The vision of teachers from Ceará on racism in public schools

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ABSTRACT

Racism is a problem present in Brazilian schools that is perpetuated by invisible and surreptitious mechanisms that seek to maintain prejudiced ideas even in a modern society where it should not exist. This suggests that racism is still a reality in Brazilian society, including in schools, and measures need to be taken to combat it and promote a culture of respect for diversity and equality. The research specifically addresses how these mechanisms can be combated. A qualitative approach was adopted for this research, connected with a quantitative approach, both inserted in an exploratory character. The general objective of the research is to analyze teacher perceptions related to racism in public state schools in Ceará. The research presents assumptions and perspectives regarding racism in public state schools in Ceará. One of the main results of the research is to highlight the urgency of addressing racism through pedagogical and effective actions that can reject and combat discriminatory practices against black students in the school environment. This implies that it is necessary to implement concrete measures to promote inclusion and equality of opportunities in schools, such as diversity policies and awareness and training programs for teachers and students. Additionally, it is important to adopt a critical stance towards discriminatory practices and combat the naturalization of racism in society in general.

Keywords: Racism, Teacher perceptions, Discriminatory practices, Pedagogical actions.

1 INTRODUCTION

This article presents the final results of a research conducted involving the instrumental collection of opinions of teachers of state public schools in the State of Ceará regarding racism in the school environment. The study takes into account the importance of Laws No. 10,639/2003 and No. 11,645/2008, as official instruments that act in the fight against racial discrimination, including within the school space. It is believed that the school mediated by the aforementioned Laws will contribute, above all, in the formation of citizens who will know how to face racism in their social routine. In doing so, the school values the cultural matrices that have made Brazil an example of a plural, multiple and exceptionally rich country.

For the elaboration of this research we used a qualitative approach associated with a quantitative approach, both inserted in an exploratory character. The general objective of this research

is to analyze the perceptions of teachers related to racism in state public schools in Ceará. These are the specific objectives outlined for this research: to discuss racism, focusing on its dimensioning, its threats and the ways of coping; recognize definitions and establish approaches necessary to confront racism in school environments.

This research was structured into five topics. In the first, the introduction was presented, highlighting the objectives of the research. In the second, a theoretical foundation was elaborated in which a discussion was promoted, enriched by a mutual exchange of opinions between these researchers and authors who deal with the same theme. In the third, the methodology used for the elaboration of this research was explained. In the fourth, a commented analysis of the data collected in the quantitative research was carried out. In the fifth and final topic, the final considerations of this study were presented.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This rationale has been ordered into two subtopics. In the first, we talked about racism, dimensioning, threats and confrontation. In the second, we discussed the necessary definitions and approaches.

2.1 RACISM, DIMENSIONING, THREATS AND CONFRONTATION

Racism is one of the main threats to the democratic functioning of Western societies. To the extent that one group does not enjoy the freedom and equal rights of others, there is a dysfunction in institutions and a dangerous contradiction between the principles of democracy and socio-political reality. The complexity of the racist phenomenon is evident in the successive distinctions and adjectives that have been given to the term racism in the socio-scientific literature: biological or culturalist racism, old and new racism, internal and external (xenophobia), institutional or social, manifest and covert racism, visible and invisible, etc. (OLIVEIRA; BRANCHES; PENA, 2023) The Curricular Document Referential of Ceará warns that:

> As a result of historical processes that fostered, above all, the slavery of African peoples, articulated with discourses that aimed to justify violence, cruelty and injustice against them, several nations were constituted with racism as a structural element. Brazilian society also (re)produces racism and, even in the face of many struggles of black peoples, we realize that it is present in the school space. (CEARA, 2021, p. 56)

This plurality is based on the different variables and factors involved: psychological, sociological, cultural, economic, political, historical, religious, etc. This same plurality shows how widespread racism can be spread trusting that it will not be condemned. In any case, diversity in distinctions or conceptions stems from two fundamental elements: First, their location in the field of

ideologies (such as discourse, mentality, belief or myth), or in the field of social practices (such as behaviors and policies of discrimination and segregation) or in both interrelated dimensions.

