

Original Article

Pesquisa IȘÉ: contributions of afro-referenced Occupational Therapy in the processes of formation and restitution of black subjectivities

Pesquisa IȘÉ: contribuições da terapia ocupacional afrorreferenciada nos processos de formação e restituição das subjetividades negras

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Abstract

Historically, in the Brazilian diaspora, training, professional practices, and the production of knowledge have not prioritized epistemologies, knowledge, and ancestral black practices, neglecting rights, singularities and needs inherent to black people. Statistically configured as the majority in Brazil, this population should be the target of political, academic, and practical actions that contemplate their unique ways of being in the world, reversing universal logics. This manuscript aims to present how the *IȘÉ Research: construction of clinical, cultural and educational approaches aimed at the black population*, linked to the Lab-IȘÉ/UFRJ, has contributed to the processes of formation and restitution of black subjectivities in Brazil. The research method is qualitative with a cartographic approach. The proposal is to carry out the mapping of black theoretical and conceptual bases in scientific, clinical, cultural, and educational productions in undergraduate courses in the country. For this article, the focus was on the occupational therapy undergrad course at UFRJ, more specifically at Lab-IȘÉ, as it is the first occupational therapy laboratory in Brazil dedicated to the black population. In addition to the survey and analysis of theoretical and documentary materials, the narratives of the laboratory team made it possible to consider as a result how much afro-referenced occupational therapy has been an important construction leading to the processes of formation and subjectivation of black people involved in the actions of the Laboratory. It is hoped that this work will inspire the entire field for the reformulation of its whitened practices.

Keywords: Black Population, Professional Training, Occupational Therapy, Subjectivity.

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Resumo

Historicamente, na diáspora brasileira, a formação, as práticas profissionais e a produção de conhecimento pouco têm priorizado epistemologias, saberes e fazeres ancestrais negros, negligenciando direitos, singularidades e necessidades inerentes às pessoas negras. Estatisticamente configurada como maioria no Brasil, esta população deve ser alvo de ações políticas, acadêmicas e práticas que contemplem seus singulares modos de ser e estar no mundo, revertendo lógicas universais. Este manuscrito tem como objetivo apresentar de que forma a *Pesquisa ISE: construção de abordagens clínicas, culturais e educacionais voltadas para a população negra*, vinculada ao Lab-ISE/UFRJ, tem contribuído nos processos de formação e de restituição das subjetividades negras no Brasil. Caracteriza-se com um método de pesquisa qualitativa de abordagem cartográfica. A proposta é realizar a cartografia das bases teóricas e conceituais negras nas produções científicas, clínicas, culturais e educacionais nos cursos de graduação do país. Para este artigo, o recorte se deu para o curso de graduação em terapia ocupacional da UFRJ, mais especificamente no Lab-ISE, por ser o primeiro Laboratório de Terapia Ocupacional do Brasil dedicado à temática da população negra. Além do levantamento e análise de materiais teóricos e documentais, as narrativas da equipe do laboratório possibilitaram considerar como resultado o quanto a terapia ocupacional afroreferenciada tem sido uma importante construção condutora dos processos de formação e subjetivação das pessoas negras envolvidas nas ações do Laboratório. Espera-se que este trabalho inspire o campo para a reformulação de suas práticas embranquecidas.

Palavras-chave: População Negra, Formação Profissional, Terapia Ocupacional, Subjetividade.

Introduction

The epistemic construction of universities originating from the West preserves a structural base of academic training, professional practice and production of scientific knowledge separated from epistemologies and black ancestral knowledge and practices, both African and Afro-diasporic, present in everyday life. Santos (2015), better known as Nêgo Bispo, in his book entitled *Colonização, Quilombos: modos e significados*, discusses organic knowledge and synthetic knowledge, distinguishing them as knowledge related to the involvement of being and knowledge related to the involvement of having, respectively. Based on this differentiation, it is possible to denote the synthetic knowledge as a knowledge of the Academy that is disconnected from a reality that the territories present, weakening the organic knowledge based on the oral tradition and the coexistence with ancestral figures that were precursors of the know-how existing in the black communities, such as the *terreiros*, for example, and in the different rural and urban quilombos, through what is lived and, as soon as, incarnated in the totality of the being (Bâ, 2010). In the context based on Eurocentric logic, a break with biointeractive processes¹ and the adoption of an exploratory colonial model is visualized.

