

## Black women in EJA: understanding the challenges and strategies to fight racism at school

*Mulheres negras na EJA: compreendendo os desafios e as estratégias de enfrentamento do racismo no âmbito escolar*

*Mujeres negras en la EJA: comprender los desafíos y estrategias para combatir el racismo en la escuela*

Flavia Souza Rocha Lima<sup>I</sup>

Lara Mendes Christ Bonella Sepulcri<sup>II</sup>

Silvania Neris Nossa<sup>III</sup>

Sabrina Oliveira de Figueiredo<sup>VI</sup>


### ABSTRACT


This study sought to understand the life trajectory of black women in relation to school and the challenges and strategies for coping with racism in the school environment. This is a qualitative research, whose data were collected through interviews with black or brown women, inserted in education for young people and adults (*educação de jovens e adultos* — EJA), a public school teaching modality in Brazil. Data were analyzed using content analysis. Among the findings, school dropout due to lack of interest and limitations related to school attendance stood out, in addition a deficiency in the knowledge of the history and legacy of Afro-Brazilian culture. In order for these women to have their stories critically and respectfully valued, engagement of the school community in giving voice and visibility to black women is relevant, by highlighting the protagonism of these trajectories, centering and adapting the curriculum, the teaching materials and the training processes of teachers and school management.


**Keywords:** Black Women. Youth and Adult Education. Racism.


### RESUMO

Este estudo buscou compreender a trajetória de vida de mulheres negras em relação à escola e aos desafios e estratégias de enfrentamento do racismo no âmbito escolar. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, cujos dados foram coletados por meio de entrevistas com mulheres pretas ou pardas, inseridas na educação de jovens e adultos (EJA), modalidade de ensino da rede pública no Brasil.

<sup>I</sup>FUCAPE Business School, Vitória, ES, Brazil. Email: flavyrocha@hotmail.com  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3077-9436>

<sup>II</sup>FUCAPE Business School, Vitória, ES, Brazil. Email: larasepulcri@fucepe.br  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2706-6125>

<sup>III</sup>FUCAPE Business School, Vitória, ES, Brazil. Email: silvanianossa@fucepe.br  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8087-109X>

<sup>VI</sup>FUCAPE Business School, Vitória, ES, Brazil. Email: sabrinafigueiredo@fucepe.br  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3302-9489>

Os dados foram analisados por intermédio de análise de conteúdo. Entre os achados, destacou-se o abandono da escola por falta de interesse e limitações referentes à assiduidade escolar, além da deficiência no conhecimento da história e legado da cultura afro-brasileira. Para que essas mulheres tenham suas histórias valorizadas crítica e respeitosamente é relevante o engajamento da comunidade escolar em dar voz e visibilidade às mulheres negras, trazendo o protagonismo dessas trajetórias, centrando e adequando o currículo, os materiais didáticos e os processos de formação de professores e da gestão escolar.

**Palavras-chave:** Mulheres Negras. Educação de Jovens e Adultos. Racismo.

## RESUMEN

Este estudio buscó comprender la trayectoria de vida de mujeres negras con relación a la escuela y los desafíos y estrategias para el enfrentamiento del racismo en el ambiente escolar. Se trata de una investigación cualitativa, cuyos datos fueron recolectados a través de entrevistas con mujeres negras o pardas, insertas en la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos (*Educação de Jovens e Adultos - EJA*), modalidad de enseñanza en escuelas públicas de Brasil. Los datos se analizaron mediante análisis de contenido. Entre los hallazgos se destacó la deserción escolar por falta de interés y limitaciones relacionadas con la asistencia escolar, además de la deficiencia en el conocimiento de la historia y legado de la cultura afrobrasileña. Para que estas mujeres tengan sus historias valoradas crítica y respetuosamente, es relevante el compromiso de la comunidad escolar en dar voz y visibilidad a las mujeres negras, trayendo el protagonismo de estas trayectorias, centrando y adecuando el currículo, los materiales didáticos y los procesos de formación de docentes y gestión escolar.

**Palabras clave:** Mujeres Negras. Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos. Racismo.

## INTRODUCTION

Racial inequality in education is a worrying reality (Alves and Soares, 2013; Matos and França, 2021). Authors such as Valverde and Stocco (2009), Jesus (2018), and Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes (2021), for example, discuss the differences between dropout, failure, and school performance rates of black and non-black students and, indeed: even when socioeconomic and geographical issues are similar, the racial factor still seems to influence the results.

The differences in academic progress rates can go beyond economic and social issues and are partly explained by racial structural school factors such as: lack of historical and cultural representation of Afro-Brazilian and African issues in textbooks (Roza, 2017); unpreparedness in the discourse of education professionals on the subject (Gomes, 2003; Carvalho, 2005; Moreira and Aguiar, 2015; França, 2018; Gemelli and Closs, 2023), silencing and neutrality of public authorities, educators and managers in the face of racial conflicts (Jesus, 2018; Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes, 2021; Santos and Sampaio, 2022).

Concerning the effects of racism on students' school life, we found losses in academic performance (Banerjee, Byrd and Rowley, 2018; Matos and França, 2021) and the devaluation of self-image, causing low self-esteem and hindering social relationships (Ferreira and Camargo, 2011; Zamora, 2012; Jesus, 2018). There is evidence that teachers who are not familiar with the anti-racist cause often evaluate black students unfairly, with prejudice and low expectations of this group (Carvalho, 2005; França, 2018; Leath *et al.*, 2019; Scafuto *et al.*, 2020). Also, black students are

among those most punished for disciplinary infractions (Moreira and Aguiar, 2015; Wun, 2018; Leath *et al.*, 2019).

Thus, to deal with the issue systemically, Law No. 10.639 was sanctioned in Brazil in 2003, amending Law No. 9.394 of 1996, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education. It aims to make Afro-Brazilian history and culture compulsory in the school curriculum in all areas of knowledge and was created to promote policies that foster racial equity in schools, in a way that highlights the need for historical recognition of the contribution of the Afro-Brazilian population to the cultural, social and economic construction of the country (Zubaran and Silva, 2012; Coelho and Coelho, 2013; Roza, 2017).

In addition to how racism affects the life trajectory of students, Crenshaw (2002) merged race and gender issues, i.e. using the term “intersectionality” to discuss the specificities of black women. Since Gomes (2003) brought up the issue of black women’s aesthetics, which is seen as being outside the dominant standards, other literature has also emphasized and given visibility to black children and young people and their school relationships (Cruz, 2014; Guizzo, Zubaran and Beck, 2017; Leath *et al.*, 2019; 2021; Cintra and Weller, 2021). At this point, it is worth noting that schools, as organizations, are relevant spaces for subsidizing social interactions, which are influenced by institutional norms and rules that dictate behaviors, distinctions, and relationships between people (Small and Adler, 2019).

Faced with these issues that affect the trajectory of black women and students, school dropout affects black students to a greater extent than non-black students (Jesus, 2018; Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes, 2021). Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes (2021) point out that the school dropout rate of black girls and young women is usually attributed to teenage pregnancy and time spent on domestic chores. However, studies show that the factors behind school dropout are more related to the invisibility and silencing of institutions in the face of racial and gender conflicts and the absence of public policies aimed at black girls’ belonging in education (Santos and Sampaio, 2022).

In this context, it cannot be denied that the trajectory of black women who have dropped out of school or had no access to it, and the intersectionality of race, gender and class in education, are identified on the school benches in youth and adult education (*educação de jovens e adultos* — EJA) (Dayrell, 2005; Valentim and Assis, 2018; Ruas and Quirino, 2019; Lira and Barbosa, 2021). EJA is dedicated to the education of people who have experienced exclusion from school, either through dropping out or because they did not have the opportunity to enter school (Valentim and Assis, 2018).