It is also possible to measure racism through the analysis of personal and group characteristics or attributes, this time the differences are related to racist ideas or actions: biological (sex, disability, phenotype, sexual orientation), cultural (ethnic, linguistic, religious, nationality) or both related sets. Today the world is undergoing a change of profound dimensions that does not occur only because of the health and economic crises triggered by COVID-19. Obviously, a new society is emerging. Digital expansion is a reality from which we can no longer escape and virtual platforms are totally transforming our daily lives and the social and economic organization of today's societies. Changes are taking place in the world of work and in the new forms of organization of institutions and everyday life. Much of the narratives that have given coherence, meaning, and cohesion to societies are in decline. For many authors of social theory, this future is often seen from the perspective of a globalized world at risk, a world adrift and at the mercy of spurious interests (NACONECY, 2019; Dutra, 2019; LUKE; RECH, 2019) Currently the image of the future that is presented to us indicates a future that seems monopolized by the automation and digitalization of life, and it is difficult not to imagine this future without hearing these visions that anticipate new and greater global crises from which uncertainty and despair emerge. It is recognized that racism is rooted in Latin American societies:

> When discussing ethnic-racial issues in the context of Latin America and the developments that led this population to processes of (in)exclusion of the Afro-descendant population, a historical contextualization is necessary, since part of the processes experienced are the same, such as the fact that Latin American countries have suffered an important historical-social erasure with regard to the black population. (SOUZA; SCALLOP; HOEPERS, 2021, p. 02)

Unmasked the lies supported by false scientific theories related to an inadmissible white superiority, other lies insist on staying alive, are those that deny the existence of racism (who defends this misinformation denies all the situations of violence and social exclusion that the Afro-descendant population has gone through and has gone through until the present day). (ROBINSON; KOKKONEN; SOUSA, 2021)

Another lie practiced is that which claims to exist "only" prejudice – expressed within an individual perspective, not accepting the existence of a collective, institutional and structural perspective. It is perceived that racism implies a practice built from the hierarchization and racial or ethnic inferiorization. (ROBINSON; KOKKONEN; SOUSA, 2021; OLIVE TREE; BRANCHES; PENA, 2023) It is clear that the division of human beings into races is arbitrary and obsolete, but despite the social changes that have occurred in our societies, this phenomenon continues in everyday life, having even, in recent times, gained more strength even in the school space. To see this subject in depth, it is important to keep in mind that Latin American societies developed from racist ideologies that, through the glorification of white-mestizo national identity and the myth of racial democracy,

they sought to deny black and indigenous roots and their contributions to the history and culture of Latin America. This cultural and scientific negationism directly wounds one of the determinations of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture (2004, p. 21):

> The teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, avoiding distortions, will involve articulation between past, present and future in the scope of experiences, constructions and thoughts produced in different circumstances and realities of black people. It is a privileged means for the education of ethnic-racial relations and aims to recognize and value the identity, history and culture of Afro-Brazilians, guarantee of their rights as citizens, recognition and equal appreciation of the African roots of the Brazilian nation, alongside the indigenous, European, Asian.

For a long time, racist discourse and the denial of otherness were present in our societies; in addition, in the search for models that defended a homogeneous citizenship, countries implemented different policies of invisibility and assimilation that sought to erase the cultural practices and identity of these populations. According to Melo, Santos, Loureiro and Calvente (2017, p. 04):

> Policies and cultures permeate school practices. As a social space, the school tends to reproduce prejudices and discriminations, especially of blacks, by disregarding their history beyond the condition of slaves. Through the ages, the way of being, living, thinking and living together of Afro-descendants has been disregarded, and the legacy of this invisibility is a "heritage" contaminated by racism.

In fact, one of the greatest challenges that Afro-descendants faced, and still face, was to break with the narratives of the national imaginaries that attribute to them a subordinate place in the history of the nation and make them invisible in the present, thus limiting their full access to the rights of the citizen.

2.2 DEFINITIONS AND APPROACHES NEEDED

The Inter Group (*apud* SPAIN, 2007, p.05) defines racism as a

> Social behavior, which is related to sociopolitical ideas and the institutions that sustain it, which consists of classifying people or groups based on real or imaginary differences and that are associated, in turn, with behaviors (real or imaginary). Its purpose is to justify a hierarchy between groups that allows us to accept privileges from some people over others. This mechanism has the power to place the blame for the disadvantage on the victim.

