AFRO-BRAZILIAN WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF BAHIA (IFBA), BRAZIL

By

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine, describe, and understand underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilian women faculty members in higher education. The study aimed to advance knowledge about this underrepresentation based on perspectives of eighteen participants who self-identified as Afro-Brazilian and as women working at the Institute Federal of Bahia (IFBA). I based my investigation on two research questions: What influenced the paths of Afro-Brazilian women to becoming faculty members? What are Afro-Brazilian women educators' experiences as faculty members in higher education? Due to the nature of the research questions, qualitative methods were best suited to uncovering the meanings participants referred to in three areas: family background, educational trajectory, and professional experience. I use an intersectional theoretical lens that accounts for race, class, gender, and geography for understanding inequalities of Afro-Brazilian women. This approach is inspired by US and Brazilian Black feminisms. My findings showcased five items to increase understanding of Afro-Brazilian women's paths to higher education. These are race and gender discrimination in higher education, vulnerability of social statuses and struggles to transform them, social interrelationships, recognition of the role of educational policies, and individual dissonances.

Keywords: race, gender, inequality, Afro-Brazilian women, educators, higher education, Institute Federal of Bahia

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I thank my family in the US and in Brazil…

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This dissertation explores and analyzes experiences of Afro-Brazilian women educators' experiences in higher education within faculty ranks in Bahia, Brazil. First, knowing the history of Afro-descendant women in Brazil is crucial to understanding the importance of my research. Brazil was the last country in the western hemisphere to abolish slavery and has the world's second largest Afro-descendent population after Nigeria. In the Brazilian national identity, *Mulata* dancers in Brazilian carnivals and domestic servants remain the most prominent roles for those with Black bodies. Afro-Brazilian women still face wage and occupational discrimination. Scholars state that Afro-Brazilian women "work longer hours and earn even less than white women" and "the largest single job category for Afro-Brazilian women continues to be that of domestic worker and low-status jobs" (Lovell, 1994, p. 12). In 2011, Black women represented 61.6% of domestic workers (Bernardino-Costa, 2014). A World Bank study in 2010 found that "Afro-Brazilian women earn less than white women and men with the same level of education. On average, Afro-Brazilian women earn US $2.50 per hour compared to US $4.02 for white women and 15.6 reales US $5 for white men. Afro-Brazilian women who completed secondary education earn half the wage of white men with the same level of education" (Ceratti, 2017, p. 3) Afro-Brazilian women are also more likely than white women to be single heads of poor households. Therefore, access to higher education is critical to the struggle of Brazil's Black women to be represented in a wider, more prestigious range of occupations.

Furthermore, Afro-Brazilian women experience inequalities marked by life expectancy, region, and education (Caldwell, 2007; Le Bon, 2007; Silva et al., 2006). Even after narrowing of the gender gap in the numbers of years of schooling and illiteracy, the race-disaggregated

illiteracy rate is 19.8% for Blacks and 8.3% for white Brazilians. Regional and class differences are also important, as revealed by deteriorating educational institutions and hardships of parents with low levels of formal schooling (Beltrão, 2009; Berger, 2010; Le Bon, 2007, p. 57). Telles (2004) highlights the significance of higher education in preserving race and class hierarchies in Brazil. He also examines how public measures such as race and class affirmative action (in the form of quotas) counteract these hierarchies. Still, inquiry on experiences and perceptions of Afro-Brazilian women educators in higher education positions remains limited. Using a qualitative approach, I examine experiences of eighteen Afro-Brazilian women educators at the Federal Institute of Bahia (IFBA) regarding their educational paths in becoming educators.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to hear Afro-Brazilian women's perceptions of what influenced them on their paths to higher education and to listen to their experiences as educators at IFBA in Salvador and metropolitan regions in Bahia, Brazil. I make Afro-Brazilian women central to the discussion since they represent only 1% of faculty in higher education, while documenting their advancements as faculty at IFBA to understand what factors most influenced them to become educators (Carvalho, 2004). There is a gap in the literature on the Afro-Brazilian presence in higher education, especially concerning Afro-Brazilian women. More than 50% of Brazilian citizens have African ancestry, yet they represent only 1% of higher education faculty (Carvalho, 2004) .

Despite the significant increase between 2012 and 2019, the number of self-identified Black professors increased from 12% to 17% in contrast to self-identified white professors from 45% to 53% (Suarez, 2021). Underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilians as public higher education students also remains a problem. In 2019, for the first time, Afro-Brazilian women represented

27% of this student population, a slightly higher percentage than that of white women (25%) (University World News, 2021). This data revealed that, even though Afro-Brazilian educators have made progress, they are not fully represented in higher education.

The underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilian women educators presents a need for additional research; however, this is a study to understand how these individuals came to be represented within higher education in faculty ranks. Furthermore, it is not clear what factors influenced Afro-Brazilians to become faculty. Learning from these knowledge gaps can help policymakers implement practical solutions to increase the numbers of Afro-Brazilian women in higher education. In addition, making Afro-Brazilian women visible and ensuring their voices are heard helps to demystify academia so that Afro-Brazilian and other women in similar situations may see their experiences reflected in lives of women with institutional power and accomplishments.

Research Questions

1. What influenced the paths of these Afro-Brazilian women to becoming faculty members?
2. What are these Afro-Brazilian women educators' experiences as faculty members in higher education?

Nature of the Study

These questions led me to use a qualitative research design for examining experiences of Afro-Brazilian women faculty in higher education at IFBA during October and November 2019. Due to the nature of the research questions, qualitative methods were best suited to uncovering the meanings participants referred to in three areas of their lives: family background, educational trajectory, and professional experience. The interview guide focused on main and follow-up questions in addition to probes. These three types of question helped me best address the

research problem and ensured I would solicit vivid, rich details and nuance during interviews. As Rubin and Rubin (2005) state, “asking background questions and learning enough about the overall context to personalize your report so that you can present interviewees as real people rather than abstractions” is how vividness is achieved, while nuance involves paying attention to interviews’ understated meanings (p. 132; cited in Owen, 2014). Although several studies have used quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze educators’ experiences in general, my investigation brings something new to the literature because representations of Afro-Brazilian women are quite rare (Caldwell, 2007).

I used *purposeful selection*, a deliberate strategy for choosing participants and the research site with relevance to answering the research questions (Armstrong, 2010; Maxwell, 2013). Criteria employed for taking part in this study are women who self-identified as Afro-Brazilian and who are in higher education faculty ranks, i.e., professor, educational administrator, and administrative technician of education (TAE). IFBA is an institution in northeastern Brazil, a region seen as underdeveloped, where the local Afro-Brazilian population surpasses its presence in the national population. Purposefully choosing the sample ensured that participants were suited to answer the research questions. Access to participants was facilitated by my identity as a native of Bahia who speaks Brazilian Portuguese in addition to personal contact, a faculty member in charge of research and expansion of higher education at IFBA, who helped me recruit participants with a recruitment email via WhatsApp. I also sought to chronicle their academic trajectories with attention to factors that influenced their pursuit of higher education careers and their thoughts about faculty positions.

Definition of Key Terms

Racial and ethnic identification categories used in this study followed the example of *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatistica* (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics or IBGE), the government institution in charge of gathering and developing data for the population census. These categories include white (*branco*), Black (*preta*), mixed (*parda*; white with Black or Indigenous), yellow (Asian-Brazilian), and Indigenous (native-Brazilian). Brazil's race classification is based on a color continuum. Telles's (2004) work in Brazil shows that "Racialization occurs on a color gradient where the meaning attached to different skin colors account for different levels of discrimination" (p. 218). Sheriff (2001) also notes how racialized the discourse of color is, i.e., Black people are viewed more negatively than people with lighter skin color. Monk (2016) finds that skin color tends to be a better predictor of income and educational differences than people's racial self-identification. Following the IBGE racial/ethnical classification and examples from Black and feminist movements, I use the Afro-Brazilian or Afro-descendant category throughout my study, which combines Black and brown populations.

Whitening and *racial democracy* are also crucial terms in this research. My use of the terms is shaped by Telles (2004): "Whitening and racial democracy, the twin pillars of Brazil's racial ideology, have been rooted in a profound belief that miscegenation is a historical fact that makes Brazil unique. Whitening took a negative view of Brazil's miscegenation, and racial democracy promoted miscegenation as Brazil solution to racism. Brazil's ideology of whitening sought to rectify scientifically based fears of the nineteenth century that its extensive miscegenation would doom Brazil to perpetual underdevelopment" (p. 45). As part of the whitening, the Brazilian state passed immigration policies to "increase the number of white

Europeans in the population, hoping that the mixing with the native population would accelerate the elimination of blacks and dark *mestiços"* (Vianna, 1938, cited in Silva, 2007, p. 235-6). Racial democracy states that racial differences are fluid and conditioned by class, and that racial discrimination is mild and largely irrelevant in Brazil (Telles, 2004). Whitening and racial democracy ideologies had real effects on underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilian women in higher education. Examining these effects will shed light on how scholars and government officials viewed Afro-descendants and how their views changed over time.

Conceptual Framework

In this study, I use an intersectional theoretical lens that accounts for race, class, gender, and geography for understanding inequalities of Afro-Brazilian women. This approach is inspired by US and Brazilian Black feminisms, which serve as guides for exploring and understanding the phenomenon of underrepresented Afro-Brazilian women in higher education. Citing Cardoso (2016), Mitchell-Walhour and Santos (2021) state that "Black feminism in Brazil is a tool used by Black women even when it is not named (Cardoso, 2016) and is a framework used in academic writing to offer more complete analysis of racialized, classed, and gendered structures that shape Black women's daily experiences" (p. 11). Black feminism in the US is especially important for its intersectional inquiry, which suggests that multiple, overlapping systems of oppression shape individual and group lives in complex ways, making it an appropriate theoretical framework for Afro-Brazilian women's multiple identities and roles (Almeida, 2018; Akotirene, 2018; Carvalho, 2003, 2006; Hernandez, 2011; Lorber, 2010; Lutz et al., 2011; Mitchell et al., 2014; Museus & Griffin, 2011). According to Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), "intersectionality is a useful heuristic for advancing nuanced understanding of the circumstances and conditions that limit or expand life chances opportunities" (p. 111). Similarly,

Patricia Hill Collins (1991) notes, “Black feminist thought fosters a fundamental paradigmatic shift in how we think about oppression. By embracing a paradigm of race, class, and gender as interlocking systems of oppression, Black feminist thought reconceptualizes the social relations of domination and resistance” (1990, p. 222).

Contrary to approaches that simply add other variables to gender, intersectional theory sheds light on interconnected systems of oppression in Black women’s lives in higher education. The theory challenges the second wave feminist agenda, which has often relied on universalism that assumes all women’s experiences are the same. Chandra Talpade Mohanty speaks to this problem: “application of the notion of women as a homogenous category to women in the third world colonizes and appropriates the pluralities of the simultaneous location of different groups of women in social class and ethnic frameworks; in doing so it ultimately robs them from their historical and political agency” (cited in Mann & Huffman, p. 67, 2005). This position ignores complexity of geographic location, religious background, and cultural influence by proposing that gender oppression (i.e., patriarchy) is most significant. Using intersectional theory helps me place Afro-Brazilians’ race, class, and gender identities at the center of inquiry. For instance, a Black male’s race is an impairment, and his gender is a privilege, contrary to white women for whom race is a privilege and gender is a hindrance. In Brazil as in the US, the social status of Black women and white women has never been the same. This not to deny that both groups face sexist victimization. Still, along with their experiences of slavery, Black women continue to face more violence than white women do through physical abuse and femicide, social discrimination, and cultural denigration (Figueiredo, 2018).

Along with Black feminist theory, an intersectional lens is also necessary for understanding inequalities of Afro-Brazilian women and their realities in higher education.

Unlike approaches that simply add other variables to gender, intersectionality reveals interconnected oppressions in Black women's lives and makes the race, class, and gender identities of Afro-Brazilians central to my inquiry.

Black feminist theory and intersectionality are better suited to analyzing Afro-Brazilian women's marginalization in higher education than are mainstream and second-wave feminist thought. As bell hooks notes:

> When black people are talked about, sexism militates against the acknowledgement of the interests of black women; when women are talked about, racism militates against recognition of black female interests. When black people are talked about, the focus tends to be on black men; and when women are talked about, the focus tends to be on white women. (1981, p. 7)

In Brazil, enactment of affirmative action policies provides more college opportunities for Afro-Brazilian women. Therefore, the contribution of Black feminist thought as a paradigm transformed knowledge and political empowerment to reveal unjust power relations regarding race, class, gender, sexuality, and national intersections of oppressions. The paradigm improves understanding of Afro-Brazilian women's underrepresentation and theorizes about social domination and resistance in higher education (Collins, 2009).

There must be more support systems to ensure Afro-Brazilian women's success outside academia. For members of this group to reap higher education's benefits, gender needs consideration as an analytical tool for revealing their persistently unequal gendered and racial standings in Brazilian society. Afro-Brazilian feminists have critiqued ways in which racist and sexist discourses and practices reproduce and maintain structures of inequality in Brazil. Nationally, "Afro-Brazilian feminists have also sought increased influence in state bodies and to

make feminist practices and demands reflective of black women through the integration of an intersectional framework" (qtd. in Franklin, 2011, p. 151) as described by Black Brazilian feminist Sueli Carneiro:

> The unity of women's struggle in our societies depends, in general, not only on our capacity to overcome the inequalities generated by the historical masculine hegemony, but also requires that we surmount the complementary ideologies of the system of oppression, as is the case with racism . . . Afro-Brazilian feminists have realized the similarities of black women's experiences across national borders and have looked to initiate cross-border dialogues in their interconnected nature of their struggles. (p. 152)

Despite the influence of transnational feminist dialogues, studies of Afro-Brazilian women's experiences and socioeconomic status were scarce (Caldwell, 2007). Since then, research on Afro-Brazilians has increased in areas such as access and permanence in higher education (Gois, 2008), and discrimination based on race, class, and gender (Biroli & Miguel, 2015; Layton & Smith, 2022).

Contributions of first and second wave feminists, the former involving political access or suffrage and the latter involving access to higher education, have increased women's access to higher education. However, this has not always translated into increased career opportunities (David, 2014). This is especially evident when analyzing Black women's access to higher education in Brazil, because it is an incomplete assessment of gender inequality for all members of society. As noted by David (2014), "The claim that gender equality has been achieved usually refers to the question of the balance of male and female students, whether undergraduate or graduate degrees and courses" (p. 7). Sex becomes the focus in the quest to find out why males and females are under- or overrepresented in some fields but not in others. Thus, gender parity in

education does not translate to gender equality, and Afro-Brazilian women's underrepresentation is not visible in higher education.

Most intellectuals and activists working to dismantle the racism that typifies conventional knowledge production in Brazil have been slow to unveil sexism. Work that concentrates on racial exclusion usually adds gender to a cumulative set of disadvantages. As Le Bon notes (2007), "Often the focus is limited to the disadvantages encountered by women in the labor market and education, possibly because this is the way in which women's experience most resembles men's" (p. 56). In order to reverse this reality, future research should give more attention to women's differences relevant not only to sexist oppression, but also to racial and ethnic oppression.

Like Afro-Brazilian feminists, Joan W. Scott (1986) advocates a theoretical lens that analyses women, men, and gender because she believes that patriarchy ignores "how gender inequality structures all other inequalities" (p. 1058). Scott suggests that feminist historians can reveal traditional theory's inadequacies in explaining men's and women's persistent inequalities. According to Scott, gender has two definitions. The first describes gender construction and asserts that gender relationships can be used to "discuss race, ethnicity, or any social process" and "to clarify and specify how one needs to think about the effect of gender in social and institutional relationships" (p. 1069). Second, gender creates and enforces power relations through subordination of women by men. In Scott's view, "gender is a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated." Power is constructed to create gender distinctions and imbalances. This is how power manifests itself, as it does with race and class. Furthermore, Scott suggests politics is another area where gender is useful for historical inquiry. Following tradition, Brazil's politics continues to resist women's participation and gender

inclusion. Scott adds that it is most important to recognize that "changes in gender relationships can be set off by views of the needs of the state" (p. 1071). Afro-Brazilian women and men can attest to this assumption. During the 1930s, when the Brazilian government used Afro-Brazilians to show the world that Brazil lived in a racial democracy, there were efforts to highlight Black men's participation in soccer, along with sexual objectification of Black people.

Scott also asserts that "attention to gender is often not explicit, but it is nonetheless a crucial part of the organization of equality and inequality" (p. 1073). "High or low politics" is how governments decide which matters receive priority. Gender issues are generally not considered high politics. As Scott reminds us: "Gender is one of the recurrent references by which political power has been conceived, legitimated, and criticized." Scott suggests that we understand sexual difference in relation to the past and the cultures of the time to avoid fixed, universal, and ahistorical analysis. Only then can we make sense of our world and of how the subjects of analysis used the ideology of gender. This applies to how Afro-Brazilians face problems in politics, such as political parties' use of stereotypes of women and people of Afro-descent as "passive, irrational, dependent, and lacking in leadership and entrepreneurial ability" (Oliveira, 1999, p. 168, qtd. in Le Bon (2007, p. 168). Afro-Brazilian women's absence from traditional politics contrasts with their participation in community organizations and social movements for constructing self-esteem and common identities. In *Geographies of Power: Black Women Mobilizing Intersectionality in Brazil,* Perry (2016) notes: "This invisibility reflects a general lack of knowledge about the lives of black women in Brazil, the brutality of their experiences with systems of oppression, and their painful political trajectories" (p. 103).

Caldwell & Telles (2004) note the significance of higher education in preserving Brazil's race and class hierarchies, arguing that public measures (i.e., race and class affirmative action quotas) could counteract these hierarchies. According to David (2014),

> Even though many women have started to benefit from their countries' improved education systems, they face barriers to the same work opportunities available to men. Women continue to confront discrimination in jobs, disparities in power, voice, and political representation and the laws that are prejudicial on their basis of their gender. As a result, well-educated women often end up in jobs where they do not use their full potential and skill. (p. 33)

This is true for Afro-Brazilians, who are overrepresented as higher education students, but not as educators. In 2019, for the first time Afro-Brazilian women represented 27% of public higher education students followed by 25% of white women (University World News 2021). Thus, the gender gap in education has not allowed women to fill occupational and salary gaps. Afro-Brazilian women's access to higher education has surpassed that of white women, but Afro-Brazilian women started at a lower level than whites did. In 1996, white women had 5.9% (15 or more years of schooling) while Black women had only 1.1% (Le Bon 2007, p. 61).

Therefore, access to quality education shapes gender and race roles by reinforcing differing expectations and opportunities for Blacks and whites, and for men and women. For Afro-Brazilian women, this is a problem in the job market because their educational achievement does not yield its full economic benefits. Afro-Brazilians and women continue to face wage and job discrimination. Afro-Brazilian women remain "clustered in the lowest economic strata . . . those who attempted to climb the social ladder continued to experience discrimination" (Lovell, 1994, p. 11). Brazil's job market puts Afro-Brazilian women on the bottom; white men remain

on top, followed by white women and Afro-Brazilian men. In 2011, Black women represented 61.6% of domestic workers (Bernardino-Costa, 2014). A World Bank study in 2010 found that "Afro-Brazilian women earn less than white women and men with the same level of education. On average, Afro-Brazilian women earn US $2.50 per hour compared to US $4.02 for white women and 15.6 reales US $5 for white men. Afro-Brazilian women who completed secondary education earn half the wage of white men with the same level of education" (Ceratti, 2017). Higher education, along with its processes and outcomes, needs separate examination for Black and white Brazilian women's inequality to be redressed. Gender needs consideration in research on higher education, not only because of variations in socio-economic and racial inequalities, but also to make Afro-Brazilian women's experiences in higher education visible.

Paulo Freire, Pedagogy, and Autonomy

Paulo Freire's book *Pedagogy of Freedom* (1998) is especially important to this dissertation because of its ideas on pedagogy and autonomy. "Autonomy," Freire writes, "is the result of a process involving various and innumerable decisions," a view that is relevant to Afro-Brazilian women on their paths to higher education both as students and as faculty (p. 98). Freire develops his ideas on autonomy by associating pedagogical practice with aesthetics and ethics, noting that they are inseparable human conditions with the same finality - the exercise to liberate the person of her/his biological condition and guarantee her/his position in the world. Thus, pedagogical practices help liberate wo/men of unfinishedness and indeterminations as not simply *being in the world* but also position them as *being with the world.* Freire notes, "The fact that I perceive myself to be in the world, with the world, with others, brings with it a sense of 'being-with' constitutive of who I am that makes my relationship to the world essential to who I am" (p. 55).

Freire's affirmation of autonomy posits important meanings. First, "human unfinishedness" is the proper element of all practices because wo/men realize they should not accept reality as a given and biological conditions as determined. When they realize their presence in the world, wo/men are affected (aesthetics) by this perception, and thus refuse to have their existence conditioned to any kind of determinism, biological or social. Second, the fight to transform wo/men's unfinishedness to the human condition represents the historical process of building their autonomy (freedom) as human beings. Third, the practice of human auto-production is not dissociated from thought, nor can it be taken as individualistic practice disconnected from other human beings and the world itself. Finally, it also indicates that feeling, acting, thinking and being, which are categorized as hierarchical forms of knowledge production, act together as a liberating pedagogical exercise.

In addition, Freire is attentive to various legitimate sources of knowledge that produce reality and guarantee the positions of wo/men in the world. Much of this knowledge reveals itself as pedagogical practices that may prevent dehumanization of humanity. These can serve as instruments of liberation. Therefore, these pedagogical practices are important to critically analyzing political-economic-social causes that have been deteriorating universal principles of human relationships with the world and with other human beings for Afro-Brazilian women.

Chapter 2 provides historical and political context for my study. Chapter 3 presents the literature from a diverse body of research consisting of recent findings that help me support and address the theoretical framework, research questions, and phenomenon of this study, which is a guide for exploring and understanding underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilian women educators. In Chapter 4, the research design and methodological approach is presented. Chapter 4 represents results and findings of the study, while Chapter 5 discusses Freire, intersectionality, and their

roles in the research. The chapter also concludes the study by presenting summary of results, interpretation of findings, research limitations, and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 2

Historical and Political Context

Afro-Brazilian women educators are underrepresented in higher education. After reading Jose Jorge de Carvalho's (2006) article *O confinamento racial do mundo academico brasileiro* (The Brazilian racial academic confinement world) about overrepresentation of white faculty by 99% at public universities in 1999, I decided to investigate Afro-Brazilian women's paths to higher education at IFBA. In 2019, over 55% of the population self-identified as Black or Brown (IBGE, 2019). Even though the presence of Afro-descendant faculty increased to 16%, they continued to be highly underrepresented in higher education nationally (https://www.ufsm.br/midias/arco/ufsm-docentes-negros/). For instance, in December 2019, out of 5000 educators at the University of Sao Paulo, only 2.1% self-identified as Afro-Brazilian (Folha de Sao Paulo, December 2019). Taking these figures into account, the purpose of this qualitative study is to examine, understand, and describe the phenomenon of underrepresentation from the perspective of eighteen Afro-Brazilian women IFBA educators. My study seeks to make Afro-Brazilian women's journeys visible and increase their presence in the higher education literature.

First, this chapter provides brief history of political and economic contexts of higher education in Brazil to situate Afro-Brazilian exclusion. Second, discussion of racial democracy and whitening ideology is imperative to understanding Afro-Brazilians' continuing underrepresentation. Finally, the chapter addresses activism by Afro-Brazilians who seek to end this underrepresentation.

Higher Education in Brazil: Early 1800s to present

In 1808, the first colleges were established after the Portuguese royal family arrived in Brazil to escape the Napoleonic invasions of Portugal (Durham, 2003). Higher education was established mainly in medicine, surgery, economics, agriculture, chemistry, design, and mechanical drawing. Early as the 17th century, the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) was influential in expanding and controlling the Brazilian colony's educational system. African, Afro-Brazilian, and white women were not allowed access to the first established schools (Grover, 1993). At the time, the church provided religious, vocational, primary, and extensive education for some of the Indigenous people and sons of the white elite. Secondary education was reserved for men and children of landowners to do advance work at Coimbra, Portugal (Comparato, 1987).

With the fall of Napoleon, Dom Joao VI returned to Portugal while leaving his son Pedro I behind to govern Brazil. In 1822 Pedro I proclaimed Brazil's independence and established the Brazilian Empire. The Constitution of 1824 provided everyone the right to attain elementary education. However, enslaved and emancipated men and women were prohibited from attending schools (Tobias, 1972). Only in 1888 was slavery finally ended, and a year later landowners and the military forced the royal family back to Portugal. Brazil's first republican government was established in 1889 (Siss, 2003).

Toward the end of the 19th century, an economic gap between Southern and Northern Brazil widened. For example, in Rio Grande do Sul, the public school system provided "good quality education to all students" and "many opportunities exist[ed] for youths from all walks of life" (Levine, 1999, p. 89). The well-organized, well-funded public school system was founded only in the southern and urban areas, where economic progress was taking place. During the years of the Republic (1822-1889), Ghirardelli (2008) notes that Brazil's illiteracy

rate remained at 75%; some states offered no free secondary schools (p. 33). When they did offer secondary schools, their model was based on the French *lycée.* Required traditional subjects were numerous and difficult and did not reflect local realities (Haussman & Haar, 1978). This practice prevented even the best students from being admitted to higher education.

Although higher education expanded from 1889 to the 1930s, the Republic did not provide the masses with a public education, which would have helped them participate in Brazil's economic development (Haussman & Haar, 1978). Afro-Brazilians in general and Afro-Brazilian women specifically were kept in occupations that were common for them during colonization. They were mainly domestic servants and sexual objects for whites in patriarchal Brazil (Caldwell, 2007; Meade, 2010; Saffiote, 1978). Women access to higher education was granted in 1881 after the imperial decree, however due to previous barriers of primary education that focused on white women's moral and social role as wife and mother and high school courses that failed to qualify them for college. Black women educational exclusion continue in contemporary Brazil.

Regarding schooling, the Vargas government (President, 1930-1937; Dictator, 1937-1945; President, 1951-1954) structured and controlled primary and secondary education from above. Responsibility for school management and administration remained with state and municipal authorities or in private hands. Although an education research center, the *Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira* or National Institute for Pedagogic Studies (INEP) was founded in 1937 (Schwartzman, 2005), the slow pace of growth in higher education during this period was notable, according to Hausmann & Haar (1978).

Under the Capanema Ministry and the Constitution of 1937, vocational education and universal primary schooling for the masses expanded. This marked division of public and private schools based on socio-economics status. Most students had access to practical education in

agriculture, industry, and commerce. However, higher education was considered unnecessary for some groups. Technical schools providing basic practical education were the responsibility of industrialists and the private sector, providing and expanding education for lower-class children (Schwartzman, 2003). Therefore, higher education was still an upper-class privilege.