With these issues in mind, this study sought to understand: What is the life trajectory of black women with regard to schooling? And what are the challenges and strategies for tackling racism against black women in schools? Therefore, based on racial and gender inequalities, which can be reflected in education, this work aimed to understand the life trajectory of black women in relation to schooling and to the challenges and strategies employed to confront racism in the school environment. In this case, the context evaluated was that of black women EJA students.

As a theoretical and/or academic justification, the study dealt with the intersectionality between race and gender, given the more in-depth look at black women in education. Jesus (2018), Cintra and Weller (2021), and Leath *et al.* (2019; 2021) prioritized the understanding of female students to grasp how this dynamic takes place. In general, there is still little academic production based on listening to students with the aforementioned profile and there is a scarcity of work evaluating actions to tackle racism at school from the point of view of black women and their journey to the EJA. By proposing the study, considering EJA students who are women and black, this research seeks to advance in the academic and empirical field, notably in the direction of what Santos and Sampaio

(2022) called attention to, that is, the need for literature to legitimize reflections and knowledge from a “counter-hegemonic” perspective regarding the invisibility of black people, Brazilian ethnic diversity and racial issues in general terms.

As a practical justification, this study offers contributions to school management that actually seeks alternatives for racial and gender equity in a systemic sense. The results of the study may demonstrate the need to prioritize joint actions on the part of public organizations responsible for education and school managers, to discuss public policies and effective actions in light of Law No. 10.639, and its proposals, within schools.

## **SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND RACISM**

The relationship between students’ proficiency levels, considered as performance, and their socio-economic status was discussed in Soares (2003). The authors found that the lower the socio-economic level (SES), the lower the proficiency rates. They added that, in addition to SES, there are structural educational factors that interfere with the results related to student performance. Alves and Soares (2013) showed that the racial factor influences proficiency levels, since the lowest scores are attributed to students who declare themselves to be Afro-Brazilian, i.e. black, including here those self-declared black or brown, even when the SES is relatively similar between black and non-black students. The authors do not delve into the causes but suggest research into the school structure.

Among the educational factors that affect school performance through the structure of racism, it is possible to list the invisibility of the historical and cultural contribution of Africa and its descendants in teaching materials (Valverde and Stocco, 2009; Zubaran and Silva, 2012; Roza, 2017), the construction of a negative view of the characteristics of the African matrix, bringing negative stereotypes related to the black population (Ferreira and Camargo, 2011), the lack of representation of racial discussions in curricula (Gomes, 2012), and the silencing of institutions and teachers in the face of racial conflicts (Jesus, 2018; Cintra and Weller, 2021). Matos and França (2021), when studying the subject in question, bring results associating the perception of discrimination with low self-esteem and emotional insecurity of black students, which are detrimental to academic performance.

When it comes to school performance, dropouts and trajectories, through the intersectionality of race and gender, specificities are found with regard to black women and their particularities and challenges in education (Crenshaw, 2002; Ernica and Rodrigues, 2020).

## **BLACK WOMEN IN SCHOOL RELATIONS**

The importance of early childhood education in shaping children’s personalities has been recognized in the school environment (Santos and Rossetto, 2018). According to the authors, racism and sexism undermine the construction of black girls’ identities and their relationships at school. From early childhood education to elementary school, with a focus on race and gender relations, Moreira and Aguiar (2015) and Guizzo, Zubaran and Beck (2017) point out that black girls suffer more from name-calling and teasing related to signs of poverty and negative stereotypes related to their physical characteristics, such as the aesthetics of their hair and skin color, compared to non-black children.

Regarding the construction and valorization of black aesthetics in schools, the study by Gomes (2003), which considered as participants hairdressers and customers of an ethnic salon and their experiences in elementary school mainly related to the body and curly hair, concluded that there was a lack of actions to confront and value black culture and aesthetics in the school

environment. The existence of a dominant aesthetic standard for white women affects black girls, since skin color and hair are closely linked to aesthetics and femininity and therefore need greater support in their identity construction, self-esteem and representativeness (Cruz, 2014). In this sense, it is important to highlight that teachers play an important role in the construction of students' racial identity by reframing their practices in relation to black girls, promoting their potential, developing critical thinking about social and media aesthetic standards, informing themselves and breaking patterns that marginalize and hinder the academic possibilities of black girls (Leath *et al.*, 2021).

The school can play antagonistic roles, both in terms of omission, silencing and reproducing exclusion, and in terms of being responsible for promoting anti-racist actions, recognizing the potential of education for social transformation (Cintra and Weller, 2021). Based on the intersectionality of race, gender and class, Cintra and Weller (2021) perceived the presence of subjugation as a discriminatory component in schools, but more cruelly among black girls.

Data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2020) showed that, of a group of young Brazilians aged between 19 and 24 who dropped out of school, 33% were black and 18.8% white — a figure that is reflected in academic research such as that by Jesus (2018) and Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes (2021). According to the authors, the main motivating factors for young black women dropping out are: time spent on domestic care; early pregnancy, stable unions, marriages; and the lack of schooling for their families. These factors ultimately lead to a lack of recognition of their place at school and a search to anticipate adulthood. In addition, the students reported experiencing daily conflicts at school that affected their self-image and self-esteem, developing a feeling of rejection for not belonging to the hegemonic standards.

In this scenario, the EJA modality brings students who have dropped out back to school, giving them the chance, even if late, to finish their studies (Valentim and Assis, 2018; Lira and Barbosa, 2021). Notably, those seeking this type of education are increasingly young and mostly black (Valentim and Assis, 2018). This program welcomes women who started working hard at an early age and were unable to go to school or dropped out of school because they got married and had children (Lira and Barbosa, 2021).

The EJA, therefore, when receiving these women, needs to discuss the social erasure of black women, the absence of public policies for this population and the effects of racism on their trajectories, and present the social reality of black women as the base of the social pyramid, in addition to looking at intersectionality in order to understand the social relations of black women, which point to inequalities of gender, race, territory and generation as determinants of educational exclusion (Valentim and Assis, 2018; Lira and Barbosa, 2021).

## STRATEGIES TO COMBAT RACISM

The myth of racial democracy in Brazil, which silences, denies and stifles affirmative actions to combat racism, is a factor that makes it difficult to recognize the need for social change, because it is a common sense that Brazilian society offers equal opportunities to all, and meritocracy is valued to the detriment of equity policies (Gomes, 2012; Zamora, 2012; Gomes and Jesus, 2013; Américo, 2014). Despite this, education is seen as an important tool in the struggle to introduce affirmative action and to value black culture and aesthetics.

In Brazil, government actions were suggested by the Black Movement after years of social struggles. In this perspective, educational policies have emerged, such as Law No. 10.639, which includes the teaching and study of Afro-Brazilian history and culture in school subjects, seeking to reduce inequalities and combat racism in education (Américo, 2014). This action shows progress,

but it is still not enough to achieve satisfactory results (Coelho and Coelho, 2013; Fagundes and Cardoso, 2019).

On the commitment of school management, Américo (2014), Gomes (2011), Gomes (2012), Gomes and Jesus (2013) and Araújo and Braga (2019), mentioned the important role of school management in combating racism in education, and pointed out fundamental actions for equity in this context, reduction of school dropout and improvement in the performance of black students, such as: democratic and participatory management (Gomes and Jesus, 2013), dialogs with families, students and teachers, confronting any kind of discrimination (Araújo and Braga, 2019) and encouraging continuing training on racial issues at school (Gomes and Jesus, 2013; Araújo and Braga, 2019). These are key elements for the school to avoid reproducing values and culture of a Eurocentric education that renders black students invisible (Melo *et al.*, 2017).