For Munanga (2003, p. 08):

> For logical and ideological reasons, racism is usually approached from the point of view of race, within the extreme variety of possible relationships between the two notions. Indeed, on the basis of the relations between "race" and "racism", racism would theoretically be an essentialist ideology that postulates the division of humanity into large groups called contrasted races that have common hereditary physical characteristics, the latter being the support of psychological, moral, intellectual and aesthetic characteristics and are situated on a scale of unequal values. Seen from this point of view, racism is a belief in the existence of

races naturally hierarchized by the intrinsic relationship between the physical and the moral, the physical and the intellect, the physical and the cultural. The racist creates race in the sociological sense, that is, race in the imaginary of the racist is not exclusively a group defined by physical traits. The race in his head is a social group with cultural, linguistic, religious, etc. traits that he considers naturally inferior to the group to which he belongs. Otherwise, racism is this tendency that consists in considering that the intellectual and moral characteristics and a given group, are direct consequences of its physical or biological characteristics.

Racism, being one of the most serious problems of respect for human rights, is always seen in a negative way, even by those who practice clearly racist actions. Few consider themselves racist and yet racism is widespread in our society. Therefore, it is a priority to fulfill the commitments and actions assumed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture (2004). (RIBEIRO, 2022)

What is advocated here is that non-racist and non-discriminatory behavior is promoted and achieved from knowledge, openness of ideas, communication and with freedom of conscience; these values and conditions must be taught and shared from formal education, through non-formal education and also at home and in the workplace. The current situation of economic and health crisis (COVID-19) that the world has been going through has generated effects in the increase of inequality and social exclusion, and in the increase of fear and the feeling of threat experienced by the population, has determined the need to intensify efforts to combat discrimination and racism in all its manifestations. The increase or visibility of corruption, racism, xenophobia, gender violence, religious intolerance and even violence that have arisen in schools are worrying indicators of possible social disruptions and vulnerability of fundamental rights. Hüning, Silva and Braga Netto (2021, p. 02) argue that: "Educational processes are intertwined with the production of social vulnerability, from the bets that are made on the curricula of the different levels of education to the policies and conditions of access and permanence of black people in these institutions."

Silva (2018) considers that vulnerability leads part of society to a threshold of indiscernibility between life and death within a segregative logic elaborated in the communities. It should be noted that what is defended here is that public educational policies both have the potential to cause changes and ruptures in situations of vulnerability and, unfortunately, can confirm them. This understanding is supported by the analysis of documents aimed at the inclusion of racial discussions. In this sense, from the normative field (directives, references and recommendations), it makes clear the need and priority that education must have in adopting the appropriate measures to end problems caused by racism and initiate strategic paths capable of avoiding this social fracture.

3 METHODOLOGY

For the elaboration of this research we used a qualitative approach associated with a quantitative approach, both inserted in an exploratory character. Souza and Kerbauy (2017, p. 14) argue that "the complementarity [between the cited approaches] must be recognized, considering the distinct and varied desiderata of research in the human sciences, whose purposes cannot be achieved by a single approach."

The qualitative approach was elaborated considering a bibliographic review and a documentary research. Through these reviews, opinions and information concerning the researched theme were collected. This stage of the research was fundamental to support the positions and opinions of these researchers. It should be noted that in the development of the quantitative approach, elaborated concomitantly with the qualitative approach, the data obtained with the answers of the form, underwent a commented analysis having as main target a scientific understanding of the social phenomenon investigated. (MUSSI *et al*, 2019)

The main authors who contributed most to the realization of this research were Souza and Oliveira (2017), Marques and Silva (2020) Barbosa, Kokkonen and Sousa (2021) Souza, Vieira and Hoepers (2021). It was considered, therefore, that the act of researching prevailing the two approaches, characterizes this research as a concrete action of formation and development of scientific knowledge, since the research provided conditions for the production, identification and determination of knowledge, in addition to offering answers to specific questions and proposing, including, resolutions of difficulties, doubts and problems related to the theme in question. (MUSSI *et al*, 2019)