In 1947 Minister of Education Clement Mariani attempted to change the educational system to better prepare Brazil for demands of social and economic development. One year later a comprehensive education bill was sent to Congress. Liberals, conservatives, and proponents of centralized and decentralized educational systems debated the bill's provisions for thirteen years. The Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB) "once again decentralized education by setting a dual system: federal and state" (Haussman & Haar, 1978, p. 37). The LDB concentrated on primary and secondary education, but higher education remained unchanged.

The Federal Education Council (FEC) was established in 1961. This body oversaw all levels of education, approved statutes and bylaws of colleges and universities, and implemented curriculum guidelines for college degree programs. This period marked expansion of higher education in Brazil. For example, 22 federally financed public institutions, six Roman Catholic institutions, and one independent nonsectarian institution were founded in 1961 (Haussman & Haar, 1997). Also, the Guidelines and Bases of Brazilian Law (LDB) in 1961 recognized that all high school courses were guaranteed which made possible for women who were training to become a teacher to take the college entrance exam. Thus, in the 1960s Brazilian women increased their access to higher education and by 1970s the gender gap started to reverse (Beltrao & Alves, 2009).

The period of 1964-1984 was marked by military dictatorship in Brazil (Gonzales & Hasenbalg, 1982). President Joao Goulart supported the advance of popular organizations in the

form of "*Reformas de Base"* implemented, and he was overthrown by the military in 1964. This *coup d'état* to install the dictatorship was carried out by the armed forces and the Brazilian elite with the false pretense of stopping corruption, chaos, and communism. The failed socialist reform consisted of several measures that dissatisfied the elite: land expropriation, nationalization of oil refineries, electoral reform by guaranteeing the votes of Brazil's illiterate population, and university reforms, among others. Cruz (2005) notes that the Brazilian expansion of higher education in the postwar era was carried out by the military regime. The privatization and vocationalist policies helped expand access to Blacks and white Brazilians, and it was the result of USAID development projects.

However, the military regime pushed the idea of an economic miracle, *milagre economico*, and Brazilian modernization. The economic miracle was consolidated by a triple alliance of the military government, multinational corporations, and the business class, marked by the overflow of foreign capital into the country and the excess of manual labor that migrated from the northeastern poor region of Brazil, known as the rural exodus (Gonzales & Hasenbalg, 1982). The last factor was made possible first by the excess of cheap manual labor that secured the economic growth project, and subsequently by the people who populated shanty towns or *favelas* in large urban centers. As noted by Gonzales & Hasenbalg, "dislocating from the rural to the city, or from Northeastern to the Southeastern, and concentrated on the job market that didn't require professional qualification, the Black worker did not know the benefits of the economic miracle" (p. 14).

In 1999, 8% of Blacks between 15 and 25 years old were still illiterate, while white illiteracy was at 3%. Furthermore, 5% of Blacks between 7 and 13 years of age did not attend school and whites represented 2% in the same age group. Results of secondary education were alarming for both Blacks and whites. Among whites between 18 and 23 years old, only 37%

completed secondary education, while 84% of Blacks of the same age did not (Henriques, 2001, p. 15). According to the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Brazil's population was approximately 190 million in 2008; Afro-Brazilians represented 96 million and whites 90 million.

Chapman and Austin (2002) suggested that tuition and fees are not impediments to educational opportunity in higher education for lower income students, but several factors related to attendance are important. For instance, there is the geographic location of higher education institutions, in addition to rural areas' lack of tertiary education sites. Other factors include costs of having to move to urban areas and the quality of secondary education compared to educations of higher income students who live mostly in urban areas and attend quality schools. These factors made Afro-Brazilian access to higher education especially difficult.

In Brazil, public higher education institutions are more prestigious compared to private higher education establishments. The high status of public universities is due to low ratios of students to professors and to limited numbers of academic spaces available for each academic major. Admission to public universities is also based on *vestibular*, a highly competitive entrance exam that continued to be used in some public institutions. However, *vestibular* was replaced by the National High School Exam or *Exame Nacional do Ensino Medio* (ENEM) in 1998 (http://portal.mec.gov.br/enem-sp-2094708791) as Brazil sought to democratize access to higher education. Public universities are tuition-free and recognized for academic prestige and credibility. Middle- and upper-class students usually attend private primary and secondary schools, then take the entrance exam ENEM to attend tuition-free public universities. Students from lower classes, most of whom are people of color, attend public schools that are inferior in quality to private schools.

Brazil is the world's most elitist country as represented in private institutions of higher education, with 90% of students enrolled in private colleges in the fourth and fifth quintiles coming from the wealthiest families when compared to Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, and Uruguay (Espinoza, 2008). Expansion of higher education came with a price marked by low quality institutions. This is not unique to Latin America; however, the challenge is to provide students of different ability levels with quality educations. Latin America has implemented private higher education to expand access to all students. However, in reality, the following examples highlight the unequal system: Chile, Brazil, El Salvador, and Venezuela move graduating students from top high schools from higher income brackets to high quality and public institutions of higher education, while lower income students pay to attend inferior, private institutions of higher education (Espinoza, 2008). This expansion also has provided access to tertiary education to formerly excluded populations such as women, lower income students, and underrepresented groups based on racial, ethnic, religious, and disability identities (Bonal, 2004).

Until 2001, despite the pressure of civil society in the form of Black and Feminist movements, there were no educational policies that provided access to higher education to Brazil's lower-class population, which is majority Afro-Brazilian. This reality started to change with expansion and interiorization of higher education, which I address below.

Urban versus Rural Expansion of Higher and Vocational Education

Expansion of the education process as the right of Brazilian citizens was insured with the Federal Constitution of the 1988s, which established rights for inclusion and reduction of inequalities. According to Oliveira et al. (2019), the social rights foreseen in the Brazilian Constitution was a regulatory framework for education, especially in higher education. However, due to Brazil's economic difficulties, such guarantees did not come to fruition during the 1990s.

Prior to the democratic Constitution of the 1988s, Brazil's focused on vocational education of the lower income population of which Afro-Brazilians are the majority in the country. Since 1909, the Schools of Apprentice Craftsmen (or *Escolas de Aprendizes Artifices*) passing through the regulation of industrial education in 1942, with Getulio Vargas and Gustavo Capanema, followed by the educational reforms of military governments and the creation of Federal Technological Education Centers (CEFETs), from 1978, achieving configuration of professional education with the passage of Education Guidelines and Bases Act (LDB) in 1996, until arriving at the current formation of professional and technological education, when the Federal Institutes were established in 2008 (Moraes & Albuquerque, 2020).

Scholars note that Article 41 of Law 9.394/96 opened the possibility for professional certification by recognizing that knowledge acquired in professional education (including the job market) may be subject to evaluation, recognition, and certification to continue or complete studies (Pacheco, 2011). Thus, professional certification in its broadest sense signifies that it can be obtained with formal knowledge required in labor activities. However, the law states that Federal Institutes (*Federal Institutos,* IFs) will be in charge of applying the competency assessment exam to evaluate and certify work skills. The role of the IFs is quite relevant, considering that many Brazilians do not have access to processes of recognition of professional competencies or proof of their knowledge for the purpose of professional practice and or reinsertion into the formal education structure with a view to improving and expanding their knowledge.

Schwartzman (2016) noted that in the past, professional education in Brazil, was seen as a second-class alternative for youth who did not get into academic high school. Today, professional education is preferred for large parts of the population as an option of equal or

greater value. This is true for the more immediate job opportunities it provides and for the practical experience and chance to continue studying. For instance, the National Household Sample or *Pesquisa Nacional de Amostra de Domicílios* (PNAD) study found the per capita family income of technical courses students was 11.7% higher than that of traditional high school students, which demonstrates an economic advantage for families that prefer professional and technical education. The study also revealed that technicians' income is 20% higher than that of traditional high school graduates (IBGE, 2017).

The 21st century begins with improvements in the labor market and the advance of new public policies that sought to undo Brazil's elitist higher education population by reducing unequal access by the poor and Afro-Brazilians to higher education (Oliveira et al., 2019). This trajectory is visible through educational policies in the form of expansion of access to higher education and creation of new public federal universities (Dias & Castro, 2020). Furthermore, there has been expansion and interiorization of vocational education in the form of Federal Network of Vocational, Scientific, and Technological Education, *Rede Federal de Educacao Profissional, Cientifica e Tecnologica* (RFEPCT), of which IFBA is part.

Starting from the prerogative that access to education became insured by the 1988 Constitution, the framework for realization of this right became visible with adoption of mandatory primary and secondary education by the Brazilian state (Oliveira et al., 2019). Despite the difficulties for student retention and regional disparities, enrollment in higher education increased after 2006. Consequently, there was an intense demand on the part of the population to access public institutions of higher education. However, for reasons this study does not address, public institutions of higher education failed to respond to this demand. Private institutions did meet this demand; however, monthly tuition fees were not feasible for lower classes and Afro-

Brazilians. According to Catani & Hey (2007, p. 416), from the national average of 17.3% of enrolled students in Institutions of Higher Education or Instituicoes de Ensino Superior (IES), there is a huge regional disparity. For instance, the South and Southeast, respectively, have 24.7% and 20.8% compared to the Northeast, which has 9.5%.

To address this unequal access, two policies were implemented. First, there was expansion of educational credit and the University Program for All or *Programa Universidade para Todos* (PROUNI). The educational credit was first created during Brazil's military government, but President Fernando Henrique Cardoso restructured and expanded it in 1999, renaming it to Higher Education Student Financing Fund or *Fundo de Financiamento ao Estudante do Ensino Superior.* This program offered lower interest rates and three years to start payment after graduation. It also sought to give access to private institutions of higher education to students whose per capita income was 1 to 5 minimum salaries. The Prouni was created during President Luis Inacio da Silva's administration (2003-2010). This program offers tax credit to private institutions in exchange for full scholarships to families whose income per capita is of 1 minimum salary (US $245) or partial scholarship to family's whose income per capita is between 1 and 3 minimum salaries. However, in 2007, partial scholarships were not fully filled because families for whom the program was designed could not pay 50% of the monthly tuition fee for the courses (Catani & Hei, 2007).

Although the educational credit and Prouni measures both expanded access to higher education for lower income and Afro-Brazilian populations (Vieira, 2017), the measures did not alter the configuration of the stratified higher education system significantly. However, it did maintain the hegemony of private institutions of higher education. Such institutions focus mainly on teaching without generating significant policies of articulation of teaching with research and

extension. This situation preserves inequality in training and qualification of students, providing access to lower income students to lower quality institutions while medium to upper income students attain their educations at public and prestigious higher education institutions (Catani & Hei, 2007).

Even with implementation of the Program to Support the Plans for Restructuring and Expansion of the Federal Universities System in Brazil (REUNI) in 2007, whose objectives were to increase enrollments, raise average completion rates of undergraduate courses, equalize numbers of students enrolled by teachers, and offer new courses in regions of the interior of the country, problems remained. The expansion does not seem sufficient to meet needs of the vast majority of the most vulnerable population because it has not guaranteed a quality higher education due to the delay of students' rudimentary education, nor student retention and degree completion (Oliveira et al., 2019). It is important to note that expansion of higher education should not only seek to expand access to lower income and Afro-Brazilian students, but also must provide structural conditions for the proper functioning of institutions of higher education. This is especially relevant to implementation of research laboratories and expansion of the pool of education professionals with training levels sufficient to meet local and regional demands.

It is evident that other public policies sought to minimize this situation. These policies included the affirmative action policy (in the form of the quota program), the Unified Selection System or *Sistema de Selecao Unificada* (SISU), interconnected with the National High School Exam or *Exame Nacional do Ensino Medio* (ENEM), and the Evaluating the National Student Assistance Program or *Programa Nacional de Assistencia Estudantil* (PNAES). First, the quota program requires reserving places at public higher education institutions for students who finish primary and secondary education at public schools. Second, the ENEM ensures students' broad

competition through performance (by ranking in the score in all areas of knowledge) and academic mobility via SISU (i.e., students can apply to any institution of higher education in the country, contrary to the *vestibular* that are still administered by a few elite universities). Finally, the PNAES is intended to support students to remain in their chosen institutions of higher education with scholarships.

Access to higher education has been implemented in Brazil based on differentiation to remedy historical inequality in the form of affirmative action for Afro-descendant and Indigenous populations. In this case, equity means addressing unequal treatment of people and differential assistance to undo effects of less privileged places in society (McCowan, 2007).

Until 2019, one of Brazil's challenges in higher education was more equitable racial representation in enrollment, which fails to reflect the overall Brazilian population. Petruccelli (2004) finds that only 5.8 million of the 85 million Brazilian persons over 25 years old completed undergraduate degrees. Their racial representation is as follows: 83% are white students, while Black, mixed race, Asian, and Indigenous represent the remaining 17% of students. Blacks represent just 2.5% of the university student population.

Racial Democracy and Whitening Ideology

Legal and civil status of free and enslaved Blacks could not be separated from their social status during Brazil's colonial period. However, as Caldwell (2007) notes, with the increase in numbers of emancipated Blacks, colonial separation was based not only on race (black or white) but also on civil status (enslaved or free). Color classification already defined social status. For instance, the terms Black and *preta* were used for slaves and *senhora of cor* or "Mrs. Colored" for a free mixed race or Black woman (p. 52).

Colonial construction of gender was also based on concepts of race, color, and social status, excluding Africans and Afro-Brazilians from colonial norms of womanhood and femininity (Caldwell, 2007). Black women were also forced to be prostitutes, concubines, and mistresses. Saffiote (1978) posits that enslaved and free Black women in domestic servitude were sexually exploited by white men, thus allowing white women to hold onto ideals of femininity and womanhood in the form of virtue. Conversely, Black women, whether free or enslaved, were expected to be accessible sexually to white men, which rendered them stereotypical of lower moral standards (Meade, 2010).

In Brazil, racial classification is not only arbitrary but also carries several limitations (Oliveira, 2004; Telles, 2004). As a social category, race is ideological. However, racism is a crime in Brazil. Brazil expressed racism violently, creating gaps between Blacks and whites by perpetuating inequality of access to human, social, and basic rights. As noted in a United Nations (2013) press release: "The historic injustices continue to deeply affect the lives of millions of Afro-Brazilians and are present at all levels of society. Black people in the country still face structural, institutional, and interpersonal racism" (p. 2).

Brazil's racial democracy myth was possible due to two factors: Brazilian population miscegenation and whitening ideology (Munanga, 2019). Scholars note the process of miscegenation sought to erase Blacks from the population while increasing white European population through immigration (Silva, 2007). Enslaved African women coerced by colonizers helped carry out the miscegenation of the Brazilian population (Ribeiro, 2018). In addition, the state subsidized massive immigration from Europe to replace Afro-Brazilian workers, both in the field and in the factory, thereby to "whiten" Brazil's population, claiming Blacks had no work skills and turning to Europe for a supply of laborers. However, Graham (1999) notes that

Afro-Brazilians not only had skills to compete with European workers, but in some cases had skills superior to those of Europeans.

While European immigrants were given work, free transportation, housing, and food, Blacks were not. Afro-Brazilian women remained underrepresented. European immigration was favored to whiten the population (Skidmore, 1974). As Afro-descendants, both male and female, migrated to urban areas, they were unable to enter the labor market because employers preferred European workers who already outnumbered Blacks. Miscegenation according to skin color and physical attributes was visible through categorization of the whole population, to the detriment of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, the Vargas Era was marked by political reforms, economic change, modernization, and most important, by nationalism. By promoting *carnaval* and *futebol*, Vargas showed the world "Brazil's self-image of multiracial harmony and festiveness" (Telles, 2004, p. 37). This effort found help from sociologist Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande and Senzala, The Masters and Slaves*. The book became a great tool to propagate the belief that Indigenous, European, and African cultures were creating a national Brazilian culture where all were valued equally. Vargas promoted "racial democracy" by including underprivileged Black men and women and disguising the white supremacist ideology of "whitening." This strategy aimed to make it irrelevant for Afro-Brazilians to protest their underprivileged place in Brazilian society.

Bailey (2004), Omi (1994), Telles (2004), and Winant (2009) reveal how racial democracy affected race relations in Brazil, first by the belief in a united society built through miscegenation of Europeans, Africans, and Indigenous peoples. Second, by eliminating the concept of race, Brazil failed to help the subordinated class along color lines, but attributed inequality to class. This enabled the upper class to justify their status and undermine social

movements based on race. Effects of racial democracy relate to the core of contemporary academic and public policy discussions regarding racism and antiracism in Brazil. Various discussions suggest that racial democracy is a myth and that most Brazilians acknowledge discrimination against Afro-Brazilians and the need to address inequality. The government implemented affirmative action at federal universities and federal institutes in the form of a quota program, reserving 50% of spots based on racial-ethnic and/or social students' identification, or other types of affirmative action policy of access and/or permanence to Afro-Brazilian, Indigenous, people with disabilities, people with lower incomes, or students from the public educational system (Santos, et al., 2008). Furthermore, Bailey (2004) indicates that education is a stronger factor relating to racial inequality in Brazil. He adds that class-based identification is important because of extreme social class inequalities.

The Politics of Education in Brazil

Afro-Brazilian Movements: Early 20th Century - Present

At the beginning of the 20th century Afro-Brazilians mobilized for better living conditions. They founded several organizations including the Black Press. They aimed to fight racism and racial discrimination and "to overcome the exclusion of blacks from the labor market, the educational system, political activity, and civil society" (Nascimento, 2007, p. 122). They saw in education the means to fully participate in mainstream society and to attain full citizenship.

Afro-Brazilians Fighting for Education: Movements in Southeastern Brazil

The first three organizations established in the southern and southeastern regions of Brazil – the Black Press (1907), Black Brazilian Front (1931) and TEN (1944) – advocated for Afro-Brazilians' access to education while denouncing racism. In fact, the Brazilian Black Front

(BBF), the largest foundation at the time, was part of the Black press. BBF founded its own school and expanded education by providing night school courses. The Black Press had two roles: one for education and the other for protest. “These newspapers first seek to bring men of color together, give a sense of solidarity, set them on a path, and teach them to fight against the inferiority complex” (Bastide, qtd. in Nascimento, 2007, p. 123). Their lack of self-esteem stemmed from effects of the whitening ideology.

Development of Brazil’s Black press took two distinctive phases. The first took place in 1914 during World War I and saw implementation of a national policy providing Brazilians free public primary education. The second phase occurred in 1923 with founding of the newspaper *O Clarim* (*The Bugle*). Later titled *O Clarim d’Alvorada* (*The Bugle of the Dawn*), the newspaper “reminded readers of the black ancestors’ resistance and called on the community to organize and continue to fight” (Nascimento, 2007, p. 126). Several periodicals with similar themes appeared, including *O Progresso* (1931), *Promissão* (1932), and *Cultura Social e Esportiva* (1934), and *Voz da Raça* (1936) (Nascimento, 2007; Siss, 2003). These journals reveal determination to maintaining an independent ideological space for information whose purpose was to serve as an organizing vehicle for the Black community (Cardoso, 2002).

These activist efforts faced crisis in 1937 when President Vargas adjourned Congress and established a dictatorship. The newly founded Black Front party was banned from any political activity, unable to put the race question on the political agenda. By contrast, Vargas succeeded by placing the extremists on the right in opposition to those on the left, who were disappointed with liberalism. Many supported his new government, which he called *Estado Novo* (New State). While Vargas was autocratic and banished the Black Front and all other parties, he also passed legislation to protect Brazilian workers from immigrant competition in employment. This

measure allowed Blacks, regardless of their genders, to enter the "growing industrial labor force for the first time and be preferred for government employment" (Telles, 2004, p. 37). Despite the reform legislation, underrepresentation of Blacks in private sector employment persisted. After the 1950s, Black organizations sought to recover and value their Afro-Brazilian heritage as part of a process to dismantle their subaltern positions. Their actions were seen in literacy campaigns, conferences, meetings of congress, and conventions for various groups including intellectuals and academia (Nascimento, 2007; Siss, 2003). However, their advocacy was halted, first by the dictatorship instituted at the end of the 1930s, and last by the military regime established at the beginning of the 1960s. Advocacy resumed in the mid-1970s, marking the end of dictatorship and focusing on cultural and political demands. These took the forms of *Nucleo Cultural Afro-Brasileiro* (Center of Afro-Brazilian Culture, 1978), the *Ile Aiye* (1974), Unified Black Movement (*Movimento Negro Unificado*, MNU, 1978), and Black Women's Movements, among other organizations discussed below. Although the Black movements spent decades challenging the underprivileged position of Afro-Brazilians, some scholars conclude they first sought assimilation in white society (Andrews, 1991).

However, in *The Sorcery of Color: Identity, Race, and Gender*, Nascimento (2007) posits, "the black movements of the period 1914 to 1970 express continuity and coherence in building the foundations of the contemporary struggles and victories of the Afro-Brazilian movement" (p. 230). They had always demanded identities and citizenship and believed access to all levels of the educational system would prepare them to obtain citizenship rights, even though Brazil persisted in portraying Afro-Brazilian movements as insignificant.

The BBF had affiliates in Bahia, Pernambuco, Sergipe, Maranhao, Rio de Janeiro, Espirito Santo, Minas Gerais, and Rio Grande do Sul. All these states demanded rights to

education and citizenship. They also founded a school for children in their own headquarters with government-appointed teachers and offered adult literacy courses for adults. BBF members taught the courses for free and trained people as barbers and seamstresses.

Afro-Brazilians Fighting for Education: Movements in Northeastern Brazil

The Bahia Black Front

This organization was established in 1932 and followed programs like those of the Sao Paulo headquarters in offering literacy courses, the major educational demand of Afro-Brazilians. In addition to offering primary and courses in music, typing, and languages, Afro-Brazilian women led by organizing masked balls, parties, and philanthropic, cultural, and recreational events to enhance racial solidarity and pride. There were also lectures, conferences, and social interventions to help Blacks access the job market through establishment of an employment agency (Bacelar, 2001).

Scholars suggest the Black Front in Bahia was rejected by the *mestizo* elite, whose financial status leads members to identify as white despite their phenotype. This was contrary to the position of the Black Front in Sao Paulo. The group mobilized many socially ascendent Blacks and *mestizo* workers who were victims of exploitation and job market discrimination due to European immigration. Leadership of the Sao Paulo headquarters was also provided by middle class Blacks (Azevedo, 1996; Bacelar, 2001). While in Bahia, larger numbers of Blacks who sought to enter the job market or self-employment attained stable, modest material conditions. Thus, “the racial democracy in Bahia was clear” (Bacelar, 2001, p. 151). However, the Black Front in Bahia dismantled ideologies of equality or racial democracy by investigating Afro-Brazilians’ misery. This helped persuade poor Afro-Brazilians to unify based on race and find solidarity through education and political participation.

Afro-Brazilian's Strategies to Access Education: Culture and Politics

Ten Black Experimental Theater (TEN) Movement in Southeastern Brazil: Since the authoritarian regime impeded open demonstrations, Blacks had to come up with creative ways to organize. Some met in dancing clubs or gathered in the *terreiro* communities such as Candomblé to practice Afro-Brazilian religion. Others continued advocating for work and education for Blacks. In 1941, José do Patrocínio paved the way to establishing the Afro-Brazilian Movement for Education and Culture, an association that lasted until the 1950s. This movement helped Black women protest advertisements seeking only white people as domestic servants. Such ads always mentioned "good appearance," which was understood as a euphemism for looks associated with European descent (Nascimento, 2007, p. 138).

Notable among the movements and the media, TEN, founded by Abdias do Nascimento in 1944, asserted Black identity. This went against the national theme of racial democracy. TEN sought to create positive meanings for Blackness based on historical and cultural heritage of Africa and strayed from Eurocentric standards. TEN also acknowledged all "people and diverse cultures with their unique qualities" (Nascimento, 2007, p. 171). Their mission was to liberate Afro-Brazilians from positions assigned them in recreation, carnival, and folklore. However, TEN also realized that the only way to success would be through education.

The Brazilian government offered education to domestic and public servants and to people residing in favelas who had no formal occupations. TEN enabled them to read, act in plays, and provided other cultural activities, eventually changing their social marginalization. Literacy also allowed them to vote, long before the 1988 Constitution extended this right to people without literacy. TEN provided Afro-descendants with survival skills for the labor market and Brazilian society (Nascimento, 2007). Lelia Gonzales (1982) notes that TEN was the first

and largest post-abolition ideological movement, a milestone in the project of Afro-Brazilian political organization (p.24).

In Brazil, debates over affirmative action started in the second half of the 20th century. This began in the 1950s when the first Afro-Brazilian congressman demanded inclusion of men of color as party candidates. TEN advocated without success, seeking to develop Blacks' political leadership capacity by reserving a percentage of posts for Black candidates in Brazil's numerous political parties (Nascimento, 1982). Second, Abdias do Nascimento, a Black federal respresentative, presented Bill 1.332/1983 in the form of affirmative action advocating for Black people's access to education and employment, among other areas. The example mentioned above contradicts studies by Bourdieu & Wacquant (1999), Fry (2005), Maggie (2005), and Maggie & Fry (2004) that posit that affirmative action in Brazil is a transplant from affirmative action policy in the US, and not the result of Afro-Brazilians' long fight for the agenda of inclusion, dismatling of racial democracy, and antiracist policies.

Afro-Brazilian movements in Northeastern Brazil

The *Ile Aiye* (a carnival block) was founded in 1974 at the Curuzu, located in the most populated Liberty neighborhood. The *Ile Aiye* set a phase where the Bahia Black Movement employed African music, dance, and culture to demarcate spaces to denounce and combat racism in Salvador. They sought to change society's aesthetic references and carnival music by proposing to recover self-esteem and ethnic-racial identities of Afro-Bahians through the rescue of history and culture of African countries. As noted by Conceicao (1988), "the united black people who came together to dance and make the carnival block Ile Aiye were conscious that they were also doing politics in addition to culture" (p. 9).

After economic development from the Industrial Center of Camacari, living conditions of Afro-Brazilians inhibited from participating in carnival blocks improved. *Ile Aiye* was founded and only allowed Blacks to participate in reaffirming their African heritage to construct Black Brazilian identity. This was followed by establishment of carnival blocks *Araketu* and *Olodum* in 1979 and *Muzenza* in 1981, among others. These organizations' contributions are visible in their educational research of African and Afro-Brazilian history, which they employed to write music showcased in the parades of each of the aforementioned carnival blocks. The history of African and Afro-Brazilian exclusion from school curricula was only revealed at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, when *Ile Aiye* and *Olodum* strengthened education proposals with establishment of the *Mae Hilda* school and the *Projeto de Extensao Pedagogica* (The Pedagogic Extension Project) (Guimaraes, 2001), and *Escola Criativa Olodum* (Olodum Creative School) (Araujo, 1996).