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The aim of this research was to understand the life trajectory of black women in relation to schooling and the challenges and strategies for dealing with racism in the school environment. To achieve this objective, the qualitative research method was adopted (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). The purpose of the study was linked to the method adopted because qualitative research aims to provide an interpretative view of the phenomenon being studied, which helps to understand the object of study based on the meanings that the participants give it — in this case, the meanings attributed to school by black women, and the challenges and strategies for dealing with racism in this environment.

Field research was carried out in two municipal public elementary schools that offer the EJA teaching modality, in the municipality of Serra, state of Espírito Santo, Brazil. The schools were named School 'L' and School 'F' to preserve their anonymity. One of the researchers having privileged access to the schools, as she is a civil servant in the municipal education department, she first surveyed the data in the units and found that in School L, that has six groups, among the women over 18, there were 38 black students, seven white and 12 "undeclared". In School F, with eight groups, there were 54 black students, two white and 36 "undeclared". Although self-declaration was compulsory at the time of enrolment, the system used showed that in many cases this piece of information was missing from the record.

Based on a preliminary survey, we used a non-probabilistic sample determined a priori based on the following criteria: female, over 18 years old, self-declared black or brown and enrolled in the EJA. We set a minimum age of 18 to include female students with a certain school history, memories, and lived experiences.

We collected data based on a semi-structured interview script (Ruslin *et al.*, 2022), which we divided into three parts: the first included a presentation of the researcher, the purpose of the study, and the research consent form; the second covered the characterization of the interviewee, including her self-declared race/color; and the third covered some questions and topics. We based the script on reflections on methodological techniques based on the studies by Guizzo, Zubarán and Beck (2017), Jesus (2018) and Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes (2021). Importantly, the focus was on spontaneous accounts of the women's school history and their relationships with classmates and teachers, with an emphasis on racial issues, given the situations experienced or witnessed, and also taking a look at the schools' actions to deal with these situations. The interviews, carried out in the first four months of 2022, lasted an average of 30 minutes each and were recorded and transcribed in order to support the data analysis procedure.



We interviewed 46 women, considering their availability and willingness to participate. Of the total, 26 declared themselves brown and 17 black. Chart 1 highlights the main characteristics of the participants.

In addition, in order to protect the identity of the women who took part in the study, their “name” was given in the form of a reference to the school followed by the sequential number in which they were interviewed.

We analyzed the data using the content analysis technique (Kalpokaite and Radivojevic, 2019). Initially, the interviews were transcribed *ipsis litteris* and then each question/topic in

**Chart 1 - Profile of the participants.**

School 'L'				
Name	Age	Self-declaration	Schooling	Marital status
L1	18	Brown	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
L2	18	Black	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
L3	19	Brown	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Stable union
L4	21	Brown	8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
L5	22	Black	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Stable union
L6	29	Brown	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Married
L7	32	Black	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Stable union
L8	37	Black	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Stable union
L9	39	Brown	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Single
L10	40	Brown	NA	Single
L11	42	Brown	NA	Stable union
L12	42	Brown	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Stable union
L13	45	Brown	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Stable union
L14	46	Brown	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Stable union
L15	46	Brown	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
L16	46	Brown	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	Stable union
L17	51	Black	NF	Single
L18	52	Brown	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	Stable union
L19	53	Brown	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Married
L20	55	Brown	NA	Single
L21	57	Black	NA	Stable union
L22	58	Black	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Married
L23	65	Brown	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Stable union
L24	65	Black	NA	Divorced

Continue...

**Chart 1 - Continuation.**

<b>School 'F'</b>				
<b>Nome</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Self-declaration</b>	<b>Schooling</b>	<b>Marital status</b>
F1	18	Black	8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Stable union
F2	18	Brown	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F3	20	Brown	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F4	20	Brown	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F5	22	Brown	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F6	26	Black	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F7	27	Black	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F8	27	Black	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Married
F9	37	Brown	5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F10	41	Brown	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	Stable union
F11	42	Brown	NA	Stable union
F12	42	Black	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	Single
F13	43	Brown	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F14	44	Brown	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Widowed
F15	51	Brown	NF	Married
F16	52	Black	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Single
F17	55	Black	NA	Single
F18	62	Black	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Widowed
F19	64	Black	NA	Divorced
F20	63	Brown	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Single
F21	64	Brown	NA	Widowed
F22	71	Brown	NA	Widowed

Source: research data.

NA: not attended.

the script was tabulated and the answers transcribed into a Word document. After this stage, a pre-coding was conducted to find words and expressions that would generate subcategories. Thus, from the subcategories, higher-order categories were created, and the data were analyzed and recorded in an analytical memorandum, facilitating content analysis. The purpose of the analysis was to identify the school experience and trajectory of black women, as well as the actions practiced or silenced by schools and their consequences on women's school lives. In addition, the analysis aimed to find elements of development and encouragement of anti-racist actions in the educational structure — in other words, anti-racist challenges and strategies experienced by women in the school environment.



As a result of the analysis procedure, five higher-order categories emerged from the data produced: racial belonging, self-esteem; childhood; school memories and racism at school; slavery, Africa and coping actions; and racism. The interpretations of the data are presented below.

## RACIAL BELONGING, SELF-ESTEEM

The study revealed that the EJA is characterized by being predominantly made up of black women, but most women identify themselves as brown, even when their phenotypical characteristics point to a black female identity. Mesquita (2019) emphasizes the school's role in the construction of this identity, since self-declaration is related to a set of social, cultural and historical experiences, and feeling part of a social group is important for a critical perception. The fact that these women do not recognize themselves as black may show that they are invested with the marginal position in which they find themselves if compared to individuals in privileged spaces of the social environment (Santos and Sampaio, 2022) — an attitude that inferiorizes, that refers to the negative issues linked to color, through ignorance, and that therefore needs to be made aware of. One of the participants said in a report: “But when I was young, I thought everyone looked at me with discrimination, because, let's put it this way, I didn't dress well, I didn't know how to speak properly” (F19, 64 years old, black).

None of the interviewees explicitly said they had difficulty accepting themselves as they are from a color/race perspective, but, when faced with self-declaration at the time of the interviews, the majority declared themselves to be brown — which points to a gap in their expression of racial belonging. Working on racial belonging is an important strategy for tackling racism because, according to Leath *et al.* (2019), people that have their racial identity valued and recognized participate more actively in anti-racist actions and have the effects of racism mitigated.

In this research, the data showed that women still know little about the history of their people, their culture, their origins, so the strategy of welcoming and discussing life stories in the classroom (Valentim and Assis, 2018; Leath *et al.*, 2019) and to develop the racial belonging of black women (Leath *et al.*, 2019) within schools still seems to be neglected by the majority of teachers and managers. We see the challenge of bringing to light the perceptions of female students to be discussed in the classroom, given that the school, as an organization, needs to understand the relevance of its role in building people's racial identity and belonging, in a critical way (Mesquita, 2019).

## CHILDHOOD

The life history of the women interviewed stands out in their childhood, as there are similarities between their different stories and experiences, especially with regard to the reasons that kept them away from regular schooling. Worthy of note is that, when the interviews began, it became clear that many had not even attended school as children, and this brought new perspectives and findings to the study. As regards the women aged between 18 and 28, their childhoods were generally spent with family members, some having been raised by grandparents, aunts and mothers. They reported leaving school due to rebelliousness, lack of interest, teenage pregnancy and even a lack of encouragement from their families to continue studying. This is what the following interviewee said: “I didn't have any encouragement from my family: ‘Oh, my daughter, go and study!’ My mother left me to my own devices” (F6, 26 years old, black).