The research was developed from July 1 to August 30, 2022, through an *online* questionnaire developed on the *Google Forms* platform, consisting of 10 multiple-choice questions. The invitations to participate were made available via Whats *App* (being allowed the sharing in groups of responsibility of the teachers who agreed to participate) and 100 teachers accepted to participate in the research from the answer to the first question that dealt with the Term of Free and Informed Consent (ICF). The questionnaire used in this research was based on the theoretical foundation of a data collection instrument, elaborated by Rocha (2004). The sequential structure of the questionnaire followed the following organization: Acceptance via ICF, identification in relation to gender, definition of color (following the classification used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE), level of education, type of school (Elementary School, High School, Elementary and Secondary Education and Youth and Adult Education - EJA, promotion of thematic activities related to the confrontation of racism in school, performance of managers and teachers in these activities, performance of teachers in community initiatives and programs, identification, on the part of teachers, of situations of racism in school and teachers' understanding of how racism should be treated. The software adopted for organization and subsequent interpretation of the data was *Microsoft Excel*. A table and nine graphs

were elaborated, based on descriptive statistics, taking into account quantitative and percentage analysis of the data. (Smith, 2016)

4 ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

4.1 ACCEPTANCE VIA TCLE

According to Table 1, of the 100 teachers who agreed to participate in the research, 99 (99%) felt free and enlightened to participate in the research and only 1 (1%) admitted not feeling enlightened, although they answered the other questions.

Table 1 – Acceptance via TCL

| Datum	Items	No.	%
Acceptance via ICF	Yes	99	99
	No	1	1
TOTAL		100	100

Source: Research data

It is observed that the vast majority of participants trusted the statement of the research and participated, assertively, pointing out the options that were consistent with their specific positions related to racism at school. It is worth thanking everyone who participated in this research for the social and voluntary goodwill in adding value to this research.

4.2 GENERAL DATA OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Graph 1 presents the results for the identification of the teachers who participated in the research in relation to gender, where it is possible to verify that 60 (60%) are female and 40 (40%) are male.

Graph 1 - How do you identify with regard to gender

- Feminine
- Masculine
- Transgender
- Not binary
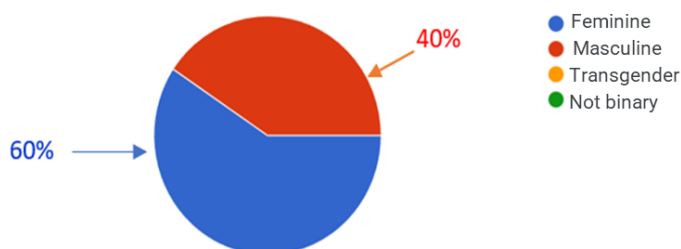
Source: Research data

This result follows the natural trend observed by the 2020 School Census, whose results indicate that 76% of teachers in Ceará are female and 24% are male. (NORTHEAST DAILY, 2021).
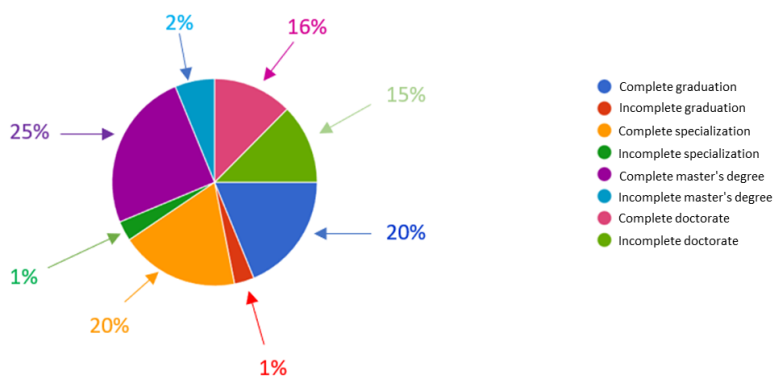
Graph 2 shows the teachers' answers when asked about their color identity following the standards adopted by the IBGE.