¹Concept coined by Nêgo Bispo (2015), which affirms the organic and harmonious relationships between living and non-living.

As Obenga (2004, p. 49) informs, within the historical conception of the origin of civilizations and contemporary sciences, Ancient Egypt effectively contributed to “a continuous philosophy, ethics or consciousness of the world of later times, receiving and educating many scholars and Greek philosophers. For example, Plato (427-347 B.C.) himself records that Thales (624-546 B.C.) [...] was educated in Egypt under the priests”. Therefore, the perspective of the civilizing cradle of mythified humanity in Europe, more precisely in Greece, is redirected to its emergence in northeast Africa, comprised in Ta-Seti and Kemet, later named Nubia and Egypt, among approximately six thousand and thirteen thousand years ago (Finch III, 2009). These records are based on research carried out and published by Cheikh Anta Diop, a Senegalese polymath, in 1974, which explains the creation of the first universities and the emergence of science and philosophical studies on the African continent, expressing criticisms of Greek philosophers who studied Kemetic institutions who do not mention them in their literary productions.

To this end, Diop (1974, p. 262), reveals the need to recognize that “the first Homo sapiens was a ‘Negroid’ and that the other races, white and yellow, appeared later. [...] Refusing to accept these facts, scholars substitute hypotheses for them”; It is important to report that the term “Negroid”, despite being a misleading term², refers to the “black race” In this logic, the Senegalese researcher still claims the importance of recognizing their own history as a people to promote self-awareness, in order to preserve the cultural and ancestral memory of their existence based on the locality in which they are located (Diop, 1974).

Under this quest for conservation, epistemicide is a challenge formalized in the course of colonial processes, the annihilation and opposition to both the elaboration and the dissemination and fruition of knowledge of subalternized peoples, in which the West, using this tool to eliminate processes of subjectivation of the black population, seeks to reorganize African epistemes towards a colonial and Eurocentric bias (Ramosé, 2011). Following the factual records of African scholars, it is understood that the attempt to erase the history of the black population is an action of systemic and structural racism that continues to the present day not only in adjacent diasporic processes, but simultaneously in the Brazilian diaspora (Almeida, 2018).

In Brazil, the proposals found for the rescue of African and Afro-diasporic epistemologies, with regard to the annulment of Eurocentric practices and theories, were promoted with greater emphasis with the implementation of Law n. 11.645/08, which amends Law n. 9.394, of December 20, 1996, modified by Law n. 10.639, of January 9, 2003, which establish the guidelines and bases of national education, to include in the official curriculum of the education network the mandatory theme “Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture” (Brasil, 2008). The constitution of the Law covers, as a priority, basic education, understood at the Elementary and High School levels; however, in the respective schooling level, there is the difficulty of incorporation in educational institutions due to the curricular weakness in the fields of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous culture (Nogueira, 2011), although there is, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE a rate of 54% of the Brazilian population, including the black population (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2011).

²Diop (1974, pp. 262-263) states that “in scientific writing, it belongs to the group of words used to cover up facts. [...] Its opposite ‘white-faced’ [...] was not invented. Thus, the unconscious sentimental basis of ‘scientific hypotheses’ is detected”.