Another student, whose mother had not attended school and was an alcoholic, said: “My mother used to pick me up from school so I could go to the family home, so I could go there to look after other people's children, while she stayed at home drinking *cachaça* [a popular Brazilian liqueur]” (L21, 57 years old, black). Women over 29, on the other hand, often reported working

in the fields from an early age to supplement the family income. One interviewee said: “My older sister and I studied until fourth grade, then we went back to the fields, everyone, the whole family [...] those who already worked in the fields continued working, those who didn’t learned to do so... I’d get up at 6 a.m. and sometimes, at 5 p.m., I’d still be stuck there, that’s when I was 11 years old” (F18, 62, black). Others were not taken to work in the fields but went on to work as nannies and housekeepers, in farmers’ homes or outside, such as in jobs arranged by relatives.

Another participant recalled: “I spent 13 years living in this family home because it was my dream to go to school, and they didn’t give me an education [...] it was an Italian lady from the countryside, she enslaved me, before dawn she woke me up to do things” (F19, 64, black). The fact that she could not go to school corroborates the idea of maintaining a black girl in her social place, with no chance of ascending; she was not allowed to study, and consequently to leave that “place” that had been imposed on her (Mesquita, 2019). It is worth adding that, as the data revealed, some women were also exposed to situations of violence, including sexual abuse by their employers and family members. One of them reported: “My ex-brother-in-law tried to rape me, to lay hands on me, she [the sister] would travel and I would go to sleep in a different house out of fear [...] I came to live with my sister [the student was adopted, and the sister in question was the biological daughter], when I was 11, she told me to do the washing up, to work, if I broke a glass he would beat me up a lot, but I’m a warrior, I’m not going to give up” (F17, 55 years old, black). Another woman said: “My stepfather was very aggressive, and I used to get sick. I got depressed when I was 13, and I didn’t want to go to school so I wouldn’t leave her [the interviewee’s mother] alone” (L6, 29 years old, brown). In general, it is understood that returning to school, now in the EJA, after so many adversities, is a way of resisting the structure that prevented them from experiencing schooling; it is an act of transgression (Lira and Barbosa, 2021).

The data analysis also showed that women over the age of 30 had a history of pregnancy and early marriage when they entered adolescence, perpetuating their jobs as maids or nannies — which pushed them further away from the school benches. Many interviewees mentioned a heavy workload, household chores and childcare responsibilities; some revealed conflicting situations at home when they had to deal with their husbands’ ban on them attending school. According to a student who got married at the age of 14: “To my sadness, at the age of 14 my father ‘made’ me get married” (F16, 52 years old, black). Another said: “I’m from a time when husbands used to say that women shouldn’t go to school, they had to look after the house and the children” (F17, 55, black). It was noticeable that the stories were similar between the groups of women aged between 18 and 28, and between women aged between 29 and 70, with childhoods and stories referring to schooling, family, marriage, pregnancy, and childhood work.

It was also noted that many women in the 29 to 70 age group, especially from School L, lived their childhoods in the south of Bahia, a northeastern Brazilian state, working in the fields and helping their families — with little or no schooling. They moved out of the state after marriage or “alone”, accompanied by their underage children, in search of work opportunities. The most frequent jobs reported were as domestic workers or nannies. After a while, some of them got formal jobs, especially as general service assistants. As Motta (2018) points out, the colonial and slave heritage still persists in the country, but with different nuances. It manifests itself, therefore, in the mode of survival, in exploitative relations and in the maintenance of the living conditions of the Brazilian people.

The childhoods of the women interviewed are full of conflicts, absences from school, aggression, child labor, teenage pregnancy, and lack of family support to continue their studies. The testimonies are related to the profile and living conditions of most of the women in the EJA, the majority of whom are black (Lira and Barbosa, 2021). Looking at these women and their life

stories must be linked to the issue of social inequality, as associated with race and gender. In order to analyze the social condition of women, it is necessary to take into account, above all, racial differences (Motta, 2018).

## SCHOOL MEMORIES AND RACISM AT SCHOOL

The fact is that, as the study showed, many black women had little or no school experience. Of the 24 interviewees at School L, six did not attend school and five had little schooling, having attended between first and third grade, and they were in EJA literacy classes. At School F, of the 22 participants, six had not attended school regularly and three had had little schooling. A subdivision might be made in these women's schooling: one group had young women who had studied up to the sixth grade on average, and another had women with little or no schooling. Regarding the girls who had more schooling, at School F the group consisted of 11 women who had studied up to the sixth grade on average, six of whom had a history of failing school at least twice, and all of whom said they liked school. When they commented on their memories of school, one woman said: "There was only class rioting, wall climbing, girls fighting, but I wasn't in the middle of it" (F3, 20 years old, brown). None claimed bad memories associated with the school itself, or with the teachers.

Another participant reported a bad memory of a nickname she was given at school, "negueba" (in a reference to her nose appearance), which made her sad, but did not influence her dropping out of school: "I used to be called 'negueba' [...], then my mother talked to me about it, that I wasn't that person, I didn't care anymore... but it bothered me a lot, I got sick, but then I didn't take it to heart" (F4, 20 years old, brown). The student said that the school was notified and contacted the students' families, made a report (or register) and went to the classroom every week to ask if these attitudes were still being repeated. The woman felt that this action by the school resolved the situation. Regarding the use of nicknames and dehumanizing adjectives, Valverde and Stocco (2009) view them as one of the ways in which racism is expressed at school. In this case, the reports indicate that one school welcomed the problem and resolved the issue, and the other school demonstrated that it had no credibility in deliberating racial issues. There is therefore a challenge for education to take on and deal with racial conflicts (Jesus, 2018; Cintra and Weller, 2021), bringing the discussion and the issue into the school. The most appropriate strategy is to be aware of conflicts and act to resolve the conflict — silencing is also a way of perpetuating prejudice (Jesus, 2018).

At School L, the group with the highest level of education (aged between 18 and 29) consisted of five women, three of whom had previously flunked at least twice. All five girls also reported that they had been well received at school and had no complaints about the school staff. Only one student had a sad memory involving bullying: "The only thing I suffered was bullying, because I had very short hair [curly hair] and they called me a macho woman" (L3, 19 years old, brown).

Three students among the group with the highest levels of schooling in both schools reported that pregnancy was what hindered their ability to continue with their studies: L1, 18, brown, became pregnant at the age of 13; F13, 43 years old, brown, became pregnant at 15; and F9, 37 years old, brown, said: "I was absent a lot, after a certain age I was more interested in the streets, in playing games, causing trouble, I ended up losing it, then I got pregnant with my son [at the age of 15]".

The group with little or no schooling at School L included 19 women. The memories of those who had attended school were generally good. They said they had been treated well at school. However, some of the students reported remembering the punishments at school, kneeling in the corn, the spanking, but they treated it with a certain naturalness, and said that despite this they liked school. One participant, however, brought up a more delicate memory involving racism,

which made her not want to go to school: “To tell you the truth, there’s no memory because when I went there it was only to get beaten up, and then I ran away from school and went outside. When I arrived... I only saw white people... when I arrived she beat me, I was blacker and she was white too, she was white... the other children were all white” (L23, 65 years old, brown). The woman recounted that she had no support from the school, and that she did not return to school for fear of being beaten up again; and even at the age of 65 she remembered the moments when she was beaten up in great detail.