Graph 2 - Considering the classification used by IBGE, how do you define your color?
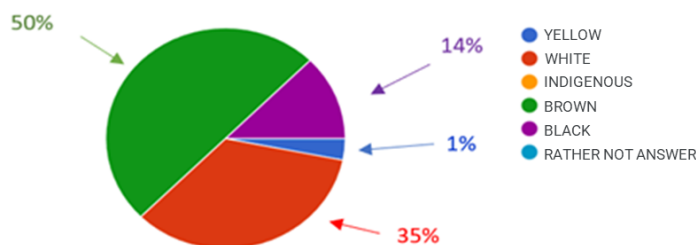
Source: Research data

Graph 3: What is your level of education?

Source: Research data

This result confirms the IBGE data for the Northeast Region (in which Ceará is inserted), which indicate a larger population within the brown color in the Northeast Region. When the data referring to the brown color are added to the data related to the color black, a total of 64% of teachers of African descent is reached. It should be noted that, in this research, we used the same color categories used by the IBGE. Graph 3 indicates the classification of the data collected related to the schooling condition, according to the responses of the participating teachers. Among the interviewees, the categories Incomplete Graduation and Incomplete Specialization each presented 1 professor (1% for each) and the Incomplete Master's category presented 2 professors (2%).

The Complete Doctorate category was flagged by 16 professors (16%), while the Incomplete Doctorate category was chosen by 15 professors (15%). In sequence, two tied categories stand out, the complete Graduation and the Complete Specialization, both with 20 professors (20%). Finally, the Complete Master's category is presented, which was the most marked category with a total of 25

teachers (25%). The analysis of the collected data evidences a significant quality in the training of the teachers who participated in the research. The level of formation of the investigated group may favor the quality of the specific responses to racism treated in this research, since it is expected that the degree of knowledge of the interviewees may result in responses more associated with the rejection of the occurrence of racist acts within the school environment. The fifth question of the research instrument used referred to the type of school in which the interviewees work. In Graph 4 it is possible to observe that most of the interviewees (30%) work in high schools. In a decreasing percentage classification, the following results were obtained for the other types of school: 28% of the interviewees work in elementary schools, 22% work in specific schools for Youth and Adult Education (EJA) and 20% work in schools that offer, in the same school space, Elementary and High School.

Graph 3 - The school you work for is...

Source: Research data
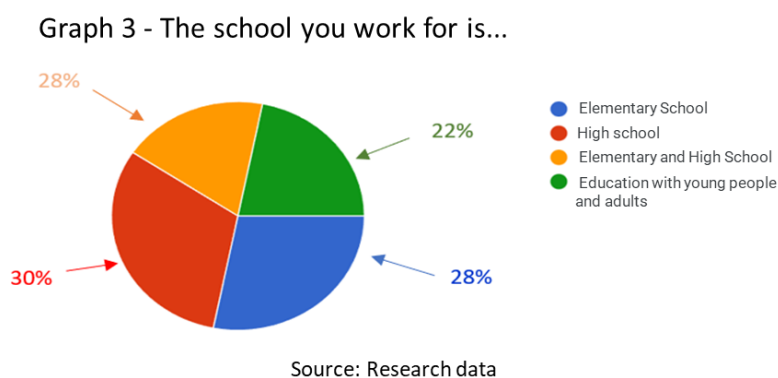
Considering that the four types of schools presented their teachers participating in the research in question, it can be inferred that in all types of school, evaluated here, racism had an occurrence as will be observed in the next group of questions.

4.3 SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL OCCURRENCE RACISM

Graph 5: Who promoted continuing education actions on racism?
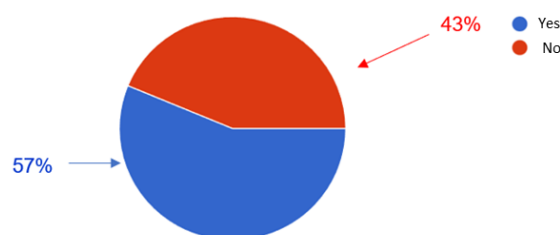