In addition to *Ile Aiye*, the *Nucleo Cultural Afro-Brasileiro* (NCAB), the Afro-Brazilian Cultural Center, was established in the early 1970s in Salvador, Bahia by Manoel de Almeida Cruz, a Bahian sociologist (Silva, 2002). The NCAB is credited with setting forth an educational proposal during the 1970-1980s known as Interethnic Pedagogy (IP). IP's fundamental objective is to study and to research ethnocentrism (such as racial prejudice and transmission of racism) through the process of socialization or education in the family, at school, in global society, and mass media. This took place in addition to indicating/presenting educational measures to combat referred phenomena (Cruz, 1989). Moreover, the theater group *Palmares Inaron*, founded by activist Antonio Godi, appeared with a proposal like that of TEN in Sao Paulo: staging plays about the Black and Indigenous populations' experiences in Bahia.

However, based on political and cultural work by these Afro-Brazilian blocks, a new idea to establish the Black Movement in politics to dismantle Bahia's racial democracy emerged. Thus, the *Nego Group* was created in 1978, following an event to commemorate abolition of slavery at the Salvador city hall. Lelia Gonzalez presented a series of lectures attended by Black youth, teachers, and workers. Titled *Noventa anos de abolicao: Uma reflexao critica* (Ninety Years Post-abolition: A Critical Reflection), the lectures were an opportunity to learn about the untold abolition of slavery history through the perspective of Black Movement activists, leading to subsequent meetings and debates (Conceicao, 1988; Silva, 1997). Gonzales (1982) notes, "The [*Grupo Nego*] innovation was in fact that the racial question was explicitly articulated" (p.47).

After just two months in existence, the *Grupo Nego* in Bahia became known as predecessor of the MNU (Conceicao, 1988). The group was also divided with three divergent positions: 1) defending an individual Black perspective to maintain the status quo, 2) defending a socialist view, and 3) focusing on work from below. Scholars have suggested these three ideologically divergent lenses of the MNU reflected lack of understanding between culturalists and politicians. This is seen in comparison to regional differences; for instance, activists in Sao Paulo opted for political language, while in Salvador, the BBM prioritized cultural public demonstration as the route to political action. Members of *Nego Group* were artists, educators, bankers, and college students. Within the *Nego Group*, conflicts varied from fear of political repression, the racial question, and division of sexual labor. The men believed activism was best done by pamphleteering in the street and during carnival block rehearsals, while the women pushed for education and taught adult literacy (Conceicao, 1988).

Scholars posit that one major contribution of the MNU to the social development of Black people was continued advocacy to accessing education. Initially, this was to integrate

Blacks in Brazilian society, and subsequently to denounce the education system as Eurocentric, which denied them an ethnic-racial identity. In contrast, the MNU pushed for a parallel education that was pluricultural and implemented at public schools through actions of its members (Silva, 2002). Furthermore, the MNU demanded Afro-Brazilians have full citizenship, understanding that education was the major conduit to attaining mobility and social inclusion (D'Adesky, 2001). Silva (1988) notes: "The Brazilian educational system, from preschool to college, has obscured and distorted black population history and culture, both from Africa and Brazil while portraying Afro-Brazilians as inferior" (48). Black institutions have reversed this ideology in many ways since 1978. The MNU have denounced and demanded that the Education and Culture Ministry revise textbooks and fought for introduction of African history in the Brazilian history curriculum.

Inclusion of article IV, number 275 in Bahia Constitution notes, "it's the state's obligation to preserve and guarantee the integrity, the respectability and permanence of Afro-Brazilian religion, values, and specifically to promote adequate programs to teach Afro-Brazilians geography, history, communication and expression, social studies, art education at state institutions from elementary to higher education" (Santos, 2005a., p. 26). Thus, the article's implementation was one of the MNU's major achievements at the end of the 1980s. In the 1990s, the MNU pushed for creation of courses to help prepare Black students to enter the university by passing the *vestibular*. These educational initiatives were carried out by diverse entities, from educators to community organizers, to help a large part of the poor and Black population to not only enter college, but also to raise racial, gender, and class awareness parallel to the *vestibular* (Nascimento, 2005).

The first pre-*vestibular* course was created in Salvador in 1992 at the Steve Biko Institute. Its goal was to promote the Black population's social mobility through education and to recover ancestral culture and values while making it possible for this population to access higher education. This example was inspiration for many other courses implemented throughout Brazil, namely *Movimento Pre-Vestibular para Negros e Carentes* (Preparatory college entrance exam for Black and poor students, PVC) in Rio de Janeiro in 1993, *Projeto Educação para Afrodescendentes*, EDUCAFRO, Education Project for Afro descendants in Sao Paulo in 1997. These courses focused on racism and discrimination and were innovative for the MNU not just because they sought to include Blacks in higher education, but also for helping start debates about access and retention of Black students in public higher education institutions. As noted by Nascimento, "in the debate of educators and students of pre-vestibular for underprivileged blacks, racism and racial discrimination were important elements that constitute social inequalities, and thus in higher education composition; the affirmative action policies appear as proposal to social and racial rearrangement" (Nascimento, 2005, 154-55).

In Bahia, the first state public university to implement affirmative action policy was UNEB. The institution became a pioneer in Brazil's implementation of affirmative action in a public state university in 2002. Scholars posit that thanks to the Black movement and the academic community, UNEB was born with Bahian color and was committed to its region, Blackness, wilderness, poverty, educational problems, food, and health (Boaventura, 2009). Based on their academic-administration autonomy, the academic community inside UNEB presented a proposal to create a quota program reserving 40% of spots for Afro-Brazilian candidates in undergraduate and graduate programs (Anjos & Guedes, 2021).

In 2003 there were just four public universities with affirmative action in the form of a quota program, i.e., the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), State University Fluminense Darcy Ribeiro (UENF), UNEB, and in 2004, the University of Brasilia, (UNB) the first federal university to adopt the policy. During President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva's administration (2003-2010), 84 public higher education institutions (municipal, state, and federal institutes of education, science, and technology) implemented the quota system program based on racial-ethnic, social, or other types of affirmative action policy of access and/or permanence to Afro-Brazilian, Indigenous, people with disabilities, people with lower incomes, or students from the public educational system (Santos, et al., 2008). Although the affirmative action policy in the form of a quota program expanded during President Lula's government, affirmative action became Law 12.711 in 2012. Initially, this ensured that 59 federal universities and 38 federal institute reserved 50% of spots based on social and racial-ethnic students' identification during the administration of Brazil's first elected woman president, Dilma Rousseff (Anjos & Guedes, 2021; Santos, 2013).

This chapter provides a short historical overview of the politics and economics of education in Brazil while situating Afro-Brazilian exclusion. There is also discussion of racial democracy and white ideology to help illustrate Afro-Brazilians' unequal educational access, and finally, their activism to end their underrepresentation in higher education.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

This chapter analyzes gender inequality and higher education to understand benefits and drawbacks of gender parity in Afro-Brazilian women lives outcomes (Bradley, 2000; Jacobs, 1996; Mazzetti, Wedig, & Oliveira, 2020). There is also analysis of feminism's contributions to studies of gender inequality (Biroli & Miguel, 2015; Lorber, 2010; Venturini, 2017), and to racial and class inequality (Layton and Smith, 2017; Mariano & Carloto, 2016; Mitchell-Walthour, & Santos, 2022; Osorio, 2021). In addition, scholars address consequences of race and color categories (Bailey, 2008; Monk, 2016; Telles, 2004). Much research on education focuses on gender but this study also looks at hierarchical relations in education (Ferreira, Teixeira, Ferreira, 2022; Mitchell-Walthour & Santos, 2022; Scott, 2010), which is a key institution for understanding gender (Persell, James, Kang, & Snyder, 2006). Access and the expansion of higher education system are examined (Carvalhaes & Ribeiro, 2019; Carnoy et al. 2013; Durham, 2004; Gois, 2008; Hanson, Guilfoy, & Pillai, 2009; Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009; Knobel & Verhine, 2017; Perkins, 2015; Salto, 2018; Sampaio, 2014). Some scholars have addressed gender's effects in the hard sciences (Fox, 2006). Others call on higher education researchers to do *intersectional* research rather than one-dimensional analyses (Biroli & Miguel, 2015; Cardoso, 2016; Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1993; Gonzalez, 1988; Mariano & Caloto, 2016; Mitchell-Walthour & Santos, 2021; Museus & Griffin, 2011; Santos & Costa, 2021).

In Brazil, the United States, and many other nations, women's higher education access has improved with policies that prioritize education as a fundamental strategy to eradicate socio-economic inequalities (Lorber, 2010). Unfortunately, gender parity emphasizes access but not systemic, structural inequities, which are raced and gendered (David, 2014). To understand

socially, historically, and politically unequal standings of Black women, this review looks at literature relevant to efforts to establish parity of women in higher education. An intersectional approach that employs gender as central to analysis is most important. Gender needs consideration not just because of variation in socio-economic and racial inequality, but also to expose differentiation in educational experiences and outcomes that are often abstracted from socially embedded processes.

Moreover, the improved access to higher education in Brazil (and in the US) is insufficient to undo gender inequality of Black women. First, this chapter discusses women's movements as a catalyst for equality in higher education by undoing their unequal status. Second, it reviews histories of Brazil's public and private higher education institutions during their expansion while they provided access to underrepresented Black and poor students. The chapter ends with a review of the literature on increased college access based on race, gender, class, and regional inequalities.

The Women's Movement

To address gender inequality in higher education I take a multidisciplinary approach, drawing from feminist research in sociology, education, and history. Lorber (2010) analyzes contributions of feminism to understanding gender inequality over time. Looking into the *first-wave* feminist movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Lorber emphasizes the right to vote (suffrage), to own property and capital, to retain custody of children, to go to college, to become a professional certified physician, to argue cases in court, and to serve on a jury. She also argues that these rights were results of an agenda to secure equal rights for women of all classes, races, religions, and ethnicities, and that such rights are now often taken for granted.

Second-wave feminism is often represented by Simone de Beauvoir's account of historical and current statuses of women in her influential book *The Second Sex*. Published in 1949, *The Second Sex* dismantles the idea that women's subjugation is biological, arguing instead that it is a social creation. Contributions of de Beauvoir and others in the second-wave movement became especially important in the 1960s for exposing sexual oppressions that women face. They advocated interpersonal, political, and legal solutions to patriarchy in society. During the 1970s and 1980s, feminists advocated greater equity for women in legal rights, political participation, and access to occupations and professions with overrepresentation of men. This "gender reform" feminism had the goal of enacting policies that made some changes to the social order while maintaining structures that preserved larger gender inequalities.

The mid-1980s marked the beginning of democracy and of Black-organized movements' influence on the political stage in Brazil. Even though Black women tried to engage the race and gender debate during the mid-1970s, neither the Brazilian women's movement nor the Black movement seemed to understand their needs. In 1985, they decided to form their own movement, which led to establishment of several Black women's collective groups in Brazil (Caldwell, 2007). Although Afro-Brazilian women have a history of participating in many Black movements throughout Brazil (such as in the cities of Salvador, Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro, and Sao Paulo), their male counterparts held leadership positions in most organizations. Scott's (2004) observation is relevant here: "Feminism emerged in the context of liberal democracy's proclamation of universal equality, discursively positioned in and as contradiction--not just in the arena of political citizenship, but in most areas of economic and social life" (p. 19).

In Brazil as in the US, "difference among women became more difficult to reconcile in a single category" such as gender because race, sexuality, ethnicity, and nationality were equally

important in defining "women" (Scott, p. 22) for Afro-Brazilian women. The First National Encounter of the Black Woman took place in 1988 to address race and experiences of black women in Brazil, topics omitted from the Ninth Feminist Encounter (1987). Their participation took place at the same time of the centennial of abolition of slavery and the drafting of Brazil's new constitution in 1988. Another important event was the North and Northeast Black movement and the Black Women's movement in Recife, Pernambuco. These movements opposed the ideology of Gilberto Freyre (1933), author of *Master and Slaves*, and the racial democracy myth. The title of this conference was *Negro e Educação* (Blacks and Education). Its agenda addressed "colonization of the black intellectual students" (Santos, 2007, pp. 162-63). In other words, participants advocated for including Afro-Brazilian history in the curriculum and in textbooks to represent realities of their existence during Brazil's colonial, imperial, and republican periods.

In the 1990s, movements of multiracial and multiethnic feminisms, critical feminist studies of men, and theories of queer, social constructionist, and postmodernist feminists challenged first- and second-wave feminisms (Rosenberg, 2008). Scholars representing these newer third-wave currents in feminism dismantled long-held assumptions of binary gender duality and heteronormativity, arguing that many ways of "doing gender" restrict many sexes, sexualities, and identities, and reproduce unequal orders in the social realm (Lorber, 2010). Contrary to gender *reforms* by liberal, Marxist, socialist, postcolonial, and Asian feminists, gender *resistance* from radical, lesbian, psychoanalytic, and standpoint feminists confronts gendered social structures. According to Lorber, the 1990s saw the emergence of a *third-wave* feminist movement as a theoretical perspective with elements of the second-wave movement. However, third-wave feminism put greater emphasis on coalitions with causes such as peace and environmentalism, advocating much more inclusiveness of varied gender and sexual identities,

e.g., gay, lesbian, and transgender.

As Black movements and feminist movements strove to address Afro-descendants' racial and economic inequality, they succeeded in 1995 with the *Marcha Zumbi dos Palmares Contra o Racismo e Pela Cidadania e a Vida* (The March of Zumbi of Palmares against Racism and for Citizenship and Life) in Brazil's capital Brasilia. The demonstration pressured the government to enact legislation addressing racial inequalities and implement public measures to open access to all education, including higher education. The Afro-Brazilian demonstration had 30,000 participants and its leaders met with President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The activists gave the president a document titled *Programa de Superação do Racismo e da Desigualdade Racial* (Program to Combat Racial Inequality and Racism). They also advocated self-representation along "color" lines in all government documents and promotion of equal opportunity for all in the labor market, particularly Afro-Brazilian women. This measure would allow Afro-Brazilian women to attain education and enter the job market (Santos, 2007).

Still, the field of education has been slow to debunk the patriarchal system found in educational politics and policy. Marshall and Lois (2008) criticize this slow pace, noting that "feminists have sought, fought for, and sometimes obtained important guarantees in the constitutions and in the law that would provide women and children equity and equality" (p. 284) through numerous issues that include education outcomes. The authors emphasize contributions of women educators' reform agendas to address gender equality, along with challenges they faced when implementing feminist critique in the hierarchical political and institutional system.

In another important study, Jacobs (1996) draws from sociology, economics, history, social psychology, career counseling, and educational policy to analyze gender and higher education. She finds that gender inequality is not evenly distributed in the educational system.

Jacobs does note women have attained parity in college access. However, in terms of satisfaction with college experiences and schooling outcomes, women lag their male counterparts. Like Marshall & Lois (2008), Jacobs (1996) and Persell et al. (1999) note that gender does not receive proper attention in education. When inequality is addressed in the education field the focus is social class, disparities among men, or other variables. By contrast, studies of gender inequality treat education as women's disadvantage.

An important review of research on gender and education appears in Persell et al. (1999). The authors posit that research on education neglects the role of gender in the US and in Britain. The same can be said for Brazil. They also point out that conceptualizations of gender differ depending on researchers' theoretical perspectives. For instance, those who use human capital theory when analyzing educational access and attainment suggest social and economic success is the result of individual decisions. However, this approach discredits social standings and "rational choices" of students' parents, where gender is one of several deciding elements in such situations. Human capital theory and the status attainment model focus on individual choices by faulting individuals rather than systems for deficits and by overlooking how societal and family factors affect types and levels of education attainment. This is especially true for my study where Afro-Brazilian women credited their educational outcome to parents and community involvement.

To determine how gender stratification constrains participation, performance, and rewards in science professions and to investigate arguments around construction of scientific knowledge, Fox (1999) analyzed hierarchical gendered relations in mathematics and engineering, and in the physical, natural, computer, and environmental sciences. Within higher education, "hard" science is often identified as central to the university's modern complex development and

is sometimes considered more important than the humanities. Science and the political order carry an ideology of merit and equity. Public support for this ideology results from institutional relationships among science, education, and the state. Scholars need to study these relationships to understand the power that results in gender stratification. A relevant article by Museus and Griffin (2011) calls on researchers to use intersectionality to develop better-informed understanding of student, faculty, administrators, and staff experiences, instead of one-dimensional analyses that lead to reductive categorization of individuals and groups working and participating in higher education. This study employs intersectionality to better understand Afro-Brazilian women's higher education access and success.

Access to Higher Education

In Brazil, Afro-descendant women have been pivotal in the debate over racial inequality in the state's bureaucracy, ministries, institutions, and higher education. This was seen in the 1996 conference, *Multiculturalismo e racismo: o papel da ação afirmativa nos Estados Democráticos Contemporâneos* (Multiculturalism and Racism: The Contemporary Democratic States and the Role of Affirmative Action held at the University of Brasilia, UNB), (Santos, 2007, p. 17). At this gathering, a Brazilian President (Fernando Henrique Cardoso) publicly acknowledged racism for the first time in the country's history, openly discussing ways to implement anti-discrimination policies and affirmative action programs. This was a victory for Brazil's Black and feminist movements, both of which had been advocating legislation to benefit the Black population in education for many decades, and for access to higher public education.

In the US, Perkins (2015) notes, the result of gender equity legislation of the later twentieth century for Black women's success were "in large part the result of taking advantage of significant recruitment efforts and affirmative action programs at predominantly white

institutions" (p. 742). Other scholars credit race and gender policies for opening access to college administrative and faculty positions for women and people of color while warning: "One of the major challenges to equity is the continuing attack on affirmative action, school desegregation, and women's rights" (Hanson, Guilfoy, & Pillai, 2009, p. 91). States such as Michigan, Oregon, and Arizona have altered race-sensitive admissions policy in ways that decrease racial and ethnic minority student access to higher education (Harper, Patton, & Wooden, 2009).

Scholars agree Brazil was a latecomer in higher education (Sampaio, 2014). Durham (2004) notes the first higher education institutions were established in 1808 and the first universities in the 1930s. The private sector flourished in the 1960s, helping to expand the Brazilian higher education system in a mixed system of public and privately funded institutions. Public universities are federally or state financed while private institutions can be not-for-profit, i.e., Catholic universities, or for-profit. By the 1980s, new types of organization, i.e., "non-religious, on-university institutions that organized as business (covertly) in search of profits" were established (Salto, 2018, p. 814).

Due to societal pressure to access higher education, Brazil expanded its private sector exponentially (Carnoy et al., 2013; Salto, 2018). The private sector established institutions as non-profit, which had benefited from tax exemption and limits on how to disburse revenue. In the mid-1990s Brazil's private higher education institutions were permitted to "establish themselves as for profit, tax paying organizations" (Salto, 2018, p. 810). Brazil was one of a few nations in Latin America and worldwide that legalized profit-making in higher-education institutions. Salto's study analyzes data from the Brazilian Census of Higher Education and the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (INEP) through exploratory analysis to understand the role, function, and form of the for-profit sector compared with its nonprofit and

public education institutions counterparts. The study reveals that “Brazil gave its private sector a demand-absorbing role, keeping most elite and semi-elite institutions in the public sector” contrary to the US, which “includes a higher number of elite and semi-elite institutions in the nonprofit sector,” while “public policy toward private higher education has played a critical role in the growth of the private sector through tax exemption and student financial aid support” (p. 822). The study adds that public institutions of higher education in Brazil hire professors on full-time contracts (82.9%) while in the private sector only (24%) of professors are hired.

In another study, Knobel & Verhine (2017) reported: “For-profits tend to be ranked below other higher education institutions on official student learning indicators and also suffer from problems related to infrastructure, faculty qualifications” and “most of the students are enrolled in low-cost programs” (p. 23). The authors also state that these degree programs tend to “favor larger classrooms, low faculty salaries, reduced academic expectations, and the absence of policies designed to minimize dropout rates” (p. 23). Moreover, institutions of private higher education in both nonprofit and for-profit sectors do not carry out research. As teaching-oriented institutions they are criticized by the public sector, considered a sign of low quality.

Oliveira, Pochmann, and Rossi (2022) evaluate recent expansion of the Brazilian population’s access to higher education from 2001 to 2015. The authors analyze educational policies that expand access to higher education based on students’ socioeconomic, racial, and regional differences. They concluded that the educational policies helped increase both low income and Black student’s representation from the North and the Northeast. This not only involved access but also degrees received; “black students increased from 21.9% in 2001 to 43.5% in 2015, even though Afro-Brazilian were 53.4% of the population” at the time (pp. 424-

25). The article reveals that the inclusion process in the form of educational policies may be at risk by austerity policies implemented in recent years.

In another study, Carvalhaes & Ribeiro (2019) evaluate expansion of Brazilian public-private higher education and how opportunities in access to higher education based on socioeconomic status, gender, and race were distributed. Using data from the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (INEP), between 2002-2010, the authors find that students from upper socioeconomic groups, i.e., parents with higher education, were more likely to enter the most prestigious fields such as medicine and dentistry, and to attend public institutions when compared to students from lower social incomes. "Gender stratification revealed that women were found in courses relating to care and teaching while their male counterparts were more likely to attend courses in hard sciences" (p. 222).

Seeking to understand the phenomenon of permanence in higher education despite the increased access and expansion of HE, Barros & Araujo (2018) note that retention of students is not the object of preoccupation or policies from private higher education. The study found "residual change in the policies of permanence in the private higher education" while proposing "more research on the private sector to design policies for student's permanence" (p. 99). Although the data are excellent for understanding the expansion of public-private higher education, without attention to students' educational trajectories and to narratives of access and academic success the study is limited as a source to fully understand Brazil's educational stratification. Thus, Afro-Brazilian women educators' narratives in higher education will add to and improve the literature.

Gendered Outcomes

Overrepresentation of women in higher education has yet to result in equity. In Brazil,

white women reached majority in higher education in 1996 (Kabengele & Silva, 2021). However, David's (2014, p. 7) assertion about flawed claims about gender equality is relevant to analysis of Black women's access to higher education. Sex becomes the focal point in the quest to find out why men or women are under- or overrepresented in some but not all fields. According to David, "enhanced access to higher education by women has not always translated into enhanced career opportunities, including the opportunity to use their doctorates in the fields of research" (p. 31). Gender parity in education is not gender equity. Carrying out a quantitative survey based on published national censuses in the last five decades, Santos & Costa (2021) analyzed women's advancement in Brazilian higher education, taking into perspective gender, race, and class issues. Data revealed that enrollment in higher education increased by 500% between 1995-2019. This increase in enrollment is seen in private institutions, which in 2019 tripled in contrast to public institutions of higher education. Although the proportion of Blacks in Brazil is more than 50% of the population, Black women represent only 37% of graduates. Like other studies, "segmentation of gender by areas of activity still persists and, consequently, a greater concentration of women in areas with lower wage remuneration" remains (p. 17). This is also seen in Venturini's (2017) study, which seeks to map participation of women in Brazilian higher education. The quantitative research adopted descriptive analysis of the Higher Education Census released by the National Institute of Educational Studies and *Research Anisio Teixeira* (INEP), in addition to databases with information on curricula registered in the Lattes Platform of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPQ), Demographic Census published by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) and information on the CNPq website and Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES). The study reveals that despite women's overrepresentation in higher education (52%),

such progress remains unequal and hierarchical in some areas and levels. Although women represent most graduates with master's (54%) and doctoral degrees (48%), "men continue to be in the majority in research productivity (64%)" (Venturini, 2017, pp. 6-7). The author concludes that women in positions of power and institutional decision making remains disproportionate and added that other studies confirm that gender inequality and inclusion in higher education of all groups, especially Blacks, that constitute the Brazilian population, remains unequal. Caution is required, according to Lazaro & Montechiari (2014), when examining national data on overrepresentation of women graduates, which if not looking under different perspectives "the national data suggest an apparent gender equality in the academic environment. When seen in detail reveal the permanence of distinctions that evoke the traditional sexual division of labor" (p. 5, cited in Kabengele & Silva's (2021)). However, his finding presents evidence that the study of Afro-Brazilian women is important to reveal not only their higher education access but also their occupational status since they continue to be underrepresented in Brazil's higher education.

Seeking to understand the impact of racism on social participation of Black female undergraduate students in the state of Alagoas, Brazil, which implemented only a social quota system, Valerio et al.'s (2021) qualitative study employs a focus group with six Black students. The study analyzes three themes: "Difficulties related to access and stay at the university; Expressions of racism in university everyday life; and Strategies to fight against racism" (p. 1). Difficulties relevant to the markers of gender, race, and class were perceived in entry and trajectories of Afro-Brazilian women in higher education. The authors conclude that "Society pre-determines the possibilities and spaces of Black women and education appears as possibilities of subversion, enabling them to occupy other spaces, considered as not belong to

her. It also makes it possible to enter the labor market, moving up to prestigious positions, and obtaining better financial conditions" (p. 12). The study also suggests that participants bet on education as a strategy to reframe situations of discrimination and take advantage of affirmative action policies to undo social-historical injustice.

In another study, Mitchell-Walthour & Santos (2022), use qualitative data from in-depth interviews in the United States, Milwaukee (39% Afro-descendant), and Charlotte (35% Afro-descendant), and Brazil, Salvador (80% Afro-descendant), and Sao Paulo (33% Afro-descendant) to examine the impact of class and racial discrimination on Black women social welfare beneficiaries in both countries. The authors conclude that in the US, "Afro-descendant women beneficiaries suffer from skin and class discrimination unlike their white counterparts." They suggest, "because of the meritocracy myth, beneficiaries will be more likely to perceive skin color discrimination rather than class discrimination" (p. 17). Black women in both countries also responded that they face stereotypes of being lazy and are accused of becoming pregnant to receive food assistance: "At the intersection of race and gender are particularly powerful stereotypes off dark-skinned women as domestic and seductresses" (Bernardino-Costa, 2014; Caldwell, 2007; Goldstein, 1999; cited in Layton & Smith, 2017). However, Mitchell-Walthour and Santos note that in Salvador, Brazil, Afro-Brazilian women respondents were "more likely to perceive neighborhood discrimination than skin color discrimination" (p.19). By contrast, "Afro-descendants in Sao Paulo, Milwaukee, and Charlotte are more like to perceive skin discrimination than neighborhood discrimination" (p. 19). In addition, the authors note that darker skin toned people are more likely to admit they have experienced skin color discrimination. Mitchell-Walthour and Santos indicate there is a relationship between skin color

discrimination and skin tone. The same is reported by Gois (2008): “during their educational trajectories blacks are discriminated 52.1% more than mixed-raced 14.7%” (p. 765).

Similarly, Layton and Smith’s (2017) study on sources of perceived race, class, and gender discrimination in Brazil draws on data from 2010 AmericasBarometer. They conclude that “darker skin tones, lower household wealth, and women are more likely to perceive discrimination on the basis of skin color, their economic situation, and gender, respectively” (p. 53). The Brazilian racial democracy myth is predominant as women perceived class discrimination first and skin color second. Monk (2017), using the same data, also finds that “skin color is a stronger predictor of educational attainment and occupational status among Brazilian race (operationalized as census race-color) categories used in virtually all research on ethnoracial inequality in Brazil” (p. 413). These study results align with my research on Afro-Brazilian women educators in higher education and their perceived skin tone discrimination in the form of colorism – the idea that people should be treated differently according to skin color.