At School F we had two accounts of experiences with racism. One of them said: “At school I was quiet, I stayed in the corner, I looked at how many black people there were”. When asked if there were many black girls at the school, the student said: “Not many, I counted, and there weren’t that many... so I’m black, I’ll stay in this corner... I’m black, they’ll notice me, because I’m black! The teachers already knew that they couldn’t call my name, they would talk to me by coming close. I remember girls and boys not wanting to play with me because I was black. They’d say, don’t invite her, because she’s black” (F19, 64 years old, black). It can therefore be seen that the discussion of racial issues is still minimal and necessary in the school environment. Bringing up the issue, discussing it, and reflecting on it together with the students are important aspects in shedding light on the topic and helping to problematize these racial issues, in addition to the urgent need to include the topic in school curricula (Gomes, 2012).

Authors such as Jesus (2018) and Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes (2021) explain that black students have lower school performance — as observed in the analysis of the data, failures are present in the trajectory of the majority of students in the group with the longest schooling, who later sought the EJA to complete their studies. It is, therefore, a challenge for education to understand the causes of the high failure rate of young black women (Ferreira and Camargo, 2011; Banerjee, Byrd and Rowley, 2018; Ernica and Rodrigues, 2020), taking on strategies such as valuing Afro-Brazilian history and culture and creating a positive representation of black people at school and in teaching materials (Roza, 2017; Moreira-Primo and França, 2020; Matos and França, 2021).

## HISTORY OF SLAVERY, AFRICA AND ACTIONS TO COMBAT IT

With regard to black women’s historical knowledge of the African continent and the history of blacks in Brazil (one of the guidelines and indications contained in Law No. 10.639), of the 46 interviewees, 36 expressed negative images of the African continent. Some even referred to Africa as a country: “A country, poor, sad, with children starving” (L15, 46, brown). Only five students gave more realistic views of the African continent. One of them said: “When I saw it on the internet, we saw that extreme poverty, but as time went by, we started researching, I saw that there are middle-class, upper-class people” (L4, 21 years old, brown). Another participant, despite having positive images of Africa, thinks that the entire population of the continent is black: “They’re all black, it’s a beautiful place, there’s a beach, just like us, there’s good and there’s bad” (F4, 20 years old, brown). Four students were unable to say anything about the African continent. These findings are in line with the observations of Dayrell (2005), who reported in his project with the EJA that few students knew about the history of Africa and Afro-Brazilians.

Regarding the period of slavery, the arrival of Africans in Brazil and the history of struggle and resistance of this population, 22 students were unable to say anything, and in some cases said they had seen something about it, but could not remember it. When asked if they knew or imagined why Africans were enslaved in Brazil, the answer was generally along these lines: “Because they were black... blacks were slaves” (F5, 22 years old, brown). Another student said: “They were a strong people who could handle the work, and also had needs, because of their need, they were enslaved to do other people’s bidding” (F8, 27 years old, black). One of the

participants, for her part, said: “It was a hardship, they were mistreated, it was like that because they were rich and white, and they saw these people of color with no future, and they took them away from their relatives, from their families, they beat them, they humiliated them, there were no conditions there at all, because they took them and they lived like animals” (L21, 57 years old, black). This last comment changes the chronology of the real facts (after being enslaved, black Africans lost their rights), and, according to the woman, this order was reversed, and was even used to explain the enslavement of these people.

The participants were also asked about the actions they remembered taking part in at school and whether they thought they were important for learning about African peoples and racial issues. Of the total, 12 students replied that they had heard about the subject at school but could not remember, while nine students recalled actions taken by the school in relation to racial issues. In all the answers, one point was common: isolated and specific actions at school. These solitary actions were pointed out by Coelho and Coelho (2013) as a practice that is still common, but that needs to be overcome by new practices that foster the collectivity of projects dealing with the racial cause by the entire school community, within the perspective of Law No. 10.639.

To valorize African culture, the history and culture of black people beyond slavery, that is, to overcome a Eurocentric view of history, must be relevant in school content, thus representing an important action to combat racism (Valverde and Stocco, 2009; Ferreira and Camargo, 2011; Zubaran and Silva, 2012; Coelho and Coelho, 2013; Fagundes and Cardoso, 2019). It can be seen that it is still a challenge in education to contextualize the history of black people in its entirety, without bringing in only limiting and negative aspects, reducing such history to slavery in a decolonizing view of the curriculum (Gomes, 2012).

## RACISM

The research field was also fertile ground for the participants’ reflections on the concept of racism. Their reports pointed to situations and experiences of prejudice against their phenotypical characteristics, relating racism to skin color and hair and manifesting itself in curses and unfriendly looks. One of the interviewees reported: “These people don’t like black people, who don’t like to be friends with black people, they are even disgusted by them” (F7, 27 years old, black). The idea of associating racism only with curses and looks due to physical characteristics is viewed by Nogueira (2007) as “brand racism”. The author explains that racial brand prejudice is prevalent in Brazil and is associated with phenotypical and aesthetic characteristics, influencing various sectors and situations related to race/color.

Some of the women interviewed associated racism with other forms of prejudice, including bullying and homophobia. As one student said: “Racism is when the person is black, a beggar, homosexual” (F11, 42 years old, brown).

When asked if they felt uncomfortable in any environment, if they did not feel welcome anywhere, relevant data emerged in the research. One participant said: “I started going to the mall after I married, I thought it was just a place for rich people, white people, that everyone who went there was just to buy something, I thought that if I went without money they would ask: ‘What did this woman come here for?’” (F18, 62 years old, black). Other evidence showed veiled racism (Araújo and Braga, 2019; Fagundes and Cardoso, 2019) through looks, whispers and discriminatory behavior, as follows: “[...] the woman didn’t want to go and get a pair of shorts... When we went into the store, she told the guy to lock the door. My sister said: ‘Did you see? They’ve locked the door. I pretended not to care, the woman looked at me [...] making fun of me’” (F5, 22 years old, brown).

It was clear that most of the students did not recognize the different faces of racism and how it permeates their lives in different ways. Some reported brand racism (Nogueira, 2007), with



cursing; others reported identifying it in looks, in the way they were treated in some commercial establishment. However, the racism that structures labor relations, which is in the absence of many of them from school benches, that is, structural racism (Bersani, 2017), is not discussed at school and is therefore not acknowledged/known by them. It is understood that the strategy for tackling racism would be to present and discuss how it manifests itself, in its different forms (Valentim and Assis, 2018; Lira and Barbosa, 2021), bringing racial awareness to women, presenting and discussing the legislation that underpins racial issues in education and its forms of implementation (Américo, 2014; Fagundes and Cardoso, 2019).

By promoting actions in the classroom, projects, seminars and changes to the curriculum, the manager is taking on an important strategy for tackling racism, bringing racial awareness and, consequently, a greater capacity to confront and take a social stance on issues involving racism (Cintra and Weller, 2021). It is still a challenge, as the school team — in this case, management and teaching staff — must first be trained to develop this awareness in the students (Gomes, 2012; Gomes and Jesus, 2013; Américo, 2014; Araújo and Braga, 2019).

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

When analyzing the racial, social and critical belonging of the students, as black women occupying the space of the EJA benches, the data from this study allowed us to infer, notably, that it is not assimilated by these women. The childhoods of these black women were traversed by jobs that required physical effort, such as activities “in the fields” or “in family marriages”, often interspersed with abuse, domestic violence, lack of schooling and school dropouts. Racism was part of the narratives, manifesting itself in discrimination, from name-calling, discriminatory looks and gestures and injustice to the silencing of an educational structure that apparently does not bring the young black woman with representativeness to school reflections. Due to a lack of critical perception, as Moreira and Aguiar (2015) explain, because these students did not identify themselves as black and did not explicitly identify racism, they suffered silently under discriminatory actions and gazes. The authors affirmed the importance of teachers listening to and looking at students, suggesting that they make a greater effort to rethink and discuss their own teaching practice.