Source: Research data
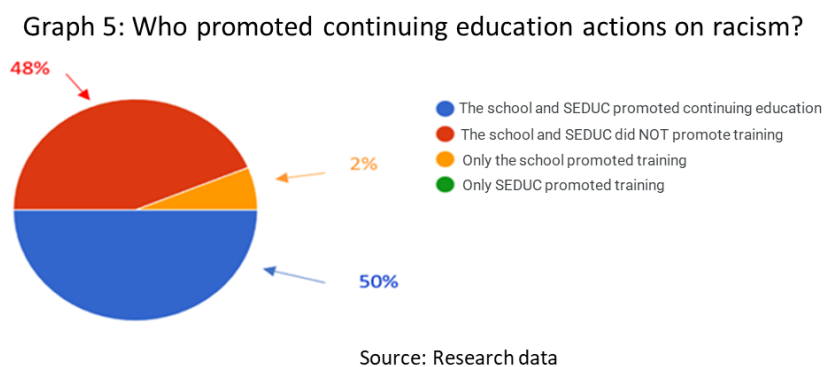
The first of the specific questions about racism of school occurrence aims to know if the school (s) of the interviewees or the Secretary of Education (SEDUC) promoted or promoted, in the last five years, meetings of continuing education (or lectures, meetings, etc.) to deal with themes related to racism. The analysis of Graph 5 reveals that of all the possible answers, the option "only SEDUC promoted the trainings" was not marked by any teacher who participated in this research.

Adding the percentage of teachers who chose the option "the school and SEDUC promoted continuing education" with the percentage of teachers who marked the option "only the school promoted the trainings" reaches a total of 52%, indicating that most teachers teach in a school that had some type of continuing education related to racism.

Before considering a good result it is necessary to take into account that the percentage of schools in which there was no training (48%) is very high. It is considered, therefore, that the State should promote more training and should also encourage and provide conditions for the school itself, within its specific reality, to develop training throughout the year, seeking, in this way, to fully comply with Laws 10,639/03 and 11,645/08. It should be noted that it is not recommended that the aforementioned Laws are only "met" on commemorative dates, because what they effectively recommend is the inclusion of the theme of Afro-Brazilian History and Culture in the curricula of the Elementary and Secondary Education network in Brazil. In Graph 6 it is observed that most educators (57%) have carried out actions such as lectures, video display, implementation of projects, seminars, activities, etc. during the school year. However, as in the previous question, the number of educators who have not been performing these actions is still significant (43%).

Graph 6: Have you and your colleagues been carrying out actions to confront school racism?

43% No
57% Yes

Source: Research data

It is up to the school management and the teaching staff, as a whole, the constant observance of the Laws so that racist actions are definitively overcome in the school space, although these researchers consider that such a procedure would not need a legal basis to be developed, that is, to face racism in the school environment beyond the fulfillment of the laws established in the country should be an action of ethics, of character and natural coexistence. In Graph 7 it is possible to see that most

of the educators who participated in this research do not work in community initiatives and programs related to the confrontation of racism in the school environment.

Graph 7: Do you work in community initiatives and programs related to confronting racism in the school environment?
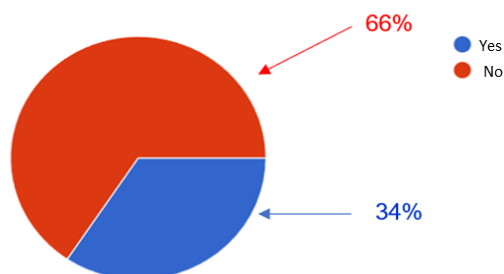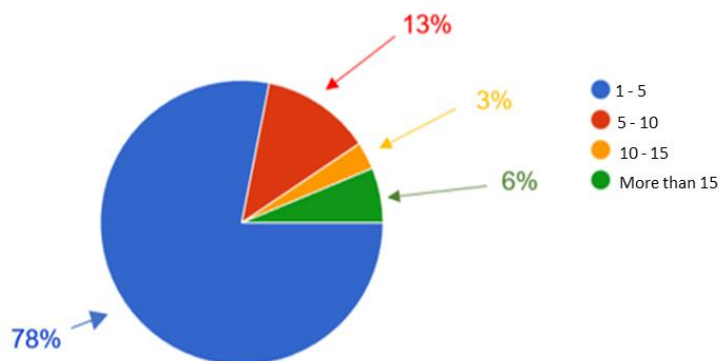

Source: Research data

The authors of this research see this situation as a great concern, because it may reveal that school planning is not attentive to the need for inclusion, implementation and development of its educators in community programs related to the confrontation of racism in the school environment, making it evident that the school and the community are distanced in what is related to school racism. It is believed that this distancing is, at the very least, incoherent because the school must plan all its actions in order to meet the desires of the community in which it is inserted, promoting, in this way, the school/community interaction that Ceará and Brazilian education both aims to achieve and, in the case of such a sensitive and necessary theme, These researchers recommend a greater concern to decrease, as soon as possible, the observed distancing.