Kabengele and Silva’s (2021) bibliographic study and analysis of official documents presents an overview of race and gender in the higher education system in Brazil between 1996 and 2018. The authors base their study on the National Survey of Socioeconomic and Cultural Profile of Undergraduate Students from Federal Institutes of Higher Education (IFES), conducted by the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education (Andifes). The study is divided in three sections: 1) describing the student’s socioeconomic and cultural background from IFES; 2) discussion of student’s gender, and 3) examination of student’s race/ethnicity. In the first part, Andifes’ study, which started in 1996 and seeks to contribute to educational policies at universities by ensuring student retention and academic success, is employed. Although Andifes’ study uses gender, age, race, and other categories,

Kabengele and Silva focus on gender and race categories to determine if intersectionality between these categories generated inequalities, since women and Blacks are historically overrepresented categories.

The second part of the Kabengele and Silva's analysis is based on the National Survey of Socioeconomic and Cultural Profile of Undergraduate Students from Federal Institutes of Higher Education (IFES), which discussed women's increased presence of 3% in higher education compared to their male counterparts (2021, p. 186). However, the authors note that women continue to lag in positions of power and decision making. Lastly, the authors state that the number of Blacks is increasing as result of educational policies such as affirmative action in the last decade. They add that the IFES are more feminine and Blacker and question if the data found in the study is enough to guarantee women and blacks equity in higher education and in the diverse spaces of power in Brazilian society. This study provides analysis of women's access to higher education at Federal Institute of Higher Education (IFES), while my research seeks to analyze Afro-Brazilian women's access to higher education at IFBA.

In a statistical indicators comparison of Black/white racial inequality in Brazil and the US from 1990-2010, Andrews (2014) analyzes racial differences in fertility, life expectancy, infant mortality, regional distribution, educational enrollment and achievement, labor force distribution, income and earnings, and poverty indicators. Through a series of elected presidential administrations (1994-2010), Brazilians demanded reduction of class and regional inequalities. This proved effective in reducing poverty and inequality while moving 30 million poor and working-class Brazilians into the middle class. The author concludes that even though the US remains "the more racially egalitarian country, in the statistics terms… Brazil's experiments in social democracy and in class- and race-based affirmative action" were producing results worth

of United States' policymakers and citizens interested in diminishing racial and class inequalities (20). This scenario has changed drastically, as my study reveals, within the Brazilian presidential administrations (2016-present).

The long history of educational neglect in Brazil is seen in population income concentration (Araujo, 2012). For instance:

> In 2001 the richest 20% had 27 times the income of the poorest 20%.... In 2008 the richest 10% of the population lived on more than 40% of the national income, whereas the poorest 40% survived with only 10% of that income… The percentage of families living on less than the monthly minimum wage, that is, about $100, in 2008 was 22.6%, approximately 38 million people. (Civita, 2009, p. 118, qtd. in Araujo, 2012)

This income inequality has resulted in social disparities for most members of the poor population, who are Black and women (Araujo & Lombardi, 2013).

Examining racial inequality in Brazil in the last three decades under sociological socioeconomic theories based on the National Household Survey (PNAD), Osorio (2021) notes that "despite all the change in racial relations in the period [1986-2019], such as the debunking of the myth of racial democracy, the growing appreciation of Blackness, and the greater denunciation of racism and discrimination, in the income dimension there was only a tiny reduction in inequality" (p. 23). The author concludes that racial and income inequality need to be combated together. Policies for Afro-Brazilians that do not account for socioeconomic and regional inequality will not diminish racial inequalities in the next few decades. LeBon (2007, p. 56) also notes that the focus is limited to disadvantages women face in the labor market and education, perhaps "because this is the way in which women's experience most resembles men's and therefore data are more available but also because such data 'speaks' to policy makers."

Therefore, scholars and Black feminists must acknowledge not only sexist oppression but also racist and ethnic oppression. Analysis of the private sector versus the public sector is necessary to reveal how Afro-Brazilian income differs, because my study reveals that women seek federal higher education careers in hopes of attaining career stability.

Mazetti, Wedig & Oliveira (2020) employ a decolonial perspective to examine the transition from colonization to coloniality and hierarchical and intersectional relations of gender, race, and class found in the Brazilian higher education system. The qualitative exploratory study analyzes data from Education Ministry (MEC), the National Institute of Educational Studies, and *Research Anisio Teixeira* (INEP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The authors posit that it was difficult to find more specific and detailed data regarding social inequality of the less privileged groups, but it indicates that significant change happened during the twentieth century with the expanded inclusion of women, Black people, and lower socioeconomic classes in academic spaces. However, occupational segregation in less privileged fields remain.

As David (2014) cautions, women with improved educational opportunities still "confront discrimination in jobs, disparities in power, voice and political representation and the laws that are prejudicial on their basis of their gender. . . well-educated women often end up in jobs where they do not use their full potential and skill" (p. 33). Access to quality education and the hidden curriculum shape gender and race roles, reinforcing disparate expectations and opportunities for whites over Blacks and for men over women. This is a problem for Black men and Black women in the job market because their educational achievements do not bring full economic benefits (Araujo & Lombadi, 2013; Mariano & Carloto, 2013).

Even though women have greater overall numerical representation in higher education institutions, such progress remains unequal and hierarchical in some areas and levels (Veturini, 2017). Although women represent most graduate courses, namely master and doctoral degrees, men continue to hold most professor positions (Ferreira, Teixeira, & Ferreira, 2022; Kabengele & Silva, 2021). Therefore, regarding women's representation in education and in the professions, race and class are at play as much as gender is. Compared to all other race and gender groups, there is disproportionate representation of Black women in the lowest ranks of Brazilian society (Ferreira, Teixeira, Ferreira, 2022; Passos & Nogueira, 2018; Telles, 2004). Blacks are less educated than whites are, they earn less, they die earlier, and they tend to live in shantytowns (Araujo & Lombardi, 2013; Benjamin & Mendonca, 1997; Mariano & Carloto, 2013).

Education credentials are correlated highly to income in Brazil. Higher education is the key to middle-class status. Being formally educated is known as the best way to gain opportunities for social and economic mobility (Hanchard, 1994; Telles, 2004). In present-day Brazil, Afro-Brazilian men and women earn less than their white counterparts. Afro-descendant women in Brazil make the least money for their labor. They also tend to be the last employees hired and the first fired (Araujo & Lombardi, 2013; Lowell, 1999; Marianot & Carloto, 2013; Telles, 2007).

Scott (1986) suggests we understand sexual difference in relation to history and the culture of the time to avoid designating fixed, universal, and ahistorical predestined places. Most important, this use of gender will open new possibilities for feminist political strategies, "for it suggests that gender must be redefined and restructured with a vision of political and social equality that includes not only sex, but class, and race" (p. 1075). This is relevant to how Afro-Brazilians face problems in the political arena, starting within political parties with their

stereotypical images of women and people of Afro-descent, as quoted in Le Bon (2007): "passive, irrational, dependent, and lacking in leadership and entrepreneurial ability" (Oliveira, 1999, p. 168). Afro-Brazilian women's absence from traditional politics is not an imperative for their participation in community organizations and social movements, whose impact is visible in their mobilization to construct self-esteem, identity, and access to higher education seeking to undo inequalities that are marked by life expectancy, regional, and educational factors.

Thus, as revealed in Venturini (2017) and Kabengele & Silva (2021), women in positions of power and institutional decision making remains disproportionate and inclusion in higher education of Blacks, who constitute the majority of the Brazilian population, remained unequal. Lazaro & Montechiari (2014) suggest the need to look from different perspectives and not mistakenly assume there is gender equity in higher education. Following these examples, this study seeks to learn from Afro-Brazilian women's perceived experiences in the career trajectory in higher education.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

Research Questions

1. What influenced the paths of Afro-Brazilian women to becoming faculty members?
2. What are Afro-Brazilian women educators' experiences as faculty members in higher education?

Study Design and Participants

Research Site

This study was conducted at the Institute Federal of Bahia (IFBA) in Salvador and metropolitan region in Bahia, Brazil. IFBA is part of the Federal Network of Vocational, Scientific, and Technological Education (RFEPT). RFEPT consists of 38 Federal Institutes, two Federal Centers of Technological Education, the Pedro II School, the Federal Technological University of Parana, and more than 650 technical schools linked to federal universities that provide education to more than one million students.

Currently, IFBA is organized in the state of Bahia as follows: 22 campuses in operation, five centers of technology, two campuses in the implementation stage, one innovation center, the Salinas da Margarida advanced nucleus, and the office of the rector (president). (Fig. 1 below).

Figure 1: IFBA's map (2020)

IFBA's map (2020)

Source: IFBA's map, (2020): (https://portal.ifba.edu.br/campi/escolha-o-campus).

The IFBA was established in 1909 as the Schools of Apprentices for educating workmen. Between 1960 and 1990 it evolved into a Federal Technical School (FTES) focused on medium level technicians' education in Mechanics and Construction, along with Electrotechnics, Electronics, Telecommunications, Data Processing and Industrial Informatics. In 2000, FTES was transformed into the Federal Center of Technological Education (CEFET). Yet in 2008, the Institute Federal of Vocational, Scientific, and Technological Education was one result of the

passage of Law 11.892 establishing national policies of professional education technology in Brazil (Brasil, 2020), of which the IFBA is part.

IFBA is also known as the Federal Institute (IF), an institution of higher, secondary, and professional/vocational education. A policy of education verticalization (*Verticalizar a educação* in Portuguese) is in effect. This means that IFs offer professional and technological education on secondary and tertiary levels as mentioned in Law 11.892/2008: "To promote the integration and verticalization of basic, professional, and higher education by optimizing physical structure, faculty and administration resources" (Brasil, 2008). The law also offers education for youth and adults called *Educação de Jovens e Adultos* (EJA), which is professional and special education, along with long distance education, *Educação a Distancia* (EAD). Therefore, IFs are called pluri-curricular institutions. Unique among nations, the Brazilian educational system offers basic, professional, and higher education in one institution (Silva, 2009, p. 22).

This new pluri-curricular proposal integrates high school to technical training, where integration is carried out with modules. The proposal seeks to establish dialogue among scientific, technological, social, and humanistic knowledge and abilities related to work, while overcoming concepts of school fragmentation and duality. Thus, the curricular proposal seeks to undo the knowledge hierarchy and collaborate effectively to construct the IF's new identity (Pacheco, 2011, p. 26).

Due to IFs verticalization, faculty duties involve integration of levels and modules that account for teaching, research, and extension of basic, higher, and technological education. Faculty duties are the result of IFs having the same status as universities: namely, autonomy, evaluation, and supervision of institutions and courses (Brasil, 2008). Therefore, IFs are responsible for offering initial and continued courses. This structure is known as the *Formação*

Inicial e Continuada (FIC) because it offers medium-level technical courses, especially integrated curriculum courses. In higher education it offers technology courses in engineering and bachelor's degrees in physics, chemistry, mathematics, and biology, along with licentiates (or *licenciatura)*, a degree program that can last up to five years, similar to a bachelor's degree. The main difference is that *licenciatura* includes subjects related to education and teaching, and the recipient of the licentiate degree is qualified to teach up to high school) of professional and technological education (for example, teacher training in mechanics, electronics, and informatics). There are also masters and doctoral programs; consequently, IFs cannot be defined as technical schools or universities because they represent new institutions of professional education in Brazil (Ortigara, 2013, p. 2).

The IF is a national institute with the mission of training students to become citizens concerned with human and professional development for a democratic society in Brazil. In contrast to previous educational goals for training workers, IFs want graduates to learn from their communities, identify problems that need solving, and work toward outcomes that will improve their communities. Social justice, therefore, is important to learning, research, and research applications of the IFBA (LEI 11.892/2008) and to the emancipatory education they seek to promote. IFBA faculty is comprised of 2,069 teachers and 1,339 administrative technicians (*Sistema Unificado de Administração Pública* (SUAP), 2020) serving more than 36,000 students. They offer 300 on-site courses along with 17 distance learning courses (https://portal.ifba.edu.br/campi/escolha-o-campus).

Table 1 below shows gender demographics of IFBA's teachers and administrative technicians of education (TAE). There are fewer female than male teachers, which is not very surprising considering that IFBA offers professional and technological education. However, for

TAEs the opposite is true: there are more females than males in these positions. Furthermore, when we add both occupations male representation surpasses female by 20.07 percent.

Table 1: Faculty's Gender at IFBA

Faculty's Gender at IFBA

Occupation	Male	Female	Total
Teacher	1,026	707	1,733
Technic Administrative of Education	517	578	1,095
Total	1,543	1,285	2,828

Source: Data adapted from Sistema Unificado de Administração Pública, (SUAP, 2020) (https://suap.ifba.edu.br/rh/tela_recursos_humanos/).

As for Table 2, the racial and ethnic identification of brown people in both occupations surpasses rates for all the other groups. However, if we look at whites, they surpass Black people in both occupations. However, when we combine Black and brown people as representative of Afro-Brazilians in IFBA's faculty, their numbers exceed those of people who identified as white, Indigenous, and yellow (along with those who declined to disclose race and ethnicity).

Table 2: Faculty's Racial and Ethnic Identification at IFBA

Faculty's Racial and Ethnic Identification at IFBA

Occupation	White	Black	Brown	Indigenous	Yellow	Not Disclosed	Total
Teacher	565	287	764	11	24	82	1,733
Technic Administrative of Education	282	203	570	3	11	26	1,095
Total	847	490	1,339	14	35	108	2,828

Source: Data adapted from Sistema Unificado de Administração Pública, (SUAP, 2020) (https://suap.ifba.edu.br/rh/tela_recursos_humanos/).

Study Design

A qualitative research design was used for examining experiences of Afro-Brazilian women faculty in higher education at IFBA. It was conducted during October and November

2019. In seeking to understand these educators' experiences on their paths to becoming faculty members and working at IFBA, I based my investigation on two research questions: What influenced the paths of Afro-Brazilian women to becoming faculty members? And What are Afro-Brazilian women educators' experiences as faculty members in higher education?

To answer these questions, I developed an interview guide and survey demographic, which were translated to Brazilian Portuguese and shared with a native Brazilian "to determine if the questions work as intended and what revisions" were necessary (Maxwell, 2013, p. 101). Information in these materials was based on (a) Afro-Brazilian women's perceptions of their educational journeys to become and work as faculty members (see Table 4); (b) demographic information pertaining to participants, such as age, gender, religious background, relationship status (see Table 3), professional occupation (see Table 5) number of years working as an educator, number of institutions worked at, what kind of institutions worked for (see Table 6), job satisfaction, region, and state, and lastly Afro-Brazilian women in position of authority (see Table 7).

Due to the nature of the research questions, qualitative methods were best suited to uncovering the meanings participants referred to in three areas of their lives: family background, educational trajectory, and professional experience. The interview guide focused on main and follow-up questions in addition to probes. These three types of questions helped me best address the research problem and ensured that I would solicit vivid, rich details and nuance during interviews. As Rubin and Rubin (2005) state, "asking background questions and learning enough about the overall context to personalize your report so that you can present interviewees as real people rather than abstractions" is how vividness is achieved, while nuance involves paying attention to interviews' understated meanings (p. 132; cited in Owen, 2014). Although several

studies have used quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze educators' experiences in general, my investigation brings something new to the literature because representations of Afro-Brazilian women are quite rare (Caldwell, 2007).

I used *purposeful selection*, a deliberate strategy for choosing participants and the research site with relevance to answering the research question (Armstrong, 2010; Maxwell, 2013). Criteria employed for this study are women who self-identified as Afro-Brazilian and who are in faculty ranks, i.e., professor, educational administrator, and administrative technician of education (TAE), in higher education. IFBA is an institution in northeastern Brazil, a region seen as underdeveloped, where the local Afro-Brazilian population surpasses its presence in the national population. Purposefully choosing the sample ensured participants were better suited to answer the interview questions. I gained access to participants by using personal contacts and relationships, facilitated by my identity as a native of Bahia who speaks Brazilian Portuguese. I also sought to chronicle their academic trajectories with attention to factors that influenced their pursuit of higher education careers and their thoughts about faculty positions.

Racial and ethnic identification categories used in this study followed the example of *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatistica* (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics or IBGE), the government institution in charge of gathering and developing data for the population census. These categories include white (*branco*), Black (*preta*), mixed (*parda*; white with Black or Indigenous), yellow (Asian-Brazilian), and Indigenous (native-Brazilian). Brazil's race classification is based on a color continuum. Sheriff (2001) notes how racialized the discourse of color is, i.e., Black people are viewed more negatively than people with lighter skin color. Following the IBGE racial/ethnical classification and examples from Black and feminist

movements, I use the Afro-Brazilian or Afro-descendant category throughout my study, which combines Black and brown populations.

Data Collection

Interview protocols for the study were submitted to the University of Kansas Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB approved the Informed Consent Form, which I gave to each participant to read and sign. This document informed participants of their rights to decline by describing the study and its purpose, interview procedures, study risks and benefits, and terms of confidentiality regarding data collection, analysis, and publication. Participants were assigned pseudonyms. All interviews were digitally recorded, encrypted in password-protected files, and stored in my iCloud archive. Interviews were audiotaped and fully transcribed, and those parts of the interviews relevant to answering the research questions were translated. Participants received no payment and were told they must sign the consent and authorization form in order to participate.

Another key stage in research occurred in 2018, when I was invited to present the paper "Black Women, Education and Affirmative Action in South Bahia - *Mulher Negra, Educacao e Acoes Afirmativas no Sul da Bahia*" at the *XII Jornada de Relacoes Etnico-Raciais* (XII Ethnic-Race Relations Journey) at IFBA. During this conference I met many faculty members through personal contacts, which helped me choose IFBA as the research site. From October 10 to November 22, 2019, I conducted research after approval from IFBA's Rector/President.

Primary data collection employed in-depth qualitative interviewing. The interview guide was designed with main questions, probes, and follow-up questions as suggested by Rubin & Rubin (2012): "Qualitative interviewers listen to hear the meaning of what interviewees tell them. When they cannot figure out that meaning, they ask follow-up questions to gain clarity and

precision" (p. 6). This approach allowed me to elicit rich, detailed information from participants using open-ended questions. These Afro-Brazilian women were free to answer or decline to answer questions, to elaborate, and to disagree when responding. Semi-structured interviews focused on three areas of each participant's life: family background, educational trajectory, and professional experience. These areas were chosen to achieve better understanding of the Afro-Brazilian women's whole experiences from childhood to adulthood and as part of the educational system. Interview protocol was translated into Portuguese and developed with assistance from a Brazilian colleague at IFBA. The Interview Guide is included in Appendix B.

Prior to interviews, participants were asked to answer the Demographic Survey (see Table 3), which provided information on age, gender, religious background, relationship status, numbers of years working as an educator, numbers of institutions where they worked, what kinds of institution they worked for, job satisfaction, region, and state. These categories are relevant to documenting Afro-Brazilian women's diverse experiences on their paths to becoming educators. Due to social marginalization, Afro-Brazilian women are often seen as a monolithic group, but I intended to document their diversity.

Qualitative Method

Interviews

I contacted twenty Afro-Brazilian educators at IFBA but interviewed only eighteen of them due to some participants' conflicts with last-minute meetings and health emergencies. The women educators in my sample were between 35 and 67 years of age. Interviews were conducted and transcribed in Portuguese. Responses to interview questions were translated into English. These were in-depth, face-to-face conversations. Interviews lasted between two and one-half to three hours. There were three settings for these conversations. I interviewed three participants at

their homes, four at their institutions on different campuses, and eleven at shopping malls of their choosing in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. Participants represented varied faculty experiences, years of administrative experience, and degrees. Afro-Brazilian women of faculty rank in higher education were selected to provide information that is unique, rich, and relevant to their life experiences and journeys to become educators (Glaser & Strauss, 2009; Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 1980).

I was unable to conduct follow-up interviews with participants and other faculty members due to limited time spent in the field. However, participants provided additional valuable details by elaborating when necessary and clarifying meanings during our interactions. I encouraged them to share details of their life experiences in hopes of gathering rich data. Following examples of previous scholars, I paid attention to how the "fragment of data gains theoretical plausibility because it provides a way of understanding many more situations" as I encountered "both statements and silences" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 90). There were even moments of trauma when some respondents shared childhood and adult experiences with racism and discrimination inside and outside their academic paths. Seven interviews conducted at IFBA's various campus locations also provided data specific to situations and events illustrating Black women's experiences in adjusting to isolation, stress, lack of support, and institutional racism, all of which many participants mentioned in interviews.

Finally, during my visits to IFBA's campus locations, I gathered information from public areas that showcased educators' current achievements and events relevant to my research questions. For example, there was a newspaper article featuring the newly elected rector, a Black woman whose inauguration was disputed even though she won her election.

(https://atarde.com.br/colunistas/levivasconcelos/luzia-a-reitora-do-ifba-eleita-em-dezembro-ainda-espera-a-posse-1093473)

Figure 2: IFBA election

IFBA's election

A TARDE SALVADOR DOMINGO 20/10/2019 POLÍTICA B3

Levi Vasconcelos

ANÁLISE POLÍTICA, FATOS E CAUSOS

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Luzia, a reitora do Ifba eleita em dezembro, ainda espera a posse

Já dizia Octávio Mangabeira, é sempre bom recorrer à máxima *pense num absurdo, a Bahia tem precedente*. Desta vez o palco é o Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia da Bahia (Ifba). Lá, a professora Luzia Mota foi eleita em 13 de dezembro e até hoje, quase 10 meses depois, não tomou posse.

Pro tempore é uma expressão latina que significa *transitório*, ou *por enquanto*, qualquer coisa assim. E aí está o absurdo: no Ifba o reitor Renato Anunciação, que tumultuou o processo e ficaria *pro tempore*, num pleito com quatro candidatos foi o último, mas virou o primeiro. Está até hoje.

PROTELAÇÃO — Luzia Mota teve 32,2%. Segundo ela, o processo foi tumultuado pelas tentativas de protelação do reitor (e candidato):

– Foram necessários dois mandados de segurança para garantir a realização da eleição.

A documentação com o resultado eleitoral, que elegeu ainda os diretores de campi, foi encaminhada ao MEC em 10 de janeiro, para as avaliações jurídicas e trâmites visando ao encaminhamento à Casa Civil e a nomeação da reitora eleita, pelo presidente Bolsonaro.

Pelo contrário, o MEC não só deixou de efetuar o encaminhamento como ainda fez retroceder todos os procedimentos já efetuados. Luzia tem o apoio de 32 dos 42 representantes federais da Bahia, mas nem isso sensibiliza o ministro Abraham Weintraub, de resto, outro mestre em abrir precedentes absurdos.

Priscila Felipe / Divulgação

Luzia, a reitora eleita há 9 meses, esperando a posse

Photo taken by the author on November 19, 2019.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was based on collection of recorded data that 18 participants provided during face-to-face interviews. These interviews were transcribed, and the analysis process started with my reading transcripts while listening to corresponding recorded files in Portuguese. Finally, I translated the summaries and citations addressing the research questions into English. This method immersed me in Afro-Brazilian women's accounts of their lived experiences in

their own voices (Smith et al., 2009). During this process I also reviewed field notes, interview transcripts, demographic questionnaires, and summaries to make sense of patterns and thematic categories (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) that helped me describe and compare by making connections between data and relevant studies, i.e., triangulation of data (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Another method was content analysis, which encompasses "the patterns, themes, and categories analysis come from the data; they emerge out of data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (Paton, 1980, p. 306). This method helped me address the lack of research on Afro-Brazilian women's paths to higher education.

Therefore, my study represents Afro-Brazilian women's narratives about their educational paths. I established rapport, earned their trust, and entered their worlds. Moreover, organization, management, description, analysis, and interpretation of data, accompanied by the documentation process, transformed the qualitative data into evidence while providing answers (Lincoln, 2002; Wolcott, 1994, cited in Bhattacharya, 2009). The interviews were conducted in Portuguese, tape recorded, transcribed in full, and then the transcript was returned to interview participants. And those parts of the interviews relevant to answering the research questions were translated.

Positionality

Growing up as an Afro-descendant woman in Bahia, Brazil, I knew my educational and career opportunities were limited. This motivated me to emigrate from Brazil and seek opportunities elsewhere. After living and working as an au pair, domestic worker, in Holland, I later earned my undergraduate and graduate degrees from universities in the United States. As a Black woman from South America – namely Brazil – studying and living in the "first world," I attained privileged status as a Black scholar. But this status does not keep me from being

dehumanized, racialized, and invisible within the dominant white structure in both Americas (Anzaldua (2015) cited in Walsh, 2018, p. 21).

I come to this study from a Black feminist perspective informed by intersectional and decolonial theory (Lagunes, 2020; Mignolo & Walsh 2018; Quijano, 2000), embracing "the white parts, the male parts, the queer parts, the pathological parts, and the vulnerable parts" (Anzaldua, 1987/1999, p. 110) while recognizing that not all Black women in Brazil (and in my study) identify as feminist. My identity as a Black feminist Brazilian woman from Bahia is influential at every stage of this study but is especially important to how I conducted interviews and analyzed and interpreted interview data. I embrace this awareness of positioning, which is in line with Black feminism as a point of self-reflection to better understand links between theory and practice (Carneiro, 1999; Collins, 1995; Crenshaw, 1988; Lebon, 2007; Werneck, 2007). As an Afro-Brazilian native who neither finished high school nor attended college in Brazil due to financial barriers, situated in the United States since late 1990s as a former resident of Brazil who shares Portuguese language with interviewees, I had some insider status. Participants and I shared accounts of painful elementary classroom experiences and awareness of early childhood racial differences in the Brazilian educational system.

Our gender also proved to be a point of common understanding. Participants spoke freely of concerns around issues of household care and family relationships. My research shows that class and color were not monolithic for participants. Some interviewees related to the experience of growing up poor; however, others benefitted from a middle-class background. With regard to color, "Colorism is a vestige from slavery much like class is a function of hierarchical capitalistic society, and sexism, evidentiary of a patriarchal system" (cited in Merriam et al., 2001, p. 407). Some participants spoke openly of colorism and its negative effects on their lives. Although I

benefitted from my language, gender, and race as parts of my Brazilian identity, there were power issues I had to be cognizant of during interviews – namely, dialogue balance, research agenda, societal hierarchies, and north/south border crossings. Since I have lived overseas for over 20 years and am not from Salvador, I made sure to ask for clarification and repeated back what I thought I was hearing. I was also aware that the free time that participants provided me during interviews was time taken from their busy routines, which would help me finish my education, so I plan to share my dissertation with them. I was aware that even though we identify as Black women we had class, social, economic, age, and belief differences that assigned us societal hierarchies such as education and occupation. They were professionals and I am a student.