Noteworthy aspects to be underlined involve the negative image of the African continent, a lack of knowledge about the history of Africa, about the pre- and post-slavery abolition periods, and the rare and isolated reports of actions at school. This reflects how Law No. 10.639 still requires more effective initiatives, as well as more adherents in the country. In view of the fact that the teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture is mandatory in the curricula of Brazilian schools, if these themes are not treated with due importance by managers — in the case of this study, by public managers responsible for education —, they will not foster the same importance in the teaching staff and will amount to nothing more than an unenforceable rule.

According to the data analysis, the school does not sufficiently meet the demands that promote an identity recognition that can reflect on the historical and cultural appreciation of this ethnic group. Conceição, Schwengber and Moraes (2021) point to the need to recognize identity as a critical part of ensuring that young people do not continue to perpetuate the places reinforced by statistics and that they move forward. The authors believe that to build the racial belonging of young black women, the school environment cannot disregard their experiences and perspectives on life.

At this point, we highlight an empirical contribution of this study that adds to other academic publications: despite the assumption that the black women in question dropped out of school in view of their silencing due to educational racism, which interrupted their school trajectory, we found that, in reality, there was no dropout, but an educational gap for these women, who started school



precisely in the EJA. Of the 46 students interviewed, 20 had not attended school or had attended school for up to three years before joining the EJA. These women were kept away from school due to the gender and racial inequality that make up society (Lira and Barbosa, 2021). Faced with this group, another face of racism emerges, structural racism, which has brought the life stories of black women to light — even without their being aware of the existence of this racism, we observed how much it made it difficult for women to go to school.

Bersani (2017), when analyzing racism in education, claims that the relationship between structural racism and the right to education influences the structure of social relations, and presents itself not only in conscience, but also in work relations, educational indexes, socio-economic levels, vocabulary, unemployment rates. and that it still reduces, by a high percentage, the number of black students who reach high school. The author points out that public policies, such as those that can derive from the guidelines of Law No. 10.639, have been neglected by the state, which has used a racist social structure since colonization.

The issue of race is already part of the EJA audience (Dayrell, 2005), starting with the people who live there. EJA students are socio-cultural subjects who have histories and trajectories that should be represented in school debates. Therefore, fostering anti-racist practices will be of great importance in the lives of the young people who make up this group. In order to truly understand how racism affects the lives of black women in Brazil, authors such as Hooks (2015), Motta (2018), Ruas and Quirino (2019) and Lira and Barbosa (2021) suggest a reflection on the issue of black women from the following perspective: understanding the intersectionality between race, gender and social class. In this sense, this study contributes and advances academically by revealing that the school, as an organization, endowed with not only physical space, but permeated by social relations (Small and Adler, 2009), influences the inclusion and permanence of black women in education. In this context, structural racism as present in Brazilian society promotes a gap in schooling and, consequently, impacts the employability of this group; and the configuration of the school space — either by action or omission of practices that reinforce the identity of black people — perpetuates the minutiae of racial and gender discrimination, mostly observed in speech, gestures, looks and other forms of segregation.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The aim of this study was to understand the life trajectory of black women in relation to school and the challenges and strategies for dealing with racism in the school environment. The research showed that the school trajectories of black women were impacted by racism in different ways (such as: nicknames, name-calling, exclusion, dropping out, or even lack of schooling). However, in some cases, racism was not recognized by these women, but its signs were present in their reports.

Regarding the challenges of tackling racism at school, the study identified that the main ones were manifested in the following aspects: have a teaching staff prepared to insert the racial agenda into school content and curricula in order to work on racial identity and belonging; have in-depth knowledge of Law No. 10.639 and its guidelines, seeking to contextualize the history of slavery, away from the Eurocentric vision; valuing the history of Africa and its historical contributions to humanity; seeking alternatives to reduce the dropout and failure rates of black students, while at the same time investigating the causes of such rates; promoting ongoing training and informative actions in the school environment with a focus on the teaching staff; among others.

With regard to coping strategies, few were found in the research data, but considering the literature it was possible to identify the most pertinent strategies in the face of the challenges encountered in the study: welcoming and discussing women's life stories in the classroom (Valentim and Assis, 2018; Leath *et al.*, 2019); developing their racial belonging (Carvalho, 2005; Mesquita,

2019); promoting racial criticism by valuing Afro-Brazilian culture and history and deconstructing negative values and stereotypes about black people and their history (Ferreira and Camargo, 2011; Zamora, 2012; Jesus, 2018); preparing school management and teaching staff to properly debate anti-racist education, based on the proposals of Law No. 10.639 (Jesus, 2018; Cintra and Weller, 2021); discussing with public organizations initiatives to reduce the number of failures and dropouts of black women from mainstream education and, consequently, the number of young women in the EJA (Jesus, 2018; Valentim and Assis, 2018; Cintra and Weller, 2021); increasing the frequency and encouraging the continuity of actions in schools, such as events, lectures, classroom discussions, with practices that foster collective projects by the entire school community (Gomes, 2011; Coelho and Coelho, 2013); developing racial awareness, presenting laws and movements that seek actions on behalf of the black population, especially claims for rights based on historical knowledge of the configurations that racism is structured in society (Nogueira, 2007; Bersani, 2017; Valentim and Assis, 2018; Lira and Barbosa, 2021).

The data analyzed showed that structural racism can prevent girls and young women from going to school. And that, when they enter school, they need to be aware of the structure that surrounds racism and how racism is present in this environment. Awareness of the representativeness of Afro-Brazilian culture, valuing it and taking pride in racial belonging should be worked on, as it involves critical reflection and suggests developing an instinct for change. The school needs to fulfill its duty to provide spaces for critical reflection and equity, because it is awareness of this public that will foster the will and predisposition for social transformation, which will spread into attitudes inside and outside the school (Cintra and Weller, 2021).

It is also clear from the study that the school, as a team, needs to be oriented and trained to carry out these reflections based on what is suggested in the documents and norms that propose national curriculum guidelines for the education of ethnic-racial relations and for the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture. It is understood that the documents should be brought into teacher training, stimulating the study of and reflection on Law No. 10.639 and its importance. So, more than just reading and writing the basic sciences, the issue of race and the social issues that affect people's lives need to be discussed in education, across all areas (Dayrell, 2005).

As a theoretical contribution, this study offers solid and faithful knowledge from the accounts of black women, EJA students, about the challenges of black women in Brazilian education, from the perspective of the intersectionality between race and gender. Listening to EJA female students between the ages of 18 and 71, who have dropped out or not attended school, provides an insight into the different faces of racism that structure society and education. As a practical contribution, the work shows the apparatus for management that, in fact, seeks alternatives for racial and gender equity in a systemic sense, generating joint actions by the education departments and school management that discuss public policies and monitor actions for the effectiveness of Law No. 10.639. Thus, the results of this study also help to reflect on the reformulation of a school that broadens its gaze beyond the school walls and reinforces practices to build the racial and critical belonging of black women in the EJA. It is possible to think of an adjustment at all levels of basic education. It is important to emphasize that the contributions of this study go beyond the limits of the EJA, but allow it to reach basic education, notably the promotion of an education that seriously tackles the evasion of young blacks and their failure in school.

The research carried out reinforces the urgent need to debate the reduction of black women's absence from schools — especially of those who had their childhoods marked by child labor, who were unable to enter school, and are looking to the EJA for a possibility of social ascension. Education can play a leading role in projects that encourage public policies aimed at serving black women and bringing them to the center of the discussion. It is important to point out that, when

these women enter school, they need to have information and knowledge that (re)constructs their racial identities and solidifies their sense of struggle for justice and equity.