> That is why educational spaces must promote the elimination of any form of prejudice, racism and discrimination, so that from an early age, children understand and consciously engage in actions that they know, and recognize the importance of different ethnic-racial groups, and also the appreciation of Afro-Brazilian history and culture. (MARQUES; Smith, 2020, p. 05)

In Graph 8 are the answers to the following question: How many situations of racism, in the school in which you work, have you witnessed in your teaching life?

Graph 8: Situations of racism witnessed

13%

3%

1 - 5
5 - 10
10 - 15
More than 15
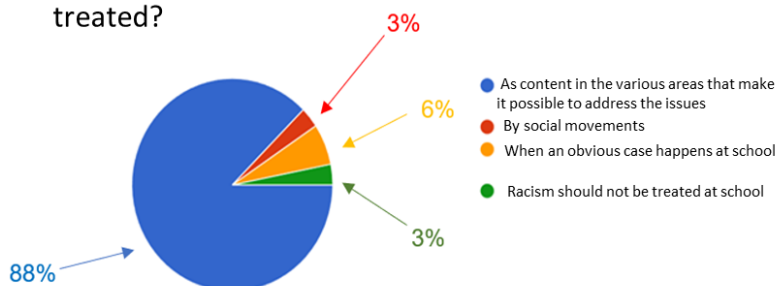
6%

78%

Source: Research data

The analysis of Graph 8 indicates that all teachers stated that they witnessed at least one situation of racism in the school environment. It is noteworthy that the majority (78%) indicated having witnessed from 1 to 5 of these situations, on the other hand 6% stated that they witnessed more than 15 reprehensible situations. In an environment in which no reported cases would be desirable, concern is shown and it is alerted that measures are effectively taken by the competent channels in order to reduce and even mitigate these occurrences that only happen due to the structural racism that still persists in Brazil. On this Marques and Silva (2020, p. 07) warn that:

> In addition to suffering racial discrimination, black children may still be ignored and harassed by teachers, due to their unpreparedness to deal with the situation or even by the naturalization of racial inferiorization. The cruelty, evidenced as a consequence of this, becomes even more painful when one is aware that the black child spends much of his life being nicknamed "macaca", "stinky black", "dirty", "hair of blowing", "asphalt roll", among many other pejorative nicknames, and when reporting such cases to teachers, most of the time is ignored or only listens as a response: "That's a joke, it doesn't care."

It is common sense among researchers that every time the black student is interpreted as wrong, he will tend, little by little, not to feel safe in manifesting himself and, consequently, the family, most of the time, will take time to realize that the child is suffering racial injuries. Graph 9 presents the position of the teachers who participated in the research regarding the understanding of how racism should be treated, especially in the school environment.

Graph 9: How do you believe that racism should be treated?

Legend:
- As content in the various areas that make it possible to address the issues
- By social movements
- When an obvious case happens at school
- Racism should not be treated at school

88%, 3%, 6%, 3%

Source: Research data

For the analysis of these results, Law No. 11,645 (2008) with its Article 1, which modified Article 26-A of Law No. 9,394 (1996) with the following statement for its paragraphs 1 and 2:

> Art. 26-A. In public and private elementary and secondary schools, the study of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history and culture is mandatory. § 1 the programmatic content referred to in this article will include various aspects of history and culture that characterize the formation of the Brazilian population, from these two ethnic groups, such as the study of the history of Africa and Africans, the struggle of blacks and indigenous peoples in Brazil, the black and indigenous Brazilian culture and the black and the Indian in the formation of the national society, rescuing their contributions in the social, economic and political areas, pertinent to the history of Brazil.