Furthermore, this study does not pretend to give voice to or "save" Black women participants. We already have voices, and we are rarely heard, but we do not need saving. Like Claudia Pons Cardoso (2016) and Gayatri Spivak (1988), I hope we are heard and that we can been seen in all strata of society. Hearing and writing about experiences of Afro-Brazilian women showcases the importance they assigned to extended family, to being raised by many hands, to organized faith, and to the Black movement. Since they are skeptical of the idea of meritocracy, the interviewees emphasized the collective factors in their success.

Regarding translation, being positioned between my native Portuguese and English was not as difficult as some scholars have suggested (van Nes et al., 2010). However, it was striking to realize how Afro-Brazilian and Afro-American women's' struggles and resistances were similar despite being in different Americas. This is the result of a shared history of slavery and a racist ideology. Although there are differences in naming (with the one drop rule as opposed to phenotype classification), this ideology inflicts the same psychological and material damages on

people of African descent no matter where we are located.

Consequently, translations, with their language barriers and cultural uniqueness, are politically and theoretically important to forging Afro-descendant feminisms. Such feminisms are “pro-social justice, anti-racist, postcolonial/decolonial, and anti-imperial political alliances and epistemologies” (Alvarez, Caldwell, & Lao-Montes, 2016, p. v) throughout the Americas. This project was translated with the objective of fomenting dialogue, visibility, resistance, and transformation. In the Findings chapter, I present testimonios of 18 Afro-Brazilian women on their paths to become educators in higher education at IFBA, Brazil.

Chapter 5

Findings

This chapter presents perspectives of Afro-Brazilian women educators at IFBA to answer these research questions:

1. What influenced the paths of Afro-Brazilian women to becoming faculty members?
2. What are Afro-Brazilian women educators' experiences as faculty members in higher education?

First, I provide participants' backgrounds, followed by three themes: Theme 1, Enrichment Inside and Outside School; Theme 2, Navigating College (describes Afro-Brazilian strategies of access and persistence); Theme 3, Becoming an Educator (divided into Afro-Brazilian women's college paths to professional careers, IFBA as their current destination, and Afro-Brazilian women's perspectives on educational policies). Prior to exploring these themes, I offer background information on participants' demographics.

Participants' Backgrounds

Table 3 presents various demographic information on eighteen Afro-Brazilian women: their ages, gender identities, religious affiliations, relationship statuses, regions, and states of background. Participant ages varied from 35 to 67. Most women were at least 40 years old.

Table 3: Demographic Information

Demographic Information

Name	Age	Gender identity	Religion	Relationship Status	Region	State
Alice	58	Heterosexual	Catholic	Divorced	Northeast	Bahia
Felicia	46	Heterosexual	Catholic & Kardecist	Married	Northeast	Bahia
Regina	35	Heterosexual	Catholic	Divorced	Northeast	Bahia
Olga	45	Heterosexual	Catholic	Divorced	Northeast	Bahia
Bruna	54	Heterosexual	Omnist	Divorced	Northeast	Bahia
Rosa	40	Heterosexual	Candomblé	Partner	Northeast	Bahia
Adelia	37	Heterosexual	Candomblé	Single	Northeast	Bahia
Zelda	36	Heterosexual	Atheist	Married	Northeast	Bahia
Irene	40	Homosexual	Kardecist	Married	Northeast	Bahia
Laura	38	Heterosexual	Buddhist	Single	Northeast	Bahia
Iris	43	Bisexual	Candomblé	Single	South	Parana
Aida	48	Heterosexual	Catholic	Married	Southeast	Rio de Janeiro
Nina	67	Heterosexual	Catholic	Married	Northeast	Bahia
Wanda	39	Heterosexual	Buddhist	Partner	Northeast	Bahia
Olinda	55	Heterosexual	Atheist	Single	Northeast	Bahia
Maria	46	Heterosexual	Candomblé	Single	Northeast	Bahia
Elsa	43	Heterosexual	Candomblé	Single	Northeast	Bahia
Nora	62	Heterosexual	Catholic	Married	Northeast	Bahia

Although all participants identified as Afro-Brazilian, two came from interracial families. Iris, who is from the southeastern region, described her family as multiracial: her father is white, her mother is Black, and her nine siblings are Black and brown. Laura, who is from the northeastern region, described her family as "interracial, with a white mother from Salvador and a Black father from rural Bahia." Afro-Brazilian women participants' family's size varied from one to thirteen children. Only one participant said she comes from a nuclear family as opposed to an extended family.

Parental Occupations

Occupational and educational backgrounds of Afro-Brazilian women's parents are diverse. For instance, Nora's parents' access to formal educational was rudimentary. Her father's employment in the civil construction industry, however, provided the seven children in Nora's family access to good education, enabling them all to earn higher education degrees. Nora stated, "My family has a lower social background living in poor conditions. This scenery changed later after becoming public servants in education." Although Nina's parents had only elementary education, her father had his own business as a barber and her mother stayed home, taking care of nine children.

Rosa notes, "My parent's education was a rarity in the street we lived. Almost no one had a high school diploma. Almost all women were domestic servants." Domestic servant occupations can be assets to lower income parents as they benefit from the social capital of middle-class employers, as seen in Zelda's experiences: "My mother worked as a domestic servant to a couple that taught mathematics, and she told them that I was studying to take the entrance exam to enter CEFET (now IFBA). The teachers sent many math books, which helped

me prepare and pass the exam." Lastly, Nora's father worked in the civil construction industry, which provided access to good education for employees' children at their own public schools.

Aida came from a nuclear family. Her father was a lawyer and her mother was a nurse working for the federal government. She credits her mother for all her opportunities because her father came from a poor family. As a result, Aida noted that "my father was trained to not dream even though he practiced law." Irene's mother was "the only one of ten siblings to acquire a college degree by leaving the rural residence and moving to Salvador, she showed everyone the path to higher education." Her father had a high school degree when they married, but later in life her father acquired an accounting degree.

Narratives of Educational Opportunity

For most participants, access to education was marked by many difficulties such as health. Olga's father's eyesight loss led her mother to work in manual labor outside the home as the breadwinner. She noted, "Mother was a warrior, hard worker. She became the father." Along with access, the public and/or private school attended and its permanence varied according not only to parents' financial standing but also to parents' understanding of and investment in Afro-Brazilian future employment. This was addressed by Iris: **"**My mother once said that we had to study to get out of misery, you have to study, so I thought I'm going to study to escape poverty." Similarly, Alice's mother told her about the importance of education to change their material conditions. Alice's path to education was shaped by the constant reminder of her mother saying, "Study to become someone in life."

Sexual Orientation

Regarding sexuality, sixteen participants self-identified as heterosexual, one as bisexual, and one as gay. Gender and sexuality identities are relevant to this study because members of

Brazil's LGBTQ community face many obstacles to education (Malta, 2018). In recent years an increase of far-right propaganda has accused teachers of imposing LGBTQ agendas (e.g., curriculum change regarding sexual orientation education), which they characterize as threats to traditional family ideals.

Religious Affiliations

I also asked participants to identify religious orientations. Their religious affiliations were varied. Religious orientation was included in the study because Black's experience religion-based racism when they practice African religions such as *Candomblé* in Bahia and throughout Brazil. Only five participants identified with *Candomblé* and six identified as Catholic; none identified as evangelical, even though some participants attended church services with close relatives during childhood. Similar to gender identity discrimination, *Candomblé f*ollowers face discrimination due to expansion of the evangelical church's intolerance and extreme attacks against houses of worship, including arson and physical assaults on the people of *Candomblé* (Malomalo, 2019; Melo, 2019). As Iris noted, "African religion of *Candomblé* is depicted as the devil's religion," a common stereotype in Brazilian society, "used to diminish black culture's faith." *Candomblé* followers dispute negative mainstream narratives about Black peoples' *Candomblé* faith. Maria posits, "*Candomblé* still is subjected to persecution and is not tolerated by society."

Relationship Status

In terms of relationship status, six women were married, six were single, four were divorced, and two were in long-term relationships. The marital status category is important to the study because of national statistics indicating overrepresentation of Black women in single mother households. Furthermore, Black women's occupations are found in the lower strata of

society, where the women are mostly overrepresented in manual labor and as domestic servants (Ipea, 2011). These circumstances decrease their upward mobility. Some participants mentioned this information frequently.

Geographical Location

Sixteen participants were from the state of Bahia in the northeast, one was from the state of Parana in the south, and one was from Rio de Janeiro in southeastern Brazil. The geographic location is an important category because federal educators' recruitment in Brazil is open to all Brazilians who qualify for and pass the civil entrance exam. Their locations also show Afro-Brazilian women educators' mobility, which became clear with only two participants. Another interesting example of information gathered during interviews came from the testimony of one participant from the south, who noted that in the state she was from, racism was an impediment to becoming an educator in Parana's private school system.

Theme I – Enrichment Inside and Outside School

Extended Family and Community Involvement

Contributions of extended family members are visible in several *testimonios*, as noted by participants: "In the peripheric community the black family is educated by many people, I was educated by both my mother and grandmother and also my aunt, my cousin, and also the neighbors when my mother was at work," said Rosa. Throughout Rosa's childhood, she was taken care by "many hands" from uncles, cousins, and many neighbors. Although Rosa was raised only with her siblings and her mother, Regina grew up with her parents, two brothers, and paternal grandmother. She is very close to her 95-year-old grandmother, who incentivized and paid for some of her educational activities. Regina's private elementary education took place in her neighborhood. Olga credits her mother for influencing her goal of becoming a teacher and

her mother's sister as the basis for her academic and professional life. As for Olinda, she credits her informal education to her family and her formal education to "teachers who were politically active"; both prepared her to engage with community organization such as the Catholic church.

Maria grew up in Bahia as an only child who was very close to her extended family. She has seven aunts who were teachers. They have inspired Maria since childhood. Maria's mother was a nursing technician and her father worked in the metallurgical industry. Due to her bonds with extended family, Maria was exposed to many activities. For instance, she attended girl scout meetings with her youngest aunt, her uncle would take her to Black movement meetings and to libraries, and her father would take Maria to his metallurgical industry's union gatherings. She also went on outings with her grandfather to learn about and meet people in different areas of Salvador, i.e., medical college and museums. Elsa was taught to read by her godmother at age six. Her godmother was a teacher who ran her own her school at home, which received recognized from the government. When Elsa went to school at age seven, she notes, "I already knew how to read, so I would finish all the activities very quickly, and I helped my classmates finish the activities."

In addition to their extended family members, *Candomblé* was significant to participants' informal educations. For some participants, *Candomblé* helped pave their way to becoming involved in community social projects and was a first opportunity to teach. Elsa credits the *Candomblé terreiro* as "very important for our community, in helping to think about other perspectives and political organization" with regards to education. She adds, "there was formal projects to teach us about racial relations, first aid, and adult literacy courses to help the children, youth, and the women." Based on this community involvement, Elsa also notes that the *Candomblé* House provided a space for meetings to help fix and clean roads, and held many

ceremonies, including those involving Exu's food. In these ceremonies, leftover food was shared among families in the community: "As my family was really poor, and my father not always received enough money to support the family, we benefited from *Candomblé* House's sharing of food" noted Elsa.

Religious Involvement

Even though Afro-Brazilian women acknowledged the importance of organized faith to informal education, *Candomblé* was not the only religion. For instance, Rosa went to an evangelical church with her grandmother during her childhood. She has fond memories of this time, such as attending meetings of a youth group and Bible study. Rosa notes: "My love to learn and attentiveness to readings, and text interpretation and analysis of specific youth publications come from my grandma's evangelical church. You read the Bible and study it. Meetings to go over publications it helped motivate me," which she credits with her continuing desire to learn throughout her academic trajectory. Nina used to give religious instruction to children at a Catholic church. She notes, "I started teaching the children early on and I enjoyed it, from this opportunity I had the desire to work with children."

Zelda started attending Catholic church with friends from middle school; her parents and siblings followed her. Eventually, the nuns (who were from the Basic Ecclesial Communities or BEC, a movement to help churchgoers reflect on scripture and encourage discussion and solidarity to improve material conditions through consciousness raising) invited Zelda to catechize (a process of teaching by instructing and informing) the children and get involved with social projects to help improve lower-income children's literacy and after school activities. Later, the nuns were transferred, and a different type of Catholic church community involvement took place. Zelda notes, "The new charismatic movement resembled the Pentecostal church,"

and while the nuns' movement took effective action to help the community advocate for autonomy and rights, the new charismatic movement was concerned with charity instead of consciousness raising.

Olinda grew up with her mother being very active in the Catholic church during the 1970s and early 1980s when the church "was very involved with the end of the dictatorship, very progressive and involved in politics." Olinda adds, "every time there was any activity related to politics, I was present, I was part of the movement." This time was marked by influence of liberation theology, which was concerned with the freeing the oppressed from poverty and social injustice.

Social Movement Activism

Lastly, participants shared details on the importance of the Black movements to their uprising and involvement with their education. For instance, Elsa's brother was part of the Black movement, and she notes his influence: "Even though I come from a family of majoritarian of women, my older brother was very committed with social work and would bring me to diverse meetings. At 12-years-old I was involved with the neighborhood association of mothers, youth group, and later a group called *Polemica Negra*, Black Polemic group." Her brother also insisted Elsa be transferred to study at the *Pelourinho* in downtown Salvador, where she would have access to better public education and teachers who pushed students to learn more about their history.

Wanda credited her father and the Black movement with her historical and cultural awareness:

> Growing up, my brothers and I were immersed in Afro-Brazilian culture and had percussion, capoeira (Afro-Brazilian martial), Afro-Brazilian dance lessons, and

> we attended the *Olodum*, an Afro-band concerned with highlighting the African heritage through music and dance. We listened to the music and learned the resistance lyrics that sought to disrupt racial oppression, thus the Black movement and *Olodum* influenced and helped educate me.

Iris and Maria also credited the Black movement and her family's involvement with her education. She remembered conversations and meetings about the centenary of abolition of slavery in Brazil. Her uncle was a co-founder of the *Ile Aiye* carnival block, which was responsible for raising the Black Bahian community's consciousness and celebrating "Black is beautiful." Maria adds, "all the people involved with the Black Movement, inclusive Eloisa Barros, Luiz Alberto, and Ana Celia da Silva that I grew up with and met at my house contributed to my education, and also the *Candomblé terreiro*/house next to my house, and my immediate family relationships influenced my education a lot." The contribution of family, the social relations within the community in the form of organized faith, and the Black movements were building blocks that Afro-Brazilian women credited as the foundation of their informal educations. I now turn to the formal school trajectory experiences of Afro-Brazilian women.

Negotiating Public and Private Educational Opportunities

Black families recognize the importance of education to improve their children's material lives (Brito & Gomes, 2015). For most participants, their parents took advantage of private school despite their social economic background along with public schools that provided good educations in downtown Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. As demonstrated below, experiences of formal education for Afro-Brazilian women are shaped by financial struggles and strategies, school relationships, and racial identity inside and outside the schools.

According to Rosa, her private neighborhood school had different functions for the poor community where she resided.

> It helped expand access to school due to limited availability of the public school system and provided teachers year around, unlike public school teachers who often went on strike. The school also provided a space for extracurricular activities, enabling working parents to have their children in supervised programs that catered to their continued education, away from street problems.

Zelda notes, “I always attended private schools even though I come from a lower income family due to my father work as a servant, so my commitment was to keep my grades up to not lose the scholarship, and my mother worked as a domestic servant.” Zelda and her siblings attended private elementary and middle schools, a benefit her father earned because of his job as a manual laborer. This benefit, however, was not available during the year Zelda was a fifth-grade student. Her father went to tell the school principal that his children could not study there anymore because his company no longer provided full scholarships. Zelda recalled this change in employment benefits not only as an economic difficulty but also as a source of stress. Zelda adds, “It took my father three years to finish paying for one year of school, he fell short on payments. This made him seek out loan sharks and to renegotiate the payments many times; my health declined that school year. I was falling behind in math, so my mother paid for extracurricular mathematic support to get me caught up.”

Unlike Zelda’s situation, Irene’s parents worked in public education. To augment their income so they could afford private education for five children, Irene’s father worked at the petrochemical center in addition to teaching at elementary school. Most of the time, her mother worked teaching three shifts at private and public education institutions. Irene noted, “My

parents did this because they received tuition discount and believed the public education quality was in decline."

Adelia, Irene, Laura, and Aida also studied at private schools with scholarships. Adelia says her mother invested much in her education and expected her and her brother to succeed. They attended elementary and middle private schools because her mother worked two jobs. Adelia adds, "My mother didn't trust public schools due to frequent teachers' strikes and believed that private school would better prepare her children to further their educations." This meant that Adelia's mother's concerns were to provide a house, an education, and health conditions for her children by paying for extracurricular activities and a domestic servant. She worked hard and often left for work while her children were still in bed. Many times, she returned when they were already sleeping.

Laura's father worked for one of Bahia's telecommunications industries and had access to a scholarship to send Laura to private elementary school. However, Laura notes, "my living conditions were unstable because my mother's financial hardships. We moved often and this situation made schoolwork hard for me, always requiring outside academic support." According to Laura, these activities also worked as "a strategy to set a study routine and discipline, so by the time my mother arrived at home at night after a long day of work, I was done with homework." Due to financial instability and moving from rental houses into other neighborhoods, Laura always ended up having to move to her grandmother's due to shortages of money. These living outcomes made it hard for Laura to concentrate on school. In middle school, Laura notes, "I had to move to another state to live with my aunt because of financial hardship, during this time, I knew that I had to study to pass IFBA's entrance exam in order to return home."

In contrast to Laura's continuous financial hardships, the financial standing of Aida's family declined only at the end of her private middle school education due to her father's loss of employment. To help her parents, Aida made and sold homemade snacks to pay for school transportation and other necessities. Rosa's mother also struggled to pay for books and tuition because her father was no longer able to provide for the five children. They sought public schools that provided a good education. Rosa loved the experience of freedom at this larger public school. Feeling that she already knew the material, the curriculum was easy for her. However, poor material conditions at the school were obvious. There were times that Rosa went to school every other week because the school lacked chairs for all students. Rosa also noted, "In terms of relationships, public school is fantastic! No neighbors to keep track of you and tell your parents of your whereabouts. No one compared my academic success with that of my sister who didn't do as well as I did." Rosa's teachers not only expected success but also encouraged students by saying, "You have to study to attend college."

Like Rosa, Zelda also remembered how cruel it was for her siblings to always be compared to her at private school. Due to Zelda's parents' occupations and educations, they were unable to help their children in third grade with homework, which became Zelda's responsibility. However, Zelda notes, "As the years progressed it became harder for me to help my siblings and finish my own homework. Both of my siblings failed and were transferred to public schools." Even when she went to high school after passing the entrance exam to study at CEFET (now IFBA), Zelda's teachers always would tell her siblings, "Look up to your sister, see where she was selected." This comparison created tension not only among siblings but also with parents, as they prioritized the educational needs of participants.

For instance, Zelda notes, “During my high school and college my parents provided everything to me related to school, transportation, school materials, but I knew the money used to pay to help me would come from other material that my siblings needed, but my study was the priority.” Her siblings “never complained or asked for anything,” she adds. “Both my brother and sister grew up very close to each other, but they were not close to me. Our relationship changed after I went to college and got accepted to a paid internship that paid for my learning expenses. Only then, I got the courage to talk about these issues with my siblings and later call my parent’s attention to this unequal treatment.”

Participants’ educational experiences were constant reminders of parents telling them to do well. Alice’s path to education was shaped by her mother repeatedly saying, “Study to become someone in life” and the support of family and friends. Iris, Alice, Elsa, Nina, and Nora were the only participants who attended public schools from elementary to high school. To get to her school, Iris had to walk eleven kilometers. She noted:

> We came from a very poor family, I didn't have clothes or shoes, I walked barefoot for a long time because it was normal for us. Education was the only way to overcome poverty. My mother once said that we had to study to get out of misery, you must study, so I thought I’m going to study to escape poverty.

The higher expectations of Afro-Brazilian women’s parents sometimes didn't match that of teachers. Elsa described teachers at her neighborhood elementary public school: “The history of my neighborhood school is that most of the teachers didn't think that we students amounted to anything, the maximum they expected for us was to finish fifth grade. It was not a school that we heard about university, there was no expectation or encouragement.” After being transferred downtown to a bigger public school, Elsa met many students and got to know the area, its

museums and library, and Afro-Brazilian music bands, i.e., Olodum. Contrary to her neighborhood school, the teachers took Elsa's class on field trips to learn about historical places in downtown Salvador. She noted that she received an education that helped paved the way to college.

Race, Class, and Uncertainty at School

For Afro-Brazilian women who came from better financial circumstances, their racial identity became evident in some participant's accounts not only at private schools but also at public schools. Bruna, Felicia, Wanda, and Regina's parents paid for them to attend private school. Bruna grew in an upper middle-class neighborhood, a place she called an "island of white people." At her private elementary school there were just four Black students, including Bruna and her sister. Bruna's father worked for the oil industry at a time when such employment meant being well-to-do. However, their father's social status did not help Bruna and her sister participate in school commemorations, nor did it save them from discrimination in their neighborhood and at school.

For instance, Bruna described a painful memory at school. It involved a folklore festival where "none of the boys wanted to square dance with the Black girls, my sister and me. My mother forced my sister to dress as a boy so we could participate." At times like these her father always told Bruna and her sister, "You are Black and for Blacks to get ahead, to acquire what white people get with facility, you need to be extraordinary. That's why you need to focus on become your best otherwise you are not going to be respected in this society." Bruna's parents reminded her that the best way to overcome all the negative experiences was to study.

Unlike Bruna and Felicia, Wanda and her brothers grew up hearing their parents saying, "I want you to win studying because you are Black." For elementary school, Wanda and her two

brothers went to a private school. Wanda remembers her private school experience with pain because they were the exceptions, the only Black children studying there. Her brothers faced open discrimination; older students called them names, leading them to get in fights. On one occasion, her father was called to the school principal's office to address the racial discrimination. This led to his being invited to bring the children's Afro-Brazilian *Olodum* Band to an event to address the question of race at school. Wanda also remembered how she spent her time thinking and studying to earn recognition from her teacher. Even though she was a good student, her teacher didn't acknowledge her accomplishment, which made Wanda feel frustrated: "I wanted my teacher to say my name in front of the class to everyone to hear it and recognize how well I did my work."

Adelia was reared in Salvador and describes how she felt at school as "living in a white world of white people, white teachers, and only white bodies." She was the school's only Black child and came from a Black neighborhood in Salvador. During the 1970s and 1980s the Black middle class started to grow, which increased the numbers of Black students enrolled at Adelia's school. Besides race, Adelia mentioned social class as another difficulty. This entailed keeping up with her classmates' dress codes in addition to her racial identity. She recalls, "I didn't date any boys, unlike the white girl students. Also, the girls would hang out with me only at times when I was doing well at math." Unlike Adelia's, Rosa's racial identity had no negative effect because she felt that "at my public school the Black populations are almost the majority." Aida grew up in Rio de Janeiro and mentions that "at my school there was only two other Black girls, and they were called *mulatto*, today we know we are not, but at the time they would call me *morena* (light brown), imagine who has light skin?" Aida's skin is Black. She also shared this memory: "There was a gorgeous Black boy who was biracial, he didn't know he was also Black.

One time he told me that he liked me very much, that I was very intelligent, that I was talkative, but I was Black. He didn't date me because I am Black."

Table 4 shows Afro-Brazilian women's public and private elementary and secondary educational trajectories. For elementary school, only five participants attended public elementary public schools, as opposed to eleven in private schools, and two who attended both private and public elementary schools. However, in high school, of eighteen participants, fifteen attended public high school. The reasons presented by participants were financial hardships and loss of scholarship due to parent's unemployment, as narrated below. Only two attended private high schools with scholarships. Irene's mother taught at her school. Adelia, who says her mother tried to transfer her to public school, notes: "My brother and I didn't secure a space at the public school that my mother wanted, so she gave up transferring us from private school, and instead fired the domestic servant."

Table 4: Afro-Brazilian Woman Educational Background

Afro-Brazilian Women's Educational Backgrounds

Name	Elementary School	High School
Alice	Public	Public
Felicia	Private	Public
Regina	Private	Public
Olga	Private	Public
Bruna	Private	Public
Rosa	Private	Public
Adelia	Private with scholarship	Private with scholarship
Zelda	Private with scholarship	Public
Irene	Private with scholarship	Private with scholarship
Laura	Private with scholarship	Public
Iris	Public	Public
Aida	Private with scholarship	Public
Nina	Public	Public
Wanda	Private	Public
Olinda	Public and Private	Public
Maria	Private and Public	Private
Elsa	Public	Public
Nora	Public	Public

For high school, Laura's family expected her to go to CEFET (now IFBA). This was a public institution of reference that her family believed would provide Laura with the foundation and preparation to attend college. Laura returned to Salvador to take IFBA's placement test with a cousin who studied at the public school. Laura passed, but her cousin didn't. This experience made Laura feel that "our dreams were divided, what we dreamed during our teenage years, what we wanted to be were being determined by the quality of education we acquired." Laura's experience showcases her parents' pressure for her to attend private elementary school. She finished both high and electronics school.

Olinda's high school experience was marked by a time when the state was testing an all-day school format. In the morning there was a regular curriculum. In the afternoon, there were

industrial techniques, agricultural techniques, commercial techniques, and home economics. Olinda's father was not happy that his children were spending the whole day at school, so he withdrew them and enrolled them at a private school at night. Later, Olinda was transferred to a public high school. During her senior year the government was pushing professional education. Many students resisted this mandate and Olinda decided to move to Salvador because she wanted to attend college in Bahia. However, Bahia also required students to earn a technical education parallel to high school, which Olinda satisfied by earning an accountant technician's diploma.

Zelda's parents knew the private scholarship ended in middle school. She recalls, "my parents were searching for a public school that was good, and they waited overnight in line to get me a space at a downtown Salvador high school." Zelda also studied very hard and entered CEFET (now IFBA) in hopes of becoming a chemistry technician and to find employment. Her situation was affected by government actions. Zelda states, "in 1998, for instance, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's administration separated the technical school from high school. My first day of class was marked by a teachers' assembly to decide to go on strike due to salary and the separation of technical and high schools. The strike lasted for three months." Zelda wasn't sure she had made the right decision. However, she notes, "I ended up finish regular high school, and after graduating from high school, I enrolled in chemistry at IFBA and waited for an internship to finish my course, which took five years. Alice also attended technical school, graduating with a high school diploma in construction. Felicia graduated with technical education in high school and, Nora graduated high school with a technologist's diploma from CETEC (now IFBA).