Research limitations include: the number of schools considered as the locus of the study (two); the fact that both were close geographically (in the same municipality), which restricted the diversity of the population and the socio-economic level of the participants; the school attendance of students with the right profile for the research, which influenced the sample; among others. As far as future research is concerned, we suggest: to academically deepen the listening to and looking at young women under the age of 18, who are black EJA students; to investigate the causes for school dropout of regular education and the search for EJA; to detail the reasons why students aged between 18 and 30 reported a lack of interest and family support for their studies; to use a qualitative data analysis software in order to strengthen the analytical research process; to analyze narratives from different audiences in the school community as a way of understanding the phenomenon from other perspectives, which in some way influence the EJA environment; among other possibilities.

## REFERENCES

- ALVES, Maria Teresa Gonzaga.; SOARES, José Francisco. Contexto escolar e indicadores educacionais: condições desiguais para a efetivação de uma política de avaliação educacional. **Educação e Pesquisa**, v. 39, n. 1, p. 177-194, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1517-97022013000100012>
- AMÉRICO, Márcia Cristina. Formação de professores para a implementação da Lei 10.639/2003: o ensino da história e cultura afro-brasileira e indígena no currículo escolar. **Poiésis**, v. 8, n. 14, p. 515-534. 2014. <https://doi.org/10.19177/prppge.v8e142014515-534>
- ARAÚJO, Helena de Lima Marinho Rodrigues; BRAGA, Aline Cristina Clemente. A escola de todas as cores: o papel do gestor escolar no combate ao racismo. **Revista Exitus**, v. 9, n. 2, p. 263-291, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.24065/2237-9460.2019v9n2ID863>
- BANERJEE, Meeta; BYRD, Christy; ROWLEY, Stephanie. The relationships of school-based discrimination and ethnic-racial socialization to African American adolescents' achievement outcomes. **Social Sciences**, v. 7, n. 10, p. 208, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci7100208>
- BERSANI, Humberto. Racismo estrutural e o direito à educação. **Educação em Perspectiva**, v. 8, n. 3, p. 380-397, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.22294/eduper/ppge/ufv.v8i3.892>
- CARVALHO, Marília. Quem é negro, quem é branco: desempenho escolar e classificação racial de alunos. **Revista Brasileira de Educação**, n. 28, p. 77-95, 2005. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782005000100007>
- CINTRA, Éllen Daiane; WELLER, Wivian. Jovens negras no Ensino Médio público e privado: leituras interseccionais sobre suas vivências e percepções do racismo. **Educar Em Revista**, v. 37, p. 1-23, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0104-4060.76051>
- COELHO, Wilma de Nazaré Baía; COELHO, Mauro Cezar. Os conteúdos étnico-raciais na educação brasileira: práticas em curso TT - The contents of ethnic-racial education in Brazil: current practices. **Educar em Revista**, n. 47, p. 67-84, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-40602013000100006>
- CONCEIÇÃO, Cauana Peyrot; SCHWENGBER, Maria Simone Vione; GOLLO DE MORAES, Marileia. Rostos apagados no sistema de ensino: trajetórias de evasão na escolarização de jovens negras no município de Jóia/RS. **Revista Teias**, v. 22, n. especial, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.12957/teias.2021.54803>

CRENSHAW, Kimberlé. Documento para o encontro de especialistas em aspectos da discriminação racial relativos ao gênero. **Revista Estudos Feministas**, v. 10, n. 1, p. 171-188, 2002. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-026X2002000100011>

CRUZ, Tânia Mara. Espaço escolar e discriminação: significados de gênero e raça entre crianças. **Educação em Revista**, v. 30, n. 01, p. 157-188, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0102-46982014000100007>

DAYRELL, Juarez Tarcísio. Juventude, produção cultural e educação de jovens e adultos In: SOARES, Leôncio; GIOVANETI, Maria Amélia; GOMES, Nilma Lino. (orgs.). **Diálogos na Educação de Jovens e Adultos**. São Paulo, SP: Autêntica, 2005. p. 53-65.

DENZIN, Norman Kent; LINCOLN, Yvonna Sessions. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications, 2018.

ERNICA, Mauricio; RODRIGUES, Erica Castilho. Desigualdades educacionais em metrópoles: território, nível socioeconômico, raça e gênero. **Educação & Sociedade**, v. 41, p. 1-19, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1590/es.228514>

FAGUNDES, Heldina Pereira Pinto; CARDOSO, Berta Leni Costa. Quinze anos de implementação da Lei 10639/2003: desafios e tensões no contexto da Base Nacional Comum Curricular. **Revista Exitus**, v. 9, n. 3, p. 59-86, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.24065/2237-9460.2019v9n3ID918>

FERREIRA, Ricardo Frankllin; CAMARGO, Amilton Carlos. As relações cotidianas e a construção da identidade negra. **Psicologia: Ciência e Profissão**, v. 31, n. 2, p. 374-389, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1414-98932011000200013>

FRANÇA, Dalila Xavier de. Discriminação de crianças negras na escola. **Interações**, v. 13, n. 45, p. 151-171, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.25755/int.9476>

GEMELLI, Catia Eli; CLOSS, Lisiane. Precariousness of higher education teaching work in Brazilian private HEIs. BBR. **Brazilian Business Review**, v. 20, p. 339-361, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.15728/bbr.2023.20.3.6.en>

GOMES, Nilma Lino. Educação, identidade negra e formação de professores/as: um olhar sobre o corpo negro e o cabelo crespo. **Educação e Pesquisa**, v. 29, n. 1, p. 167-182, 2003. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1517-97022003000100012>

GOMES, Nilma Lino. Diversidade étnico-racial, inclusão e equidade na educação brasileira: desafios, políticas e práticas. **Revista Brasileira de Política e Administração da Educação**, v. 27, n. 1, p. 109-121, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.21573/vol27n12011.19971>

GOMES, Nilma Lino. Relações étnico-raciais, educação e descolonização dos currículos. **Currículo sem Fronteiras**, v. 12, n. 1, p. 98-109, 2012. ISSN 1645-1384 (online)

GOMES, Nilma Lino; JESUS, Rodrigo Ednilson de. As práticas pedagógicas de trabalho com relações étnico-raciais na escola na perspectiva de Lei 10.639/2003: desafios para a política educacional e indagações para a pesquisa. **Educar em Revista**, v. 47, p. 19-33, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-40602013000100003>

GUIZZO, Bianca Salazar; ZUBARAN, Maria Angélica; BECK, Dinah Quesada. Raça e gênero na educação básica: pesquisando 'com' crianças. **Acta Scientiarum. Education**, v. 39, n. 5, p. 523-531, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.4025/actascieduc.v39i0.29311>

HOOKS, Bell. Mulheres negras: moldando a teoria feminista. **Revista Brasileira de Ciência Política**, v. 16, p. 193-210, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0103-335220151608>

INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA (IBGE). **Síntese de indicadores sociais**: uma análise das condições de vida da população brasileira. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2020. Available at: <https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/index.php/biblioteca-catalogo?view=detalhes&id=2101760>. Access on: May 02, 2023.