It is also considered very important to take into account the Curricular Document of Ceará – DCRC (2021, p.56)

> Thus, the state of Ceara defends that the effectiveness of citizenship also involves the recognition of the cultural and knowledge matrices that constitute the diversities of Brazil, and the school is one of the first institutions that has the function of forming citizens in the perspective of respect, appreciation of racial, ethnic and gender difference. In this way, black cultures and knowledge enable black women and non-black women to create a new history and new identities, strengthening and valuing positivity, beauty, radicality and the African presence in our cultural formation. Thus, students need to have access to the knowledge produced by black peoples (Africans, Brazilians and Ceará) so that they have real conditions to understand their history to face racism.

Considering the statements of the two documents mentioned above, it is defended here that the school is one of the main environments for the confrontation of racism and each educator needs to be prepared to perceive and, automatically, reject any absurd attempt to occur school racism. When it comes to the answers pointed out in Graph 9, it is possible to highlight that 88% of the teachers who participated in this research consider that racism should be treated as content in the various areas that make it possible to treat the subject, thus attending to everything that is recommended in the statements of the two documents on screen. Six teachers understand that racism should only be fought when some case actually happens at school and three think that racism should be faced by social movements. On these positions Marques and Silva (2020, p. 05) have the following opinion:

Hence the importance of emphasizing that education for ethnic-racial relations should be implemented in all public and private schools, even if they do not have black children in the classroom, because this point, in our view has been misinterpreted, in the sense that it is only pertinent to talk about racism if there is a black child victimized.

Those responsible for this research consider that the ideal is to address racism within what was established in the documents mentioned and that in addition to social movements the school is a relevant social space for the non-dissemination of racism. On the other hand, three teachers do not accept or do not understand what the official documents defend and pointed out, in a surprising and, in our view, incoherent way, that racism should not be treated in school.

In his research Carapello (2020, p. 177) warns that, "[...] Because of the difficulties of teachers in dealing with the racial issues that cross the relations in the school, there is a tendency to configure and treat visibly racist situations in an inappropriate and sometimes omitted way." Therefore, in addition to the omission, or even for situations in which the teacher confuses racism with *bullying*, it is necessary for the teacher to understand that racism is not a unilateral action, that is, those who do racist actions are also affected and, in this case, will also need attention, so the school and the entire school community should not be omitted.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In view of the results commented, it is evident the urgent need that any educational environment should promote the banning of any type of prejudice, racism and discrimination, so that the entire school community, especially students, can understand and engage consciously in projects, actions and activities in which it is possible to recognize the importance of respect for different ethnic-racial groups, and, concomitantly, the valorization of Afro-Brazilian History and Culture. It is important to emphasize that in the school environment the absence of this understanding can cause, among white children, a feeling of superiority, in itself destructive and, therefore, unacceptable. The commented analysis of the opinions of the educators revealed that there is among them, even if not so deep, some knowledge about what is determined in the laws commented on in this article. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that some of them still have difficulty in working pedagogical practices aimed at confronting racism in the school environment.

It is warned that such a situation may reinforce the inadmissible use of pedagogical practices with homogenizing and ethnocentric characteristics, because these practices can, in a sneaky and silent way, try to impose the colonizing culture, ethnocentric values and ideals that, although they currently have a reduced influence, still insist on staying alive. It is considered that even in the full validity of Laws No. 10,639/2003 and No. 11,645/2008, the ineptitude, disinterest and omission on the part of some teachers (fortunately the minority) evidence the need to increase teacher training aimed at the

disconnection of teachers from the prejudices and taboos common to society. What can be affirmed, in view of what was investigated here, is that most of the schools of Ceará, acting individually, jointly or with some support from the Department of Education (SEDUC), are treading a path of compliance with the laws and other official documents, promoting actions, projects, debates, training and activities that, gradually, are minimizing racism in the school environment, contributing, in this way, to the formation of the social identity of the students, offering conditions so that they can perceive and understand their group of belonging in a freer way from certain visions that prove to be prejudiced and discriminatory.

At the end of this research it is recognized that the legislation favors educational actions that develop throughout the educational society a posture of coping with discriminatory situations minimizing their effects. However, it is not possible to fail to emphasize that the Law guides the actions, but the education professional has the greatest responsibility in the formation of the "final product" that are the students free of prejudice and discrimination. Therefore, these researchers consider that only when an integral awareness is achieved by educators about the types of prejudice and racial discrimination, it will be possible to minimize, and in the long term, eliminate all racist practices in the school environment.

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