Elsa attended high school and graduated as an administration technician. She was born and raised in a poor neighborhood that was politically organized. Elsa added, "I was educated by

a project from Center of Afro-Eastern Studies, *Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais* (CEAO), UFBA, responsible to bring race relations and gender educational program to my community and would take us to extra-curricular activities around Salvador." This opportunity helped Elsa decide to prepare and apply to go to the university. This is the work of the Bahia Black movement to include the history of Africa and Afro-Brazilians in the school curriculum.

Adelia attended private high schools due to a job benefit provided by her father's employment. At this time, Adelia suggested that their middle-class status had declined due to economic crisis. They no longer could afford domestic servants' help and other activities, making Adelia responsible for domestic upkeeping and her brother's homework. Adelia remembered her mother saying, "Look my daughter you need to study so you can afford your own things, your car and form your own family. The Christian and capitalist cycles of life."

In high school, Olga was trained as a teacher (*magisterium*) and started her first job at age 17, teaching at an elementary school. Bruna was admitted to a prestigious technical school. Even though Rosa's mother enrolled her in high school to become an accountant, Rosa wanted to be trained as a teacher because she believed she could find a job in that field. She notes, "I saw my parents very worried about high school, they were concerned with a professional secondary education that gave me access to work that allowed me to live with dignity." Most of the time, Rosa had to walk because she didn't have money to pay bus fare. "The shortage of money made me look for an internship at the Secretary State Office. This opportunity made me realize that to enter such places I had to study." Rosa credited the people she met at the internship with broadening her horizons to look for and prepare to go to college. Iris finished high school and was invited by a Black nun who was a school principal to coordinate the entrance exam (*vestibular*). Iris was preparing herself for the entrance exam and studying theater, which helped

her with oratory and her insecurities. Aida attended a public high school. At the time, her family's financial standing declined due to her father's loss of employment, so she made and sold snacks to help with school transportation and with expenses at home. At high school, Nina went to Barbalho's neighborhood school to be trained to be a teacher. After completion, she enrolled at a technical school (now IFBA) to become an electronics technician.

This first theme, *Enrichment Inside and Outside School*, centered on experiences of participants in both informal and formal education while attending elementary and secondary schools. Although the family was identified as key in motivating Afro-Brazilian women in pursuit of their educational trajectory, in most cases the mothers, interviewees also credited the extended family and the organized faith in addition to the Black movements. As for participants' narratives about their parents' motives to send them to private elementary school, these were, strategically, to acquire an education without long interruptions of teacher's strikes. Some also believed that public educational quality was in decline and that private education would better prepare students to access public higher education, which is free in Brazil and better funded. However, most parents faced financial difficulties in paying for school.

Theme II - Navigating College

This section showcases Theme 2, Afro-Brazilian women's access and graduation experiences while navigating higher education.

Creating strategies of access

Zelda says, "after finishing high school at CEFET (now IFBA), I returned to CEFET to study chemistry. Chemistry was an area that I had difficulties, so my strategy was to study chemistry while preparing for the college entrance exam and get a job as chemistry technician." Zelda never graduated as a technician; she notes, "the internship arrives at the same time I got a

job offer and was accepted at college. At the job interview they asked me if I plan to go to college. I followed my teacher's advice to tell the truth so, I told them that I was going to study sociology at UFBA."

Elsa passed the entrance exam for the social work and pedagogy degrees. She decided on the social work degree at the Catholic University (UCSAL), which portrayed itself as philanthropic, but it was private. It was also the first university that informed Elsa she was accepted. Like Elsa, Adelia worked and studied hard but didn't pass the public entrance exam for UFBA. She noted, "I'm from a Black and poor generation of students because my social class condition decline when my mother lost her second job, this was a difficult time with shortage of money." This left Adelia with no choice but to start at the private Catholic university, but she couldn't pay tuition. Every college year was a financial struggle for Adelia. Adelia's strategy, like that of other participants, was to find ways to stay and get involved with the Student Movement, where she had different roles. Eventually the university forgave Adelia's debt because neither she nor her mother could afford to pay tuition.

Another strategy was working and studying to acquire a college degree. Olinda first passed the entrance exam to study data processing in technology at a private college with a government educational loan. Parallel to this, she applied to and started studying communication at UFBA and moved into the college dorm, where she lived for two years. However, after her internship Olinda was hired by a company, which made it difficult for her to finish her communication degree. After one year, Olinda passed an entrance exam to work for Bahia state government. Years later, unsatisfied with her position because she felt it didn't offer ways to contribute to Brazilian society, Olinda applied and passed the exam to work for the federal government at the agrotechnical school, and lastly at IFBA. In the late 2000s, Olinda returned to

UFBA to study journalism and benefitted from the affirmative action policy (in the form of the quota program) because she identified as Black and had previously attended public school.

As Aida prepared to enter college, she wasn't sure about what degree to choose. However, some participants benefited from their parents' higher education degrees. Throughout her life, Aida's mother would bring her to work at the hospital because of no classes or no domestic servants to take care of her. She would also point out the examples of psychology, social work, and nutritionist professions. In fact, a nutritionist's degree was what her mother wanted for Aida. However, Aida notes, "I talked to the social worker at my mother's workplace and thought of becoming a lawyer like my father, but my parents didn't encourage me." Aida first went to a private college for two semesters, but her mother was having a hard time paying tuition and would tell her, "Study, I'm in a hurry." Due to economic distress, Aida applied and passed at a public college.

Unlike the influence of Aida's parents' formal education, Zelda decided by herself what degree to pursue. Her choice made her father quite upset when decided to study sociology. Zelda notes, "My father believed that with chemistry I could work at places such as the Camacari Petrochemical Center. I would have a health plan. Only when I passed the entrance exam to become a public educator, at the State of Bahia Infrastructure Secretariat, that he realized that I made the right decision."

After graduating with an electronics diploma from high school, Bruna worked for two and a half years before applying to college. Bruna didn't pass the exam for medicine because she blanked at the physics part of the exam. She notes, "I passed and studied concomitant to social work at a private and communication at public colleges. During my internship, I decided to drop the UNEB and finished my social work degree due to my father's health problems, I wanted to

help my family financially." Family obligations led some participants to come up with alternative strategies to graduate.

Even though Rosa wanted to apply to UFBA, she knew she had to enroll in a preparatory course. Her strategy was to learn mathematics, physics, and chemistry to better prepare herself to apply for college. During the preparatory course, Rosa heard about the private Catholic university, which is where "they started the affirmative action program by accepting poor and Black students." Students paid to take the entrance exam *vestibular*; once enrolled, they could apply for scholarships. At home, there was no incentive or discussion of how to apply to college. However, this didn't stop her mother's aspirations for Rosa to become someone important, like a judge. Rosa notes, "They didn't have an idea how hard and fast the *vestibular* - preparatory course was."

Rosa applied and passed the exam for the private Catholic university. Her strategy was study and work. When she did tell her mother, her mother asked Rosa about how they are going to pay. The enrollment fee was paid with the help of friends and family. Rosa notes, "I was the first one in the street to pass the entrance exam to attend college, the whole street celebrated." Rosa was accepted at the philanthropic Catholic university, although privately, Rosa noted that they had a public commitment to poor, Black, and the default student population. Rosa recalls, "once college classes started, I discovered the student defaulter movement: students were allowed to divide tuition into many payments. Later, I was considered for scholarships." Regarding the opportunity to be part of the student movement, she noted: "It was marvelous and provided a space of growth as human being, as woman, as a person that needs to position oneself politically at society to promote transformations."

Irene's private school prepared students for the college's entrance exam. However, Irene didn't pass the exam for communication at UFBA and instead attended a private college studying tourism. Thus, like other participants, Irene not only benefitted from her parents' formal education for applying to school, but she also benefitted financially since she didn't enter public free college. Her parents paid for tuition until she was considered for a scholarship and found a job at the college that helped her family with costs. Irene received a one-month internship but decided to stay for three months for the opportunity to get involved in sectors such as marketing, reservations, and finances. After returning to classes Irene's professors offered her research opportunities and scholarships. Four years later she finished her degree with a job offered by her college to be a market director. This included a salary and the opportunity to specialize in higher education methodology. Irene noted: "What does a poor and Black person want? They want to enter the job market as fast as possible and as soon as they have a degree on hand the better is." Irene's parents social and financial support helped her not only get a degree but also paved the way for her to strategically get a job.

Financial Difficulties

Iris passed the *vestibular* entrance exam to sociology at the Federal University of Parana (UFPR). She describes her experience: "I didn't believe I was accepted. [UFPR] it was something strange to me because I had no college reference, no friends that was attending it. I never had even visited or know where the college was located." She made friends and saw all the course opportunities; she took advantage of them and formed a study group. She also shares her experiences and notes, "some of my difficulties were money, to eat, to pay transportation, and to help at home." Iris looked for and was considered for a scholarship from the National Council Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq). She graduated with a sociology degree and

specialized in African cultures and inter-ethnic relations in education, where she learned race relations, noting that "UFPR didn't teach about race relations," followed by a master's degree in sociology with a scholarship from CNPQ. Iris posits, "I had bad experiences in my master's program. The professor wanted me to study Gilberto Freyre, a defender of miscegenation, and people from Rio de Janeiro that was anti quotas." Iris was very involved with the Black movement and founder of the *Instituto de Pesquisa Afro-Descendencia* (IPAD) while teaching at a private college. She also helped and participated at the Durham Conference in 2001. Iris earned a doctorate degree from Sao Paulo State University or *Universidade Estadual Paulista* (UNESP) and earned a Ford Foundation graduate fellowship. She adds, "today we are hearing about the *epistemicidio* concept, the idea that you earn a master and doctorate degree without learning anything about Afro-Brazilians' history… I just had two Black professors in my academic experience."

Even the private college route didn't work for some working participants; however, they didn't sit idle or give up. Laura applied to the private Catholic university and passed. To mitigate the lack of family support, her strategy was to apply for an electronics technician's paid internship to help her pay tuition, and she applied for financial support without success. She studied in the morning shift and worked from afternoon to evening. Once the internship was over, Laura was offered a job. Unfortunately, a year and half later, she had to abandon college because her salary wasn't enough to pay tuition and to cover food and living expenses. Unlike Rosa, Laura was not considered for the same financial support at the Catholic private university. Despite all the difficulties, Laura still applied to the public Federal University of Sergipe (UFS) and passed. Her boss helped her find a job there. Once classes started, Laura applied for scholarships and was considered for housing and research scholarships. This financial support

allowed her to participate in the student movement and experience college life to its fullest. Laura noted:

> I think if I didn't have the opportunity to be fully immersed in the academic culture through the financial support and academic scholarships, I would not have the same academic formation and preparation. It was five years of a lot of dedication, work, and university understanding, and the realization of how much I need to defend the public university.

The college experience of participants varied by socioeconomic standing in public and private college access. Wanda tried the UFBA entrance exam twice and finished her Bachelor of Literature and English as a foreign language. Wanda noted, “I lived the college life to its fullest because my father financially provided for my education, and I didn't have to work, so I took advantage and spend the whole day on campus, I took dance, music classes, and many other classes.”

While in college, Wanda got an internship to teach English to fifth graders. She remembered an overcrowded classroom without educational resources, with only a blackboard and chalk. Wanda tried to come up with ideas to keep the students engaged. At one point an experienced teacher told her, “I used to be as motivated as you, I want to see you in twenty years from now.” She realized the difficulties of teaching for lower income students without resources. In a classroom with 42 students, Wanda took 30 minutes to calm them down so she could start her teaching activities. This experience almost made her give up teaching.

Maria applied for and passed the exam at the private Catholic University for communication, UNEB for Letters, and UFBA for pedagogy. Family college experiences helped Maria decide to attend UFBA because of its prestige and because her seven aunts went there. She

started in 1991 and there was a long period of professors' striking. Maria also attended a specialization course for youth and adult's basic education at UNEB with a scholarship from her job. She transferred and graduated from Catholic University of Salvador in 2000.

Lack of money didn't stop some participants from applying to or entering the university. Some worked and applied for scholarships at school or in an elected official's program. Alice did not pass the entrance exam to become a civil engineer, so instead she passed the entrance exam to the licentiateship in mathematics at a private Catholic University of Salvador, where she had to work as a teacher to pay tuition with some scholarship stipends provided by a program between the college and elected officials. Felicia passed the entrance exam to the licentiateship in mathematics at the State University of Feira de Santana (UEFS). At some point during her studies, Felicia decided to take fewer credit hours and found a job, not because money was scarce, but because she wanted to be independent and earn her own money.

Regina took the entrance exam and passed at the State University of Bahia (UNEB), which was a relief because Regina's mother would not be able to pay for private college. Olga was trained as a teacher (magisterium) and started her first job at age 17 teaching at an elementary school. She added, "I had to get on the bus at 4 AM, my mother would walk to the bus stop with me, and I would stay at work the whole day." Nina finished her technical education at IFBA and the coordinator hired her to teach. She notes, "I worked with him, I taught his classes. At first it was very difficult to teach adults that was experienced in their fields, I was only 19 years old."

Family and Community Support

Even though lack of money was a problem for paying tuition for many participants, this didn't stop them from applying and being accepted. Once there, they received support from

family members and their community. Elsa's family and community got together and helped her pay the registration fee. Once there, she applied for educational financing. "And there were students that could afford to pay, but they got scholarships" said Elsa. However, students without the means to pay were advised by the student movement to continue attending classes while waiting for the university's answer to their student loan applications, which Elsa did. Yet she was not allowed to take exams.

This situation took up a whole semester while Elsa attended classes and got no answers from the bursar's office. She heard about the federal government student loan, the *Program de Financiamento Estudantil* (FIES). Elsa discovered that she needed a guarantor who earned three minimum salaries, the equivalent of six hundred dollars today. This was a problem for Elsa because no one in her immediate family earned this kind of money. The only person who had enough money was her mother's brother, but they felt ashamed to ask him for help. Luckily for Elsa, the Priest (*Pai de Santo*) from the *Candomblé* house where she was a member, asked how she was doing: "I'm not doing well because I don't know if I'm able to study this year. I told him about FIES and that I didn't have a loan guarantor which he said: 'Now you have, I'm your guarantor."

Aida continued to sell sandwiches at college as she did in high school to help with expenses and noted that she couldn't immerse herself in college because her mother was in a hurry for her to get a degree and start working. Aida finished her degree in social work and psychomotricity specialization. She notes, "All students were white, and I was the only Black student of the group, when I attended a public university there was no affirmative action access program. It was an elitist institution."

In the second theme, *Navigating College*, Afro-Brazilian women participants shared their educational experiences in higher education, a path paved with some financial difficulties. Lack of family economic support made students look for paid internships. When not awarded with scholarships at private colleges, Afro-Brazilian women had to look for work outside colleges. This sometimes resulted in students abandoning college because their earnings were not enough to pay tuition, food, and living expenses. However, they persisted and applied to public universities. Those who received scholarships used the money to eat, pay for transportation, and help at home, while others were able to fully immerse themselves in academic life with financial support. Afro-Brazilian women in need dealt with economic disparities by working, while others benefited from parents' financial comfort.

Theme III: Becoming an Educator: Afro-Brazilian Women's Destinations

In this section, we will learn about Afro-Brazilian's experience navigating college as they prepared to earn degrees and become educators at IFBA.

College path to professional career

The professional path of Afro-Brazilian women started with work experience, sometimes prior to college, as volunteers teaching at community institutions, or during college in the form of internships or some concomitant to college. Table 5 illustrates Afro-Brazilian women's work experiences in education, along with types of institutions where they worked in private and public sectors, and their indications of job satisfaction.

Table 5: Afro-Brazilian Women's Working Trajectories

Afro-Brazilian Women's Working Trajectories

Teacher	TAE –	Years Working in Education	Numbers of HE Institutions Worked	Types of HE Institutions	Teaching Research	Job Satisfaction
Alice		32	1	Public	Both	Yes
Felicia		20	6	Private/Public	Teaching	Yes
	Regina	10	2	Public	Both	Yes
Olga		3	2	Public	Teaching	Yes
	Bruna	25	1	Public	Both	No
Rosa		10	2	Private/Public	Both	No
Adelia		17	4	Private/Public	Both	No
Zelda		9	2	Private/Public	Both	Yes
Irene		18	6	Private/Public	Both	Yes
	Laura	11	2	Private/Public	Both	Yes
Iris		14	5	Private/Public	Both	Yes
	Aida	11	2	Private/Public	Both	Yes
Nina		45	2	Public	Teaching	Yes
Wanda		12	2	Private/Public	Both	Yes
	Olinda	25	2	Public	Both	Yes
Maria		7	3	Private/Public	Both	Yes
	Elsa	11	2	Public	Both	Yes
	Nora	33	2	Private/Public	Both	Yes

After earning a sociology degree, Iris applied to teach history at a public lower-income school. However, when she arrived to teach, the class was no longer available. The director told Iris she was assigned to teach a physical education class. She started teaching and notes, "I taught for two weeks. I reprimed a student that slam the door by asking him to leave the class and enter again without slam the door, the director told me the student was a drug dealer and that my life was in danger, and that I must be careful." During the master's program, Iris's friend told her about a teaching position available at his school and told her to apply. She did, but the school never contacted her. Her friend asked the school about Iris' application, and he told her, "The school doesn't hire Black teachers because their students are White." This negative experience

was not an impediment to teaching, and Iris has held many positions of leadership throughout her career, i.e., Research and Extension of Affirmative Action Coordination, Director of Nucleus of Research - Institute for the Defense of Human Rights (IDDEHA), Coordination/Organization of textbook, Consulting for the Department for Continuing Education, Literacy, and Diversity (SECAD), to name a few.

Zelda finished her master's degree in 2009 and found work as a substitute high school teacher for Bahia state school and as a substitute teacher at IFBA for high school, high school concomitant with technical school, and superior education. She also taught sociology of education at a private college. Zelda finished her licentiate in sociology and applied for a Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) scholarship to start her master's program. She described her higher education experience: "Even though I describe myself as a good student involved with my education, this place required me to be aware of all the sacrifices my family made to help me succeed, and this brought me fear of failing and feeling undermined." The master's degree challenged Zelda with expectations to do well by her family, professors, and friends. She not only worried about not doing well, but also worried about doing a good job because of the scholarship she received from public coffers. This was a very tense time for Zelda: "the process of learning and producing knowledge become heavy because it's very unequal and very competitive among colleagues. Thus, finishing the master is possible, but I found the process painful, and it didn't need to be this way." In 2012, Zelda entered IFBA as a full-time professor.

Once Felicia graduated college, she felt insecure with her acquired education because she believed it lacked some content. Although she knew that with persistence she could acquire the necessary knowledge, she decided to start teaching at the elementary level, saying, "I didn't

believe I could advance." Felicia's first job was at a neighborhood school teaching elementary students until she learned about the entrance exam to work as a teacher for Bahia state teaching mathematics, which provides job benefits and stability. Parallel to teaching, Felicia learned about a course designed to give students from public universities opportunities to specialize in mathematics at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), where she enrolled and considered some scholarships. This was a decision Felicia was able to make after being in the classroom teaching elementary school and realizing she had a hard time maintaining order and disciplining students. Felicia adds, "I felt incompetent within my classroom."

This experience made Felicia investigate higher education. She learned about a substitute teacher's position for a two-year contract at UEFS and applied because one criterion is to hold a specialization and she was classified in second place. UEFS called her as soon as they got a second opening. Again, Felicia said, "I felt challenged, I didn't see myself in that space, however I thought I passed, and I'm going to hold on to this opportunity." This opportunity made her realize she wanted to teach at higher education institutions. She took the four allowed classes at UFBA as a special student while applying for scholarships from the (CAPES) in the second year. She then resigned the substitute teacher's position to become a full-time student. One criterion of the CAPES scholarship was to pass the classes, but Felicia had difficulties with the content of one of her classes and didn't pass, losing her scholarship. She felt overwhelmed and thought higher education wasn't for her, but her professor told her: "Just because you lost your scholarship you are going to give up in the middle of the course? You retake the class, and I will see if I can get you another scholarship program." Felicia is grateful for her professor's help in finishing her master's degree. These credentials opened many doors to her career in private and public universities. During her two years teaching at UFBA, she realized that she had what it

takes to become a great professor because of the varied possibilities and diverse class profiles. She taught secretariat, engineer, and licentiate degrees. In 2007, she took the public exam to teach at CEFET (now IFBA). Later, she took advantage of a doctorate program offered by the IFBA-UFBA alliance, which made fifteen places available. Felicia was classified in the sixth position. In the last year, students had the opportunity to study at the Federal University of Lavras (UFLA) in Minas Gerais.

In her second year of college, Adelia started working as a teacher in a private school to pay for transportation, help at home, and to buy her own clothes and school supplies. In 2006 Adelia graduated and continued to work at private and public schools to increase her income. Adelia finished methodology of teaching, research, and extension specializations in 2008 at UNEB. This was followed by employment in public service, teaching elementary and high school students at State Secretary of Education, both elementary and high school students. This job helped increased Adelia's income and came with other benefits, such as the vice school directorship position, as she prepared to take the entrance exam to work at IFBA in 2011.

In her last semester of college, Olga belonged to a committee and learned about the education and contemporaneity specialization course at UNEB. She applied and was considered for it. Three years later, after passage of the Law 10.639, which mandated inclusion of Afro-Brazilian culture and history in the curriculum, it was required that teachers in the field of fine art, Portuguese, and history had to take the specialization course. Then Olga got her second specialization in the history and culture of Afro-Brazilians.

Regina graduated with a bachelor's degree in pedagogy, followed by specialization in teaching methodology, research, and expansion in education. During her internship she started seeing some of the difficulties of this career, such as low salaries and school conditions. She then

decided to focus on opportunities to teach at the federal level, working and studying while looking to apply to enter IFBA. She was hired to coordinate one of the city halls in the state of Bahia. However, the salary was low and work conditions were precarious. Prior to accepting the job Regina had already applied to CEFET (now IFBA). She passed the entrance exam but had to wait to take the position.

Maria passed the public service exam to teach for the city of Salvador. She attended a specialization course for youth and adult basic education at UNEB, with a scholarship from her job. She also held other jobs, including *Olodum*'s educational programs and the Center of Afro-Eastern Studies - *Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais* (CEAU), where guidelines for race relations to Salvador city hall and Afro-descendant education and occupations were written, namely for Black domestic servants and Black teachers. Maria transferred and graduated from the Catholic university of Salvador in 2000. Due to her involvement in these guidelines' proceedings, Maria helped train teachers from community schools in Salvador at an association of schools financed by the Catholic church. After graduation, she went to another state in the northeast to work for a private school in charge of the study abroad program for two years, where classes focused on human emancipation and social justice in Brazil. She enjoyed her time teaching foreign students and learned much, but she also started to question teaching for the private sector. She noted,

> I was formed and supported by so many people that were active in making a difference, so I came from all this experience and my students were people that had educational deficit, and I believed that my way of teaching could help them overcome their lacunas and helped train teachers, and at that moment I was there with privileged people that had access to everything including the best teachers.

Maria decided to return to Salvador and acquired a second specialization in racial relations in education and finished her master's in African and ethnicity studies at UFBA with a scholarship from UNICEF. Maria has extensive experience teaching students and training teachers at many institutions. In 2017 she started the doctoral program at UFBA and in 2018, she entered IFBA as a professor.

After finishing her degree, Laura applied to three public service positions and passed in all of them, two in education and one in health. She notes, "I worked for a year at the city hall, and then IFBA contacted me for my TAE position." After graduation, Rosa specialized in education and research methodology at UNEB. Then Rosa decided not to go to graduate school because she wanted to focus and study to pass the public exam for teaching to support herself. She passed the entrance exam to teach at the city council school, but it took four years for them to offer Rosa the teaching position. While waiting, she taught at private and public schools. With the job security of public school, Rosa felt she could dream of other opportunities. She applied to be a substitute teacher at UNEB. These opportunities brought two distinctive work experiences, "one working training teachers, and the other working at a public school in Salvador." In the meantime, Rosa continued to study to take the public exam to enter IFBA and succeeded in 2011.

Irene recognized two positive outcomes of her private college degree. Irene notes: "First, I graduated in four years, as compared to public colleges where strikes can delay graduation for five, six, or even seven years. Second, there was access to research extension opportunities and close relationships with professors who helped me decide that teaching was better than the tourism industry." Irene posits: "What does a poor Black person want? S/he wants to enter the job market as fast as possible and as fast as they have a college diploma on hand, the better it is,"

a position that many participants shared. This led Irene to teach in two private colleges and to take the public substitute teacher entrance exam to teach at CEFET (now IFBA) with a two-year contract, where she did a second specialization in technical and professional education. She really enjoyed teaching at IFBA and liked the opportunity to teach for a diverse program called *verticalization* from high school and technical education to the doctoral program.

As her contract came to an end, Irene decided that she needed to get a master's degree. After researching her options, she discovered that only two colleges had a master program in the tourism field. She went to the University of Brasilia (UNB), a federal public institution. After three months, the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN) opened a master's program and Irene went to partake in the process since this was in the same region as her state, Bahia. This time she lacked financial support from her parents. During the first year, Irene applied for a scholarship but was denied. However, she found employment at a private school. In the second year of college, Irene was required to teach as part of the program and was selected by her advisor to teach which helped her gain experience. While Irene was finishing her master's degree, Bahia was opening the teaching position entrance exams for UFBA, UNEB, and IFBA. She took and passed all of them.

Aida finished her degree in social work and psychomotricity specialization. Later in life she moved to Bahia and started working for a non-governmental organization with women with vulnerability, along with working with adults and youth education for the state. Aida applied and passed to work at IFBA and UNEB as a social worker, or TAE. And as for Olinda, she passed the entrance exam to work in Bahia's state bureaucracy. Years later, unsatisfied with her position there and wanting to contribute to Brazilian society, Olinda applied and passed the exam to work for the federal government at the agrotechnical school and lastly at the IFBA.

Elsa continued her education and had three remunerated internships that helped her pay for transportation and food. These internships also provided Elsa working experience with youth at the city hall at the Youth Agent (*Agente Jovem*). She also worked at the Children and Adolescence Foundation (FUNDAC) at night, helping street adolescents. Lastly, Elsa worked at the Network GAPA, which is an HIV-AIDS support and prevention group. She graduated from college and started to study to pass exams for public jobs. In the meantime, Elsa worked at CEAO with youth, where she had the opportunity to know other Black movement groups. However, she realized that her colleague's employment was based on seasonal projects and contracts and found that most of them didn't have financial security. She grew up hearing her father telling her to find job stability.

After graduation, Elsa moved out of her parent's house to live downtown, close to her work. She left CEAO and started working for the Socio Education Community House, a prison for youth. She continued to study, hoping to pass the federal exam for social work, and passed at UEFS. However, it took three and one-half years for them to call her. As soon she started work there IFBA also called Elsa. She started working at UEFS and IFBA, but later decided to work for IFBA only because there was talk about incompatibility and the possibility of having to pay the institution back even though technical administrators do not have full-time dedication, like some teachers.