JESUS, Rodrigo Ednilson de. Mecanismos eficientes na produção do fracasso escolar de jovens negros: estereótipos, silenciamento e invisibilização. **Educação em Revista**, v. 34, p. 1-18, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-4698167901>

KALPOKAITE, Neringa; RADIVOJEVIC, Ivana. Demystifying qualitative data analysis for novice qualitative researchers. **Qualitative Report**, v. 24, n. 13, p. 44-57, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.4120>

LEATH, Seanna; MATHEWS, Charming; HARRISON, Asya; CHAVOUS, Tabbye. Racial identity, racial discrimination, and classroom engagement outcomes among black girls and boys in predominantly black and predominantly white school districts. **American Educational Research Journal**, v. 56, n. 4, p. 1318-1352, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831218816955>

LEATH, Seanna; WARE, Noelle; SEWARD, Miray D.; McCOY, Whitney N.; BALL, Paris; PFISTER, Theresa A. A qualitative study of black college women's experiences of misogynoir and anti-racism with high school educators. **Social Sciences**, v. 10, n. 1, p. 29, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10010029>

LIRA, Daniela Almeida; BARBOSA, Maria Valéria. Feminismo negro, educação e interseccionalidade: as mulheres negras na Educação de Jovens e Adultos/as. **Revista Cocar**, v. 15, n. 33, p. 1-17, 2021.

MATOS, Patrícia Modesto; FRANÇA, Dalila Xavier de. Implicações do racismo no processo educativo de estudantes negros. **Educere et Educare**, v. 16, n. 40, p. 1-18, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.17648/educare.v16i40.26527>

MELO, Sandra Cordeiro de; SANTOS, Mônica Pereira dos; LOUREIRO, Celia Regina Nonato da Silva; CALVENTE, Atila. Racismo e educação escolar: reflexões sobre o lugar do aluno negro. **Revista de Educação PUC-Campinas**, v. 22, n. 1, p. 93-107, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.24220/P1519-3993-2017220100007>

MESQUITA, Tayná Victória de Lima. **Exclusão escolar racializada**: implicações do racismo na trajetória de educandos da EJA. Jundiaí: Paco Editorial, 2019.

MOREIRA, Maria de Fátima Salum; AGUIAR, Deise Maria Santos de A. Pobreza, raça e cor da pele: percepções e relações entre crianças nos espaços escolares. **Revista Eletrônica de Educação**, v. 9, n. 3, p. 143-161, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.14244/198271991154>

MOREIRA-PRIMO, Ueliton Santos; FRANÇA, Dalila Xavier de. Efeitos do racismo da trajetória escolar de crianças: uma revisão sistemática. **Debates em Educação**, v. 12, n. 26, p. 176-198, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.28998/2175-6600.2020v12n26p176-198>

MOTTA, Daniele. Do universal ao específico: entrelaçando gênero, raça e classe. **Revista Cadernos Cemarx**, n. 11, p. 71-88, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.20396/cemarx.v0i11.11291>



NOGUEIRA, Oracy. Preconceito racial de marca e preconceito racial de origem: sugestão de um quadro de referência para a interpretação do material sobre relações raciais no Brasil. **Tempo Social**, v. 19, n. 1, p. 287-308, 2007. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0103-20702007000100015>

ROZA, Luciano Magela. Abordagens do racismo em livros didáticos de História (2008-2011). **Educação & Realidade**, v. 42, n. 1, p. 13-34, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2175-623661124>

RUAS, Tatiane Santos; QUIRINO, Raquel. A interseccionalidade das relações sociais de sexo, idade, raça/cor no contexto da EJA: apontamentos. In: SEMINÁRIO INTERNACIONAL DE DESFAZENDO GÊNERO, 4., 2019. **Anais [...]**. [S.l.]: Editora Realize, 2019.

RUSLIN, Ruslin; MASHURI, Saepudin; SARIB, Muhammad; ALHABSYI, Firdiansyah; SYAM, Hijrah. Semi-structured interview: a methodological reflection on the development of a qualitative research instrument in educational studies. **Journal of Research & Method in Education**, v. 12, n. 1, p. 22-29, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.9790/7388-1201052229>

SANTOS, Raíssa Francisco; ROSSETTO, Edna Rodrigues Araújo. Feminismo, culturas infantis, gênero e raça: uma reflexão sobre ser menina negra. **Zero-a-Seis**, v. 20, n. 37, p. 157-169, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.5007/1980-4512.2018v20n37p157>

SANTOS, Vitalima Conceição; SAMPAIO, Sonia Maria Rocha. Uma “mulher do fim do mundo” na academia: aprendendo com a trajetória outsider within de Virgínia Bicudo. **Revista Brasileira de Educação**, v. 27, p. 1-23, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1590/s1413-24782022270123>

SCAFUTO, Isabel Cristina; SERRA, Fernando; GUERRAZZI, Luiz; MACCARI, Emerson. Intellectual structure of ongoing studies on business schools. **BBR. Brazilian Business Review**, v. 17, p. 458-487, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.15728/bbr.2020.17.4.6>

SMALL, Mario L.; ADLER, Laura. The role of space in the formation of social ties. **Annual Review of Sociology**, v. 45, p. 111-132, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073018-022707>

SOARES, José Francisco. **Qualidade e equidade na educação básica brasileira: fatos e possibilidades**. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Nova Fronteira, 2003.

VALENTIM, **Silvani dos Santos**; ASSIS, Neusa Pereira de. Juventude negra e Educação de Jovens e Adultos (EJA): reflexões na perspectiva da teoria da resiliência. **Práxis Educacional**, v. 14, n. 29, p. 66-87, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.22481/praxis.v14i29.4099>

VALVERDE, Danielle Oliveira; STOCCO, Lauro. Notas para a interpretação das desigualdades raciais na educação. **Revista Estudos Feministas**, v. 17, n. 3, p. 909-920, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-026X2009000300019>

WUN, Connie. Angered: Black and non-Black girls of color at the intersections of violence and school discipline in the United States. **Race Ethnicity and Education**, v. 21, n. 4, p. 423-437, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2016.1248829>

ZAMORA, Maria Helena Rodrigues Navas. Desigualdade racial, racismo e seus efeitos. **Revista de Psicologia**, v. 24, n. 3, p. 563-578, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1984-02922012000300009>

ZUBARAN, Maria Angelica; SILVA, Petronilha Beatriz Gonçalves e. Interloquções sobre Estudos Afro-Brasileiros: pertencimento étnico-racial, memórias negras e patrimônio cultural afro-brasileiro. **Currículo Sem Fronteiras**, v. 12, n. 1, p. 130-140, 2012.



**How to cite this article:** LIMA, Flavia Souza Rocha; SEPULCRI, Lara Mendes Christ Bonella; NOSSA, Sylvania Neris; FIGUEIREDO, Sabrina Oliveira de. Black women in EJA: understanding the challenges and strategies to fight racism at school. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, v. 29, e290126, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782024290127>

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors declare they don't have any commercial or associative interest that represents conflict of interests in relation to the manuscript.

**Funding:** The study didn't receive funding.

**Authors' contribution:** Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Investigation, Formal Analysis, Data Curation: Lima, F.S.R. Conceptualization, Writing – Review and Editing, Supervision, Resources, Project Administration: Sepulcri, L.M.C.B. Project Administration, Validation: Nossa, S.N. Writing – review & editing, Methodology: Figueiredo, S.O.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

FLÁVIA SOUZA ROCHA LIMA has a master's degree in administration from Fucape Business School.

LARA MENDES CHRIST BONELLA SEPULCRI has a PhD in accounting and administration from Fucape Business School. She is an associate professor at the same institution.

SILVANIA NERIS NOSSA has a PhD in accounting and administration from Fucape Business School. She is a professor at the same institution.

SABRINA OLIVEIRA DE FIGUEIREDO has a PhD in administration from the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES). She is a postdoctoral fellow at Fucape Business School.

Received on July 28, 2023

Revised on November 13, 2023

Approved on November 22, 2023