Wanda was hired for three years by a Bahia state program called REDA to teach at a public school. She also worked as a secretary at a private college that provided distance education. The classes were streamed live and teachers worked on and off camera to answer student's questions. Eventually, she became one of the teachers in the background that provided support to the teacher presenter. Wanda notes, "I was the first Black teacher on video at the

Faculty of Technology and Science in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil." Later, she taught English in two schools while doing a specialized course in teaching reading strategies by content analysis of texts about racial diversity at Salvador University.

Afro-Brazilian Women IFBA Destination

The employment process to work at IFBA today is based on a civil service entrance exam. At IFBA, the faculty has a career plan: a report that describes all activities and is updated every two years. The report looks at activities such as training, events, classes, meetings, and continued education. Each activity provides a grade number, which eventually helps them climb the ladder by obtaining promotions and salary increases. There is no mentor, the activities are done individually, and a committee evaluates them. The non-mentorship in higher education is not unique to Brazil in Latin America, as reported by another scholar (Twombly, 1998). Table 6 illustrates occupations that Afro-Brazilian women hold as teachers and administrative technicians.

Table 6: Afro-Brazilian Women's Occupations

Afro-Brazilian Women's Occupations

Teacher	Administrative Technician of Education (TAE), Educational Administrator
Alice	Regina
Felicia	Bruna
Olga	Laura
Rosa	Aida
Adelia	Olinda
Zelda	Elsa
Irene	Nora
Iris	
Nina	
Wanda	
Maria	

Table 7 illustrates current positions of Afro-Brazilian women educators at IFBA, showcasing their success at climbing the academic ladder.

Table 7: Afro-Brazilian Women's Current Positions

Afro-Brazilian Women's Current Positions

Teacher	**TAE**		**Current Position**	
Alice		Chief of Staff	Chief Executive Officer	
Felicia				
	Regina	Educational Coordinator	Management of Research and Social Programs	
Olga		PRONATEC Supervise	NEAB Organizer	
	Bruna	Academic Education Manager	Studies Director	Administrative Director
Rosa		NEAB Organizer		
Adelia				
Zelda				
Irene		Chief of Sport, Culture & Leisure	Chief of IFBA's Communication	
	Laura			
Iris				
	Aida			
Nina		Chief of Staff	Rector	General Chief of Staff
Wanda				
	Olinda	IT Coordinator	IT Director	
Maria				
	Elsa			
	Nora	Analyst and Project Coordinator		

After graduating, Nora entered the job market and worked for major laboratories analyzing metal structures for Petrobras and writing technical reports. Her teacher from *Centro de Educação Tecnologica da Bahia* (CENTEC) or Center of Technological Education in Bahia, now IFBA, invited Nora and her colleague to work for him, but the education salary was lower

than the industry salary they were earning. Her colleague convinced Nora to help their teacher and set up a laboratory at CENTEC. This is where they did the equipment maintenance and installation. They also started teaching and helping the tenured professor who didn't know how to deal with the machinery: “We were the hands-on teachers,” said Nora. She worked for three years at CENTEC; after the 1988 Constitution prohibited public institutions to do contracts, Nora had the option to opt to stay and decide to become a teacher or an administrator-technician. “I knew that the education administrator technician (TAE) made more money than the teacher, then I decided to become TAE and the institution classified me as technician of higher education.” Nora didn't have to go through an entrance exam to become a TAE because she entered IFBA before the 1988 Constitution.

Alice’s experiences in higher education are varied; however, her professional experience was only in Bahia at IFBA, where she had the opportunity to go to CEFET in Minas Gerais in southeastern Brazil to specialize in technical education. Alice also earned her master’s degree in professional education through cooperation between CEFET Bahia and the Institute of Cuba, finishing her doctorate in statistics in Minas Gerais. Alice notes that the report is not easy to write. However, as we can see from Alice’s educational background, she reached the top of the educational credential and held administrative positions, namely chief of staff for the whole institute and chief executive officer. Like other participants, Alice’s process to enter IFBA differs since she has been working for 32 years.

Bruna graduated as a social worker and later specialized in teaching methodology. However, after graduation she looked for jobs for over two years. In 1994 the economic crisis in Brazil was skyrocketing, Bruna decided to move to Rio de Janeiro and was invited by her cousin to work as a clerk at an electronics store. After three months she had to return to Salvador due to

her father's illness. Bruna learned about an opening for a public entrance exam for social workers at the CEFET (now IFBA).

At IFBA, Regina assumed the position of Pedagogy Coordinator, overseeing 60 teachers and 500 students, and worked in professional education with varied publics, i.e., licentiate and non-licentiate teachers, engineering teachers who came from technical areas, and students from private and public schools from different neighborhoods and social classes. Her previous job experience working with elementary students was helpful with adolescents. She notes that the campus where she was assigned was being implemented. She saw this as an advantage to her position as an educational coordinator because she was young and the only experience she had was working at her internship and at the city hall.

Since the campus was new, everyone wanted it to work well. During her four years of working at IFBA, Regina noticed many of her colleagues working on their masters and found a strong academic culture there. She applied to the master's program in Ceara and Sergipe states, but there was an opportunity to apply to the IFBA - UFBA inter-institutional master's program in public administration. It took Regina two years to finish while working. IFBA provided a paid three months for her to write her thesis. This degree enabled her to become manager of research and social programs at her campus.

When the IFBA's public entrance exam for teachers became available, Olga and her retired aunt decided to study together to take the exam. They both qualified in the first position after studying for three months in 2007. Later, Olga tried to apply to a master's program, taking a few classes at UNEB and the Center Afro Studies - *Centro de Estudos Afro* (CEAFRO). However, due to the selective and competitive nature of graduate programs at public institutions, she was not accepted. Olga then decided to apply to a master's program in Spain in art,

education, and cultural management at the International University of Menedez Pelayo (UIMP), Valencia. The classes were online, but in 2012 and 2013 she traveled to Valencia. Using her vacation time in June of both years to take classes, she finished her thesis while working. Olga received no institutional or financial support, and unfortunately for her, the Minister of Education in Brazil has yet to validate the master's degree she acquired in Spain.

There were five students in the same program who got their masters, including Olga. Three of them had their diplomas validated but Olga and another person continue contesting in hopes of getting validation. This study abroad experience made Olga regretful: "I deleted the doctoral program from my life." On the positive side, she liked the opportunity to go to Europe and to travel by airplane for the first time. Otherwise, she would not leave her daughter and family if it had not been for the chance to acquire her master's degree. Her previous training and tenacity brought her other job opportunities, such as *Programa Nacional de Acesso ao Ensino Tecnico e Emprego* (PRONATEC), National Program for Access to Technical Education and Employment supervisor and *Nucleos de Estudos Afro-Brasileiros* (NEAB), Afro-Brazilian Studies Nucleus organizer.

At IFBA in 1998, Bruna decided to do another specialization focused on formal education because her previous training emphasized popular education. She wanted to understand the working mechanisms of a being social worker in professional education. After finishing this training, Bruna was approved for an inter-institutional master's program at UNEP and Portugal University. However, Bruna fell in love and decided to get married and become a parent instead of getting her master's degree. Unfortunately, Bruna's marriage brought many difficulties. Bruna decided to take care of her son and reorganize her life due to her partner's alcoholism. As she states, "alcoholism, like any other addictions, affected me emotionally,

psychologically, materially, and financially." Her partner passed away, leaving a six-year-old son. Fourteen years later, Bruna remarried. This marriage didn't turn out as she expected, and instead psychological and sexual violence led Bruna to put an end to it and return to her studies, earning a master's degree at UNEB without institutional support. The trauma brought additional health issues to her life that Bruna continues to fight. Despite all this, Bruna hoped to defend her thesis in 2020. Bruna's private living conditions were not an impediment to her holding positions of authority at IFBA as a technician with higher education, i.e., Academic Education Manager, Studies Director, and Administrative Director.

After entering IFBA in 2011, Rosa proceeded to her master's program where she first applied to the UFBA as a special student but soon realized UNEB would be a better fit. She graduated with a master's in education and contemporaneity in 2018. Like Rosa, Adelia started working at IFBA in 2011. She adds, "It took a long time for IFBA to call me. I studied very hard to enter IFBA. I studied many hours and months to pass in the entrance exam. I worked for Bahia State a lot. I knew I need a better work conditions and better benefits." A year later, while working at IFBA, she applied for and was considered for a scholarship by CAPES to start her master's program at UNEB.

Adelia continued her education and noted, "I want to improve my life outcome, without education my career would stagnate and so would my salary." She graduated with a master's degree in 2014 and is now enrolled in a Ph.D. program at UFBA without scholarship, but is compensated with time off work to finish her degree. Adelia added that she enjoys learning despite difficulties of being a Black woman student – for instance, the nagging inside voice that always says her work is not good enough and that has made her miss deadlines, and the Eurocentric curriculum that is not current enough to include another form of knowledge. She

observed, “White people are always surprised if we haven’t read some of classic canon of western books, however there are no mention of canon of Black, Indigenous, LGBTIQ+, Afro-Brazilian religion and Indigenous cosmovision literature among others. White faculty and white students at college seems to talk of themselves to themselves while ignoring Blacks and Indigenous subjects.”

Adelia enjoys teaching. She likes helping to influence students and teachers in the math licentiate course and other classes. However, she wished teachers received better salaries and were more respected. Adelia also wishes she didn't have to use her income to buy school materials to augment her class plans and dislikes having to purchase an additional health plan that gives her access to a speech therapist. Adelia also dislikes IFBA’s institutional racism, charging that the institution holds an ingenuous view of racial relations that in her view is disingenuous, to say the least. Thus, she makes herself politically positioned as Black and proud, meaning she can never leave that post – not that she wants it, although she has gotten results. It can also be exhausting after seventeen years of teaching, she noted.

In 2012, IFBA had an opening for a full-time professor. Zelda applied, passed the exam, and was able to teach only at IFBA. Zelda enjoys teaching at IFBA because it gives her the opportunity to teach diverse modalities. She teaches 16-year-old students and adults in graduate school. However, regarding the institution, Zelda narrated:

> When I first started at IFBA, the people always told me that they confused me with students or that I reminded them of some students. However, the fact that I am Black and wearing simple and basic clothes at IFBA always put me in the subaltern place. They refuse to see my body as a professor. Or they ask me are you a technician? As if being a technician is inferior and a place for Blacks.

After she entered the selective process exam to teach, UNEB was the first institution to request that Irene work there, followed by IFBA, which offered her an exclusive position. However, Irene could not work outside the institute. Irene's career at IFBA has brought her many other roles outside the classroom. She has held the positions of leadership as chief of sport, culture, and leisure and as IFBA communication chief, in addition to tourism and hospitality coordination. She noted: "There are many people that retire without the opportunity to be in management positions. It's not the power that enchant me, it is the capacity and opportunity that I must transform, to make better for the students, because Black students are the majority with social and economic necessities."

Laura started working at IFBA in 2008. In 2010, she specialized in social rights and professional competency at Brasilia University (UNB). In 2011, she started her master's degree at UFS. Laura remembered, "I worked and traveled weekly for the classes, missed work at least once a week, and compensated during the week. It was very hard to balance work, travel, and study. However, I finished my masters in 2013 and 2016, I started my doctoral program." Laura's doctoral program is at Lisbon University Institute (ISCTE), Portugal. This time, IFBA granted her three years towards her degree.

Iris started her full professor's position at IFBA in 2015. Currently, she is *the Diretora de Politicas Afirmativas e Assuntos Estudantis* (DPAAE), or Director of Affirmative Action Policies and Students Affairs.

Aida finished her degree in social work and psychomotricity specialization. Later in life, she moved to Bahia and started working for a non-governmental organization with women with vulnerability, along with helping with adults and youth education for the state. Aida applied for

and passed to work at IFBA and UNEB as a social worker. After many years of such activity, Aida is now working on her master's degree.

Nina was employed by IFBA and saw the expansion of technical professional education. During her forty years, Nina's academic career brought many opportunities: chief of staff, elected rector/president twice, and general chief of staff. Currently, she oversees one of the IFBA campuses and is a member of the National Educational Council.

Wanda's previous public and private teaching experience helped her pass the entrance exam to work for IFBA. During this process, Wanda had to teach a class to the examining board. At the end, a board member asked if Wanda had thought of becoming a model. Wanda said, "I almost collapsed thinking that my class was really bad, she told me that teaching was not for me." Despite this encounter, Wanda was classified for second place, but the candidate classified in third place had more experience and Wanda was only 24 years old at the time.

A year and a half later, Wanda was asked to start working at IFBA. She noted that this was the best thing to happen in her life. The opportunity to teach *Quilombolas* students and have colleagues that work with the racial question, such as historians, sociologists, and teachers of Portuguese with master's degrees, made Wanda feel she was in the right place. The work Wanda and her colleagues developed for the Black History Month celebration in November is recognized and replicated across IFBA's campuses. She entered IFBA in 2007; by 2009, Wanda felt her self-esteem had increased. Her colleagues incentivized Wanda to apply for a master's degree at UNEB. Currently she is working in the doctoral program at UFBA.

While working at IFBA in the late 2000s, Olinda decided to return to UFBA to study journalism and benefitted from the quota program because she identified as Black and had attended public school. As before, Olinda had to balance work with study. As the national IF's

information director, she had to travel throughout Brazil for more than ten years. In the meantime, she attended the specialization course in engineering systems for which she paid, and with a professional master's in technologies Olinda applied to the education and management program at UNEB. This program was provided by an alliance between IFBA and UNEB. Olinda also held the following position of power as IT and recently was general director of one of the Bahia campuses. Eventually, Olinda finished journalism in the same year as her master's degree and took advantage of the three months off provided by IFBA to write her thesis. Olinda was the first in her family to acquire a degree; however, her siblings followed suit by earning psychology, mathematics, and accounting degrees.

At IFBA, Elsa took a specialization course in educational integrated management at the Institute of Higher Education Afonso Claudio (ISEAC). Later, Elsa started a master's program, but due to personal problems she didn't finish.

At IFBA as TAE, Nora felt that her professional technical education was limited. To expand her knowledge, she decided to go back to academia and focus on human sciences for a master's degree. "Human sciences gave me a world vision." The process was difficult, but Nora didn't give up. At first, Nora first studied literature at the Catholic university, but she got a divorce, and with a child it became impossible for her to graduate. Twenty years later she started studying and graduated with a pedagogy degree from UFBA. Throughout all these years, Nora remembered her father saying, "Everything you start you need to finish," so she tried three times until she completed her literature degree. She then specialized in formation of mechanics maintenance. With the doctoral program, she tried twice and eventually graduated with both degrees at UFBA. Nora had many opportunities to coordinate and analyze projects, e.g., the literacy project and the Brazil and Africa projects, to name a few.

Finally, with the third theme, *Becoming an Educator: Afro-Brazilian Women's Destinations*, all participants highlighted the many benefits they associated with working at IFBA. Not only was work stability one of the best benefits, but they also valued their roles as educators, both as teachers and technical administrators. There was also the desire to contribute to students' knowledge foundations and to construction of a just, democratic Brazilian society. IFBA career opportunities helped further their education as they climbed the ladder of knowledge and financial mobility to better themselves and took on responsibility to provide the institution and students with acquired learning.

However, these Afro-Brazilian women educators also spoke candidly of difficulties they seek to overcome at IFBA. These include full implementation of affirmative action; making it permanent to teach Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous history year-round, not just in November; and, expanding programs that seek to help with special education and the LGBTQ+ communities across the institution. Some social workers noted tension between technical administrators and teachers. There was also attention to the difficulties women in positions of power face while carrying out their responsibilities vis-a-vis male counterparts. Others highlighted their colleagues' difficulties in adjusting their teaching to a high-tech world.

After presenting the factors that contributed to Afro-Brazilian women' access to higher education and what influenced them to become educators, Chapter 6 present the considerations about the autonomy construction process these women went through.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine, understand, and describe underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilian women faculty members in higher education. The study aimed to advance knowledge about this underrepresentation based on perspectives of eighteen participants who self-identified as Afro-Brazilian and as women working at IFBA. Invisibility and silencing of Afro-Brazilian women's stories in academia, both as students and educators, reinforces their marginality and disseminates master narratives that continue to assign no significant roles to Afro-Brazilian women in the making of their own history.

To finish this research project, it was necessary to navigate theoretical spaces such as Brazil's social relations that encompass race, class, and gender problems. There is also coverage of educational experiences lived by Afro-Brazilian women in three fundamental areas of production of their subjectivity: family, community, and formal education. The transit through these fundamental areas made it possible for me to better understand theoretical-social problems that illustrate and ground Afro-Brazilian women's and men's underrepresentation and their suppressed participation in politics and socioeconomics in Brazil. My findings also showcase struggles of Black Movements, Afro-Brazilians in general, and especially Afro-Brazilian women, to secure human rights and build their autonomy.

This chapter presents brief examination of Afro-Brazilian women's trajectories. I seek to expand the interviewee's reflections about a few essential points that emerged during research. The reflection will also contribute to better understanding of how narratives of eighteen Afro-Brazilian women educators brought forth relative elements that marked the consciences of Black

men and women about their historic condition, their continued activism and resistance in hopes of ending their unequal standings, and construction of a better world where their autonomy (freedom) is recognized and stronger than their biological conditions. Freire's *Pedagogy of Freedom* (1998) will be used for developing the idea that "Autonomy is the result of a process involving various and innumerable decisions" (p. 98).

In *Pedagogy of Freedom* Freire associates pedagogical practice with aesthetics and ethics, noting they are inseparable human conditions with the same finality – the exercise to liberate people from their biological condition and guarantee their positions in the world. Thus, pedagogy, aesthetics, and ethics are essential practices of humanity formation of men and autonomy of women. These practices liberate wo/men from unfinishedness and indetermination so they are not simply *being in the world* but instead are positioned as *being* with *the world.* Freire notes, "The fact that I perceive myself to be in the world, with the world, with others, brings with it a sense of 'being-with' constitutive of who I am that makes my relationship to the world essential to who I am" (Freire, 1998, p. 55).

Freire's affirmation also posits important meanings. First, human unfinishedness is the proper element of all practices because wo/men realize they should not accept reality as a given and their biological condition as determined. When they realize their presence in the world, wo/men are affected (aesthetics) by this perception and refuse to have their existence conditioned by any kind of determinism, biological or social. Second, the fight to transform wo/men's unfinishedness to the human condition represents the historical process of building their autonomy (freedom) as human beings. Third, the practice of human auto-production is not dissociated from thought, nor can it be taken as an individualistic practice disconnected from other human beings and the world itself. Finally, it indicates that feeling, acting, thinking, and

being, although all are categorized as hierarchical forms of knowledge production, act together as a liberating pedagogical exercise. Freire is also attentive to various legitimate sources of knowledge that produce reality and guarantee positions of wo/men in the world. As Rosa noted,

> my goal at IFBA is to always think what to do to make the affirmative action program to work well. So, I ask myself, where are the Black students? What I can do to help them? With regards to the curriculum, what I can adjust? What I can add? What kind of activities I can promote? And with my peers who like me is trying to reach Black students how can we collaborate and communicate? I look for all my peer's male/female, Black and white because we cannot transform a racist society if we only talk among ourselves.

All this knowledge reveals itself as pedagogical practices that prevent dehumanization of humanity and serve as instruments of liberation. Therefore, these pedagogical practices are important to analyze political-economic-social causes that have been undermining universal principles of human relationships with the world and other human beings for Afro-Brazilian women.

After this short but necessary digression, I present possible intersections of Freire's thought with results of this study to answer these research questions: (1) What influenced the paths of Afro-Brazilian women to becoming faculty members? (2) What are Afro-Brazilian women educators' experiences as faculty members in higher education? I constructed three fundamental columns representing theoretical framework, methodology, and the narratives. Key concepts of Afro-Brazilian women educator's underrepresentation come from racial issues in Brazil, including historical and geographical studies on discrimination and low representation of Afro-Brazilians in decision-making spaces, not only in academia but also in politics and the

economy. Within the research phenomenon, scholars point to the mismatch between populations of white and Black men and women. Studies show that underrepresentation of Afro-Brazilians is a structural problem arising from enslavement of Afro-Brazilian people, historical denial of their rights, and socioeconomic and educational vulnerabilities to which they were subjected in the preceding centuries.

By contrast, intersectional theory as developed by Brazilian and North American researchers and decolonialism allowed me to look more critically at the great challenges manifested by the studies and alternative forms presented by the Black women I interviewed. Some concepts arising from these theories could intersect, either in subaltern conditions of Afro-Brazilians or in social movements of resistance prominent between the mid-twentieth century and the first decades of the twenty-first century. In Afro-Brazilian women's narratives they appear not only with their feminist ties but also their accounts of struggle and positioning of their ancestors. In addition, they seek social transformation for themselves, their families, and their communities. As Maria explained,

> my involvement with affirmative action comes from the Black movement advocacy as they pushed for Afro-descendant's history and contribution to be included in the curriculum and passed into law in 2003 and Afro-Brazilian's access to public higher education, as well as dispute the racial democracy myth that insisted on denying Afro-Brazilian history and education.

Thus, the study and its theoretical context showed that narratives of Afro-Brazilian women conceived of production of their autonomy as collective, initially passing through relationships with family and community, and achieving their professional educator status with

great difficulty. Afro-Brazilian women's voices have been influenced by these collective experiences and by their own subjectivities. This is evident in Maria's narrative:

> I was formed and supported by so many people that were active in making a difference, so I came from all this experience and my students were people that had educational deficit, and I believed that my way of teaching could help them overcome their lacunas and helped train teachers, and at that moment I was there [working at a private institution] with privileged people that had access to everything including the best teachers.

The interviews and the organization of their content generated rich material for understanding the history of subjective construction of these women at three important levels of existence: family background, educational trajectory, and professional experience.

Rich data obtained through interviews constitute the findings (Chapter 4) that enabled me to find answers to my research questions, but the data remain open to other interpretations and developments. Among numerous interpretive possibilities, I focus on five items to increase understanding of Afro-Brazilian women's paths to higher education. These are race and gender discrimination in higher education, vulnerability of social statuses and struggles to transform them, social interrelationships, recognition of the role of educational policies, and individual dissonances. This is followed by limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and concluding thoughts.

Afro-Brazilian Women's Race and Gender Discrimination in Higher Education

Afro-Brazilian women shared information about their experiences in private educational institutions as students, marked by reduced numbers of Black students in their classes and the absence of Black teachers. Bruna defined her experience at school as being on an "island of

white people." Adelia shared similar experiences of "living in a white world of white people, white teachers, and only white bodies." However, discrimination was not limited to primary education. Even during their professional lives there were several cases where the women were treated as custodial workers or as people who were not performing their educational duties. Zelda narrated:

> When I first started at IFBA, the people always told me that they confused me with students or that I reminded them of some students. However, the fact that I am Black and wearing simple and basic clothes at IFBA always put me in the subaltern place. They refuse to see my body as a professor. Or they ask me are you a technician? As if being a technician is inferior and a place for Blacks.

Often, these women had their authority or professional positions questioned by co-workers. Many participants felt they were denied the respect they deserved when they took positions at IFBA. Feelings of marginalization were reported by participants in addition to feelings of being judged on attire, language, and overall appearance, and on their abilities to perform. Lack of equal respect for educational backgrounds, credentials, and experiences of Black women is well documented (de Carvalho, 2007; Dias & Castro, 2020; Gomes, 1999; Goncalves, 1987; Henderson, Hunter, & Hildreth, 2010; Walkington, 2017). According to Salata (2020), "whites were often assigned high-status occupations, such as lawyer and teacher, while Blacks were identified with lower-status occupations, such as doormen, garbage collectors, and shoe shiner… assigning negative qualities and characteristics to Blacks and browns… with inferior social positions" (p. 27).

Feelings of invisibility and the impossibility of belonging in an educational setting because of their identities as Black women caused a mixture of embarrassment and of

determination to prove themselves in such spaces. During interviews, participants shared feelings of isolation and stress, sometimes speaking of racism and lack of institutional support. For instance, Adelia dislikes IFBA's institutional racism, charging that the institution holds a view of racial relations that is, to say the least, disingenuous. This can be exhausting after seventeen years of teaching, she noted.

How to act in the face of discriminatory actions regarding gender and/or race in sites that are expected to be educational spaces of formation and freedom? Perhaps the first step in this action is to recognize that spaces that have always been defined as capable of freeing men from their natural conditioning never met the needs of all Afro-Brazilian men and women, but only a select group easily identified with marks of patriarchy and Eurocentric whiteness. As noted by Adelia,

> White people are always surprised if we haven't read some of classic canon of western books, however there are no mention of canon of Black, Indigenous, LBTQ+, religion literature among others. White faculty and white students at college seem to talk of themselves to themselves while ignoring Blacks and Indigenous subjects.

Domination and discrimination must therefore be denounced and fought so there can be a liberating, inclusive educational space. Only by denouncing and fighting from within spaces of oppression is it possible to guarantee visibility and social representation at educational institutions.

Afro-Brazilian Women's Vulnerable Social Statuses and Struggles to Transform

Afro-Brazilian women in this study exposed socioeconomic vulnerabilities that trapped women and their families. Many Brazilians have faced such conditions throughout the nation's history. There is always oscillation in their social status, which increases as economic crises

affect the country. In all the narratives, these women had to endure the drama of unemployment of main family members or the burden of domestic responsibility, including the need to take care of siblings who lacked access to day care or public school. This vulnerability was also confirmed by the countless times families had to move from neighborhoods or cities, forcing daughters to drop out or restart their studies in different neighborhoods or even out of state schools. Dropping out and reenrolling are so common for Afro-Brazilian participants that the majority had the experience of starting and interrupting higher education courses, either because they were unable to pay monthly fees, because they felt the need to financially help their families, or even because scholarships from private institutions were interrupted. To mend this financial difficulty, Aida narrated, “I made and sold homemade snacks to help with school transportation and at home.”

From another perspective, it becomes apparent that social vulnerability conditions functioned more as vectors of change than as impediments to social transformation. There were several reports of Afro-Brazilian women who highlighted how they behaved individually or collectively to surmount obstacles imposed by social and economic conditions. Even while recognizing they were in a reality determined by the dominant Brazilian society, despite feeling obligated to be part of this reality, they did not submit to such conditions. Instead, they created liberating strategies. There is an obligation of formal education imposed on all members of Brazilian society. There is also a need to be part of such education and to change their social status through access to better working conditions. For instance, how did Afro-Brazilian women seek access to secondary schooling and to higher education? How did they perceive the necessity to better prepare to pass entrance exams and choose majors with hopes of attaining job security and economic mobility? As if they added to the social difficulties establishing others even

tougher for the simple reason to believe in futures that were less arduous and offered greater opportunities, Laura noted,

> in middle school I had to move to another state to live with my aunty due to financial hardships, however for high school I returned to Salvador to take the IFBA's placement test with a cousin that studied at the public school. I passed, but my cousin didn't. This experience proved that our dreams were divided, what we dreamed during our teenage, what we wanted to be were being determined by the quality of education we acquired.

For all participants' families, education represented upward mobility, job stability, better living conditions, and life with dignity. The goal was to enter a job that provided enough for a decent salary, buy a house, and live free from financial struggle. The road to job stability was through public service. Before entering federal employment, participants tried municipal and state employment. However, they realized IFBA not only provided better salaries but also the autonomy to pursue other educational opportunities within the institution in the form of projects. Maria noted, "IFBA reserves a week in November to celebrate Afro-Brazilian history. This is a formative moment outside of the classroom, multidisciplinary, collectively constructed and informative within students and our work is to teach, learn, and understand race relations." Moreover, education was available not only to augment faculty salaries but also to support research projects and advocacy to help build a society more inclusive of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous populations.

Adelia, for instance, explained why she continued her education: "I want to improve my life outcome, without education my career would stagnate and so would my salary." Others also highlighted the importance of continuing education. Adelia added that she enjoys learning despite difficulties of being a Black woman student – for instance, the nagging internal voice that

always says her work is not good enough, that has made her miss deadlines, and the Eurocentric curriculum that is not current enough to include other forms of knowledge. She observed,

> White people are always surprised if we haven't read some of classic canon of western books, however there are no mention of canon of Black, Indigenous, LGBTIQ+, Afro-Brazilian religion and Indigenous cosmovision literature among others. White faculty and white students at college seems to talk of themselves to themselves while ignoring Blacks and Indigenous subjects.

All participants highlighted the many benefits they associated with working at IFBA. Not only was work stability one of the best, but they also valued their roles as educators, both as teachers and technical administrators. There was a desire to contribute to students' knowledge foundations and to constructing a just, democratic Brazilian society. Laura noted:

> We are in Salvador where 80% of the population is Black, and a large percentage of the population is lower income. Thus, who should be at IFBA? I think IFBA needs to represent the reality we live. Therefore, IFBA has to have affirmative action in the form of the quota program to transform this reality and not focus on meritocracy and promote more inequality. IFBA's institutional values are to democratize and to help form and emancipate human beings.

IFBA career opportunities helped Afro-Brazilian women further their education as they climbed the ladder of knowledge and financial mobility to better themselves and took responsibility to serve the institution and its students. However, these Afro-Brazilian women educators also spoke candidly of difficulties they seek to overcome at IFBA. These include full implementation of affirmative action and making it permanent to teach Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous history year-round, not just in November (Black history month). They also support

expanding programs for special education, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ communities. Some social workers noted tension between technical administrators and teachers. There was attention to difficulties women in positions of power face while carrying out responsibilities vis-a-vis male counterparts. Others highlighted colleagues' difficulties in adjusting their teaching to a high-tech world.

Afro-Brazilian Women's Social Interrelations

Faced with the situations mentioned above, Afro-Brazilian families and their entire communities proved to be the necessary support for generating transformations. Examples that participants gave make it clear that without the group role, there would be no possibility of status change. It is worth mentioning the practical nature of this group's actions, which are identified in theory with ethics of practice and spontaneous relations, according to Freire (1998). The group communicates through space and examples, but the communication generated is so effective that it leaves indelible marks on formation of individuals, especially the Afro-Brazilian women. In this communicative space, elements are found with practical education, which act as first signs of ethics present in educational practice, an ethics that Freire notes should contribute to consolidating a "universal human ethic" (p. 25).

They are, therefore, on the plane of experiences and examples, not just on the theoretical plane, which is manifested through formal education and epistemic criticism. However, this does not mean ethics of formal education are not guided by examples of educator and learner experiences. There is no possibility of educating without communication through the body and through the training space. In short, inseparable from universal human ethics, the educational ethics of practical life and formal education were determinants in the process of building Afro-

Brazilian women's autonomy. This is seen in the action of relatives, community leaders, religions, and Black social movements, before being substantiated by epistemic conscience.

Afro-Brazilian women's narratives recognize conditions of their existence and the need to transform them. This recognition involves changing historical and sociocultural factors and production of autonomous subjectivity conditions. The realization encourages these women to create necessary changes within themselves and within the world around them. Regarding the opportunity to be part of the student movement, Rosa noted: "It was marvelous and provided a space of growth as human being, as woman, as a person that needs to position oneself politically at society to promote transformations." Similarly, Irene notes,

> There are many people that retire without the opportunity to be in management positions. It's not the power that enchant me, it is the capacity and opportunity that I must transform, to make better for the students, because Black students are the majority with social and economic necessities.

These examples show how it became possible for them to think and act ethically. According to Freire, to act ethically is to not accept discrimination, but to create alternatives to transform the transgressive reality. Still, it is important to emphasize that right thinking (ethically) is already embedded in naïve thinking, and therefore in spontaneous action, which is inseparable from thought.

Thus, it is important to highlight the fact that a mother who, in the daily life of her presence (existence) in the world, as a Black woman and mother, realizes the need to act in the world and on the world, so her children can advance despite historical constraints of the ruling class. Instead, women position themselves as subjects of history who are curious and agents who are transformative as epistemological critics who work in the formal education of wo/men. As

noted in one participant's narratives about her parents' motives to send her to private school, these motives were, strategically, to acquire education without long interruptions from teacher's strikes. Some also believed public educational quality was in decline and that private education would better prepare students for college. The comments of Elsa, who attended public school her whole life, are relevant. She noted,

> The history of my neighborhood school is that the majority of the teachers didn't think that we students amounted to anything, the maximum they expected for us was to finish fifth grade. It was not a school that we heard about university, there was no expectation or encouragement.

Afro-Brazilian women educators create conditions to survive institutionalized racism (Lopez, 2012) by creating alliances with peers to access decision-making spheres (ECLAC, 2018). Rosa adds,

> I look for all my peers' male/female, Black and white because we cannot transform a racist society if we only talk among ourselves. There are several colleagues that are concerned about the affirmative action and seek to promote events to dismantle racism by raising the consciousness during Black month inside IFBA and within the community.

As other scholars argue, African American and Afro-Brazilian ought to identify safe spaces to discuss their plight with people with similar experiences, to survive *institutionalized racism* (Howard-Hamilton, 2003; Rodriguez, 2006; Silva, 2007).

Afro-Brazilian Women's Recognition of the Role of Educational Policies

Several interviewees recognized that access to higher education was difficult before affirmative action. The program provided greater opportunities for women and members of their communities to enter formal education (Aubel, 2013). However, another problem was

highlighted – lack of permanence in the educational space due to working and juggling many obligations. Reports indicate there were difficulties for many women trying to maintain their studies. They lacked economic support from government programs and had even less from families to be able to attend to their disciplines and carry out activities at universities.

Many Afro-Brazilian women also deal with the importance of studying themes from Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous cultures and about their contributions to the formation of Brazil. For two decades, laws such as 10.639 and 11.645 determined inclusion of these topics in the curriculum; they have been implemented. At the IFBA there are professors with specific projects that seek to put these laws into practice. The Nucleus of Afro-Brazilian Studies (NEAB) is one such example. Much remains to be done to ensure that affirmative action policies fulfill their role in producing collective awareness and expanding access.

Therefore, some interviewees ask, where are the Black students? What can be done to help them? What can be adjusted in the curriculum? What activities should be promoted in pursuit of these goals? For example, Rosa states:

> I look for all my male/female peers, Black and white, because we cannot transform a racist society if we just talk among ourselves. There are several colleagues who are concerned with affirmative action and seek to promote events to dismantle racism within the IFBA and within the community.

Deep down, it is already clear that reflections on affirmative action have been taking shape, both with implementation of government policies and with the practices of some educators.

It is important to note, for example, the Black IFBA movement created by the Institute's workers, which aims to present an affirmative action plan to the administration. Participants are also researching the impact of racial and gender policies at IFBA. Laura studied the presence of

young Black women students attending courses historically frequented by men with implementation of affirmative action and quota programs at IFBA, compared to a case study at a professional school in Lisbon, Portugal, to learn from their experience. The institution has been seeing an increase in female participation. Laura also follows student observations of teachers' negative behaviors toward students. For instance, one teacher revealed students' grades, telling them how absurd and insignificantly low their grades were, and students pointed out that the teacher did this because the students belonged to the quota program. From Laura's perspective, this incident highlights the teacher's idea that IFBA must focus on meritocracy. However, Laura noted, "We are in Salvador where 80% of the population is Black, and a large percentage of the population is from lower income. Thus, who should be at IFBA? I think IFBA needs to represent the reality we live."

Laura is an organizer of the Race and Ethnic Relations Journey each November, which is Black History Month in Brazil. She and her colleagues face many challenges, not only in November but the year round. Some professors do not respect the calendar or the law 10.639/2003, which established the debate and mandated teaching African History and Black Conscience at all educational levels. For example, such professors reserve auditoriums and do not permit students to participate in the activities, a frustration many participants shared. There is much negotiation and tension, as Laura stated. Every year, she and her colleagues must debate the same things and every year they hear there are no resources. Laura noted there are many obstacles to affirmative action implementation not aligned with legislation, with educative principles, or with the IFBA's principles. The same difficulties can be connected to institutional racism and sexism, which are impediments to advancing knowledge and having basic discussions to address its adverse reality, says Laura.

Maria's involvement with affirmative action came from Black movement advocacy as they pushed for Afro-descendants' history and contributions to be included in the curriculum after passage of law 10.639 in 2003 and increased Afro-Brazilian access to public higher education. They continue to dispute the racial democracy myth. She was also considered by the quota program to teach at IFBA, which reserves 20% of educators' positions for its faculty. Maria noted that IFBA designates a week each November to celebrate Afro-Brazilian history events. She dislikes the term "event" because it seems like once it is over, nothing else needs to be done. However, Maria posited, "In Brazilian society, power rests with the white, heterosexual, conservative middle class. IFBA is not exempt from this situation, based on lower numbers of students and educators considered by the affirmative action program." Therefore, Maria noted it is necessary for educators to engage with and disseminate many facets of affirmative action to better implement the quota program.

Afro-Brazilian Women's Individual Dissonances

This study also reveals points of divergence among Afro-Brazilian women, which are configured by positions on affirmative action, especially the quota program and colorism. Regarding the first point, Olga disagrees with the quota program that reserves spots for Black students in secondary and higher education, especially because (according to Olga) the program excludes Black students that attended private schools. She notes:

> If the quota program in the form of an affirmative action were between public and private, then yes. Before we knew that private schools had more benefits, but today not so much. We see at IFBA's students come from both public and private, and sometimes the students from public school are better than the ones from private school. It depends on the person, on the student, on the student's interest, depend on all of these.

Another divergent position was expressed by Bruna, who entered the master's program through affirmative action in the form of the racial quota program because she wanted to make a political statement. At first, she was against the quota program. Then she started observing that this made no sense and that her view was a remnant of her parent's education. She gives an example: "You have to be exceptional to occupy the space where whites occupy, you have to be twice as good than white people." This was her education. Thus, Bruna notes, "I am Black and there is an opportunity to be at that place, so I decided I'm going to be a Black candidate, and so I did it. This is the first time I took advantage of a public policy in the form of quota program based on ethnicity, and it was nice." She then narrates her experience, "At the first day of class, someone asked me if I enter with the quota program, and I answered yes, I did it, however my grade was 96." This interaction took place between Bruna and a white teacher in the postgraduate program at a public university.

Second, my interview with Iris, one of the teachers from the south, led to a notable incident that illustrated colorism (Mont'Alvao, 2011). Iris invited me to the IFBA educator's lounge and introduced me to everyone, emphasizing that I was from Bahia, studying at KU, and doing research on Black women educators. Iris then addressed one of her colleagues (who was, like Iris, a light-skinned black woman) and said: "So, as you can see, I'm a Black woman." I was not sure what to do during this interaction, but during our interview I asked Iris if she could tell me more. "A Black teacher with lighter skin that started working here at IFBA," Iris replied, "I told her that it was great that she came to help darken the department to remind her that she is not white and that she is not going to be treated as a white woman. This has to do with our history of resistance. We need to transform our society and our society cannot positively transform itself without our inclusion."

The interaction and Iris's explanation illustrated colorism at IFBA. This became clearer as some of the participants compared their Blackness with other women's light skin colors to highlight that racism is worse for them and an example of colorism. They also stressed their socio-political involvement and responsibility as educators and Brazilian citizens.

Limitations of the Study

This research is limited due to my brief time spent in the field due to lack of institutional financial support. Furthermore, although some government institutions provide data related to gender and race categories, such as Unified Public Administration System or *Sistema Unificado de Administração Pública* (SUAP), which is responsible for administrative and academic process management. *Nilo Pecanha Plataform* also collects, manages, and publishes official data from the Federal Network of Vocational, Scientific, and Technological Education (RFEPT), but many civil servants, namely teachers and TAEs, do not identify themselves using gender and race categories, a problem pointed out by other scholars (Mota, 2021).

Recommendations for Future Research

Some participants pointed to different career paths of teachers and TAE's. Based on these findings, I recommend a study that analyzes career paths of teachers and TAE at higher education institutions. This research could benefit not only higher education but also educational civil servants in Brazil because they care about the mission of education and can help policy makers make the appropriated adjustment. Another recommendation would be to have this study duplicated at each campus at IFBA, at all national IFs, and at state and federal institutes of education throughout Brazil, to better reveal how Afro-Brazilians in general and Afro-Brazilian women especially are represented in educational institutions in the roles of teaching and of technical educational administrators. More studies on race, gender, class, and region are needed

to reveal Afro-Brazilian representation in educational settings, such as federal institutions and federal universities both as educational and administrative occupations, and as policy measures to address underrepresentation. Furthermore, it is important to note that although access to higher education by Afro-Brazilian women is of utmost importance, it is crucial to pay attention to policy *inside* higher education institutions that address racism and sexism throughout the curriculum, not just in November's Black history month, but year-round.

Concluding Thoughts

The purpose of this study was to hear Afro-Brazilian women's perceptions of what influenced them and their paths to higher education, and to listen to their experiences as educators at IFBA in Salvador and metropolitan regions in Bahia, Brazil. Afro-Brazilian participants' narratives reveal that production of their subjectivity is the result of coexistence marked by personal and collective involvements, as well as by different forms of knowledge production. The previous chapter highlighted Afro-Brazilian women's experiences living with their parents, siblings, grandparents, and other community members, which they recognized as liberating practices. These practices are so necessarily liberating that they recognize them as determining their future and human history. The struggle of parents for a school environment capable of providing better conditions of educational training, as seen in Afro-Brazilians' shared parental expectations, such as, "study to become someone in life" and "study to get up off misery," as Iris and Alice noted.

Practices of *Candomblé* leaders that go beyond the spiritual plane by helping some escape hunger were also important: "As my family was really poor, and my father not always received enough money to support the family, we benefited from *Candomblé* House's sharing of food" noted Elsa, in addition to assistance as student loan guarantor. These are examples of

acting ethically that are deeply embedded in Afro-Brazilian women's searches for reality transformations that Freire (1998) defined as *ingenuous curiosity*: "[…] the more I acknowledge my own process and attitudes and perceive the reasons behind these, the more I am capable of chasing and advancing from the stage of ingenuous curiosity to epistemological curiosity" (p. 44). As narrated by Rosa:

> I was accepted at the philanthropic Catholic University, although private they had a public commitment with poor, Black, and students were allowed to divide tuition in many payments. I was contemplated with scholarships. I also had the opportunity to be part of the student's movement. It was marvelous and provided a space of growth as human being, as woman, as a person that needs to position oneself politically at society to promote transformations even if it was for one group of people.

Afro-Brazilian women's paths to higher education and their careers, as well as challenges they face when becoming educators, reveal that Afro-Brazilians assigned importance to support systems: family, community, religion, and Black social movements. Thus, Afro-Brazilian women's access to higher education should not be viewed as exceptional, but as representative of collective support in the form of solidarity among equals and a few people outside their group built over many decades. Presence of Afro-Brazilian women in educational spaces as students and educators rupture a distorted idea of Black intellectual incapacity (Dias & Castro, 2020) that is beginning to change. For instance, Black women at IFBA were found in many positions of power, including as rector-presidents in two distinctive moments: Aurina Oliveira de Santana (2009-2014, both as rector and rector pro tempore) and Luzia Matos Mota (2020 to present) (see Fig. 2 & 3). Their transition was not easy, however, as Afro-Brazilian women explain in this study. Their educational paths are marked with strategies and resistance every step of the way.

Their commitment to transform society for all Brazilians is visible at IFBA's educational positions. I hope this research contributes to better understanding of Afro-Brazilian women's access to higher education, and of their experiences as they became educators at IFBA and enabled policymakers to pass measures to increase their presence and permanence in the Brazilian educational system at all levels.

Figure 3: First IFBA's rector/president, Aurina Oliveira de Santana

First IFBA's rector/president, Aurina Oliveira de Santana

(https://portal.ifba.edu.br/reitoria/aurina-santana/aurina-santana).

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Appendix A

Recruitment E-mail

English Version
Dear Mr./s,
My name is Maraci Aubel and I am a PhD. student at the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Kansas University (KU) in Lawrence, Kansas.

I am writing to request your participation in my dissertation research study about Afro-Brazilian Women Educators in Higher Education.

The purpose of this study is two-fold: It seeks to position Afro-Brazilian women faculty at the center of a discussion on higher education. This study interrogates the perceptions of Afro-Brazilian women in higher education and examines their academic and life trajectory. It also seeks to document more broadly the advancements of Afro-Brazilian women faculty members in higher education and to learn about the impact of educational policies.

You were identified either by your professor or peers, as a student who may be interested in participating in this study.

Participation is entirely voluntary and there is absolutely no consequence for refusing to participate. If you agree to participate in this study, I will interview you at your convenience, and also this will be strictly confidential. The interview will take approximately one to two hours and will be conducted in Portuguese. Participation in the interview indicates your willingness to take part in this study and that you are at least 18 years old.

Should you have any questions about this project or your participation in it, you may ask my faculty supervisor, Jennifer Ng at the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies or me. Also, if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Human Research Protection Program at (785) 864-7385 or email irb@ku.edu.

Interview questions will focus on your educational history, educational expectations, aspirations, and the academic career process.

If you are interested, please contact me though e-mail by replying to this message at maubel@ku.edu or call me at 1+ (785) 424 0088.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Sincerely,

Maraci G. Aubel
Ph.D. Candidate in Educational Leadership and Policy Study (ELPS)
University of Kansas,

Lawrence, Kansas, USA

Appendix B

Portuguese Version

Prezado Senhor/a,

Meu nome é Maraci Aubel, sou estudante de doutorado no Departamento de Liderança Educacional e Políticas Sociais, na universidade de Kansas (KU), em Lawrence, Kansas.

Gostaria de solicitar a sua participação numa pesquisa sobre A Mulher Afro-Brasileira Educadora na Educação Superior.

A finalidade desta pesquisa e dupla: Primeiro posiona a mulher afro-brasileira educadora no centro da discussão sobre a educação superior. Segundo, interroga a mulher Afro-Brasileira sobre suas percepções na educação superior e examina sua trajetória acadêmica e de vida. Ao mesmo tempo procura documentar mais especificamente os avanços da mulher afro-brasileira como educadora nas instituições de educação superior para aprender sobre os impactos das políticas educacionais.

Você foi identificado por professores ou colegas como uma educadora que possa estar interessado em participar neste estudo.

Sua participação será inteiramente voluntaria e não haverá absolutamente nenhuma consequência se resolver não participar. Caso aceite participar, eu o entrevistarei de acordo com a sua disponibilidade e a entrevista será confidencial. A entrevista levara aproximadamente de uma a duas horas, e será conduzida em português. Participante desta entrevista indica seu interesse em participar neste estudo e que são maiores de 18 anos.

Se você tiver alguma pergunta relacionada a este projeto ou a sua participação, queira por gentileza entrar em contato com a minha supervisora Jennifer Ng no Departamento de Liderança Educacional e Estudos de Política ou comigo. Se tiver perguntas sobre os seus direitos como participante nesta pesquisa queira por gentileza entrar em contato com a Comissão Ética no telefone (785) 864-7385 ou pelo e-mail irb@ku.edu.

As questões da entrevista estarão focalizadas sobre sua história educacional, expectativas educacionais, aspirações e processo da vida acadêmica.

Conto com a sua participação, qualquer dúvida por gentileza me contatar por telefone +1 (785) 424 0088 ou via e-mail, maubel@ku.edu.

Appendix C

Interview guide for Afro-Brazilian Women Educators

English Version

I'm interested in learning your trajectory as an educator in higher education. Let's start with your childhood…
Tell me about the family in which you grew up?
What work did your parents do?
What was their economic status?
What about their education?
How was education valued in your family?
Did your family tell you what they hoped you would get from school?
What were your family expectations and involvement in your schoolwork?
How did you feel about school?
Did your siblings have the same education?
Did you and your siblings share the same experiences and attitudes about education?

Were you and your family affiliated to any religious community?
Tell me what was like for you?
Did the religious community talk about education and learning to the children?
What other people or factors influenced you about education?
How did you decide to attend college?
Tell me about the process for applying to college, academic help, financial help, and family support…

Where did you study for your undergraduate education?
Tell me in some detail, please, how you experienced college life?
What were your favorite or least favorite aspects of going to college?
Did your college discuss graduate education and the available options?
Tell me about the process to pursue graduate education, scholarships, mentors…
Tell me your experiences about any assistance you may have received or wished to have received from your family and/or friends during the process of applying to graduate education…
How about your professors?
Did they offer and advice or cautions?
Tell me about those
Did you face any challenges?
How was the transition into graduate school?
Describe to me how you felt prior to and during the process of applying to graduate school…
Tell me a story about one of the first days in graduate school?
What aspects that stood out for you or adjustment you had to do?
What were the easiest or the hardest aspects of being a graduate student at your university?
Has your experience as graduate student changed your life or stayed the same?
Tell me more…
How did you decide to pursue an academic career?
Describe whom/what motivated you to become an educator…
What process did you follow to apply to your first job as an educator?

How was the transition from student to educator?
Tell me the norms for interacting and getting to know your peers and students…
Were you comfortable, or uncomfortable, or somewhere in between, with your fellow educators?
How about your students?
Describe, please
Did you seek out support?
What are your academic obligations as an educator?
How is your career plan within the institution?
Do you have a mentor?
Do you have any difficulties as an educator?
What do you like most and least about your job?
Tell me some of the barriers that you face in your academic career?
How did your life goals inform your decision to become an educator?
Have your life goals changed since you have become an educator?
Did your transition to an educator lead to changes in your self-identity, and if so, how?
Tell me about your current sense of identity…
Does being a woman and Black an important part of identity?
How about your religion and region?
Tell me a story or an event that clarified your identity…
Is being an educator an important part of your current identity?
How do you identify yourself?
Does being a Black women educator fit your identity at your current institution?
Do you imagine your identity would be different in another institution? How?
Now that you know what the research is about, is there anything that I should have asked but didn't?

Appendix D

Guia de entrevista - Para as Educadoras Afro-Brasileiras

Portuguese Version

Eu estou interessada em aprender sobre sua trajetória como educadora na educação superior. Por essa razão, tenho algumas questões a lhe fazer. Para auxiliar no direcionamento da entrevista, pensei em dividi-la em três partes: 1. O envolvimento familiar e dos meios sociais em sua formação básica; 2. A sua trajetória na formação profissional, da graduação a pós-graduação; 3. Sua experiência professional.

Formação Básica: O envolvimento familiar e dos meios sociais

Descreva a família onde você cresceu...
Qual o tipo de trabalho que os seus pais faziam?
Qual era o nível social?
Qual é o nível educacional de seus pais?
Como era a educação avaliada pelos seus pais?
Os seus pais deixavam claro o que eles esperavam da escola?
Quais eram as expectativas e o envolvimento dos seus pais com os seus trabalhos escolares?
Você tem irmãos? Eles tiveram a mesma escolaridade que você?
Você e os seus irmãos dividiam as mesmas experiências e atitudes sobre educação?
Era você e sua família participavam de alguma comunidade religiosa?
Como foi sua experiência?
Havia alguma conversa dentro da comunidade religiosa sobre a educação e o aprender das crianças?
Houve outras pessoas ou instituições que influenciaram sua educação?

Da Graduação a Pós-graduação: A trajetória na formação profissional

Descreve o seu processo de ingresso na universidade, destacando: tipo de instituição (publica ou provada), possíveis suporte acadêmicos, financeiros, e suporte familiar...
Qual a universidade que você estudou?
Como foi a sua experiência universitária?
Quais são os aspectos que você gostou e os quais você menos gostou enquanto atendia a universidade?
Você tem pós-graduação?
Como foi a sua transição para a pós-graduação?
Descreva como foi o processo para os estudos de pós-graduação, bolsas, e orientadores...
Conte sobre as suas experiências com assistência que você tenha recebido ou que desejaria que tivesse recebido, seja da sua família/amigos durante o processo de ingresso para seus estudos de pós-graduação...
E dos professores?
Eles ofereceram algum conselho, alerta ou precauções?
Descreva como você se sentiu antes e durante o processo para ingressar na pós-graduação?

Conte uma história sobre um dos seus primeiros dias na pós-graduação?
Quais os aspectos que você lembra como difícil e fácil em ser uma estudante de pós-graduação?
Sua experiência como estudante graduado mudou sua vida ou ficou igual?
Você teve alguma dificuldade?

Experiência Profissional

Quais foram as motivações que a fizeram escolher a carreira acadêmica?
Fale sobre sua primeira experiência como educadora?
Qual foi o processo que você seguiu para ingressar no seu primeiro trabalho como educadora?
Como foi a transição de estudante para educador?
Quais são as normas que você segue para interagir e conhecer seus colegas de trabalho e os seus estudantes?
Descreva, por favor...
Você busca apoio? Com quem?
Quais são as suas obrigações como educadora?
Como e o seu plano de carreira dentro da instituição?
Você tem um orientador?
Você tem alguma dificuldade como educadora?
O que você mais gosta e menos gosta sobre a sua profissão?
Você enfrenta barreiras em sua carreira acadêmica? Se sim, fale sobre elas. Descreva quais são as barreiras que você enfrenta dentro da sua carreira acadêmica?
Como os seus objetivos de vida influenciaram sua decisão para se tornar uma educadora?
Tem os seus objetivos de vida mudado desde que você se tornou uma educadora?
Tem sua transição para educador mudado sua identidade, se sim, como?
Descreva o seu senso de identidade...
Ser uma mulher e negra/afro-brasileira são importante partes da sua identidade?
E religião e região?
Descreva uma história ou evento que explique sua identidade...
Ser uma educadora e importante para sua identidade atual?
Como você se identifica?
Ser uma mulher negra educadora enquadra-se na sua identidade dentro da sua instituição atual?
Você imagina que sua identidade fosse diferente em uma outra instituição? Como?
Agora que você sabe do que se trata a minha pesquisa, há alguma pergunta que eu deveria fazer e não fiz? (30 mins 1030-11am 12/15/2022).