It can be said that in Higher Education and in the *Lato Sensu* and *Stricto Sensu* postgraduate programs, the appearance of disciplines and projects related to the theme is counted as the main challenge to be overcome, being also informed in the text of the CNE, Opinion CNE/CEB n. 14/2015, which says “it is perceived that there are still many misunderstandings around what determines Law n. 11.645/2008 in its curricular component referring to the history and cultures of Afro-Brazilians and indigenous peoples” (Brasil, 2015, p. 6). The panoramic orientation therefore proposes an Afro-Amerindian curriculum (Nogueira, 2011), demarcating the cosmoperceptions concerning African and indigenous ancestry, such as the ways of being, perceiving, feeling, and acting of these peoples. For the black perspectives in the training of occupational therapists, for example, it would allow not only the curricular enrichment, but the connection with the context, the culture and the possibilities in the experimentation with the other (Machado, 2017), in order to guarantee an Afro-referenced production in the processes of formation and subjectivation of black people.

In view of this situation within Higher Education, Costa (2017) states that the formalization of subjectivation vectors with the interface in art, culture and health is expressed in numerous sciences and productions of scientific knowledge, including in the field of occupational therapy, based on understanding human activities. In view of this survey, the understanding of occupational therapy regarding the black population and activities in African and Afro-Brazilian perspectives within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Brazil in conjunction with the National Policy for Integral Health of the Black Population is questioned, which presents as one of the target audiences of its strategies the black population, the quilombolas and traditional communities of African origin or terreiros (Brasil, 2009).

Thus, this article arises from the *Işé Research: construção de abordagens clínicas, culturais e educacionais voltadas para a população negra*, developed in the Occupational Therapy course at UFRJ, more specifically in the Laboratory of African Studies integrated to Activities and Occupational Therapy - *Işé* (Lab-*Işé*), from the Occupational Therapy Department of the Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), the first Occupational Therapy Laboratory in Brazil dedicated to the black population. This study aims to present how the *Işé* Research has contributed to the processes of formation and restitution of black subjectivities in Brazil. For this purpose, it was proposed to raise and analyze theoretical and documentary materials, as well as the narratives of the laboratory team, considering Afro-referenced occupational therapy as a guiding principle (Costa et al., 2021).

Method

This is a qualitative research, with a cartographic approach, which is divided into the following stages: cartography of black theoretical and conceptual bases in scientific, clinical, cultural and educational productions in occupational therapy in Brazil, in particular, those that are developed in Occupational Therapy courses in the country. For this article, an initial cut was made in which only the actions developed in the Occupational Therapy course at UFRJ will be presented, more specifically at Lab-*Işé*/UFRJ, as it is the first academic laboratory of occupational therapy in Brazil to dedicate its studies to activities in African and/or Afro-Brazilian perspectives and

simultaneously an important field of investigation on research, teaching and extension actions combined in one place (Costa et al., 2021). In addition to the survey of theoretical and documental materials, analyzes of the narratives obtained after the transcription of interviews with the laboratory team will be presented.

For Alvarez & Passos (2009), cartographic research constitutes a perspective of building an existential territory that

[...] does not place us in a hierarchical way in front of the object, as an obstacle to be faced. [...] It is not, therefore, a research about something, but a research with someone or something. Mapping is always composing with the existential territory, engaging in it (Alvarez & Passos, 2009, p. 135).

In view of this reflection, it is based that the path of cartography establishes a broad and active approach as a subject of the research itself, breaking with the hegemonic perception of the research object as a factor to be confronted or, even if superficially, presented and not experienced.

The study is the result of the *Işé Research Project: construção de abordagens clínicas, culturais e educacionais voltadas para a população negra*, coordinated by Prof. Dr. Marcia Cabral da Costa, linked to Lab-Işé/UFRJ, which is linked to the Education Axis — responsible for surveying productions in the field of occupational therapy related to the black population in the country; it is worth mentioning that in the laboratory, in addition to the Education axis, there are also Clinic and Afro-Cultural Accessibility areas with specific objectives — with a focus on giving visibility and inciting resources, actions and knowledge in the field of occupational therapy for the production of a black subjectivity.

It becomes coherent to talk about the characteristic of this research, which is performed as procedural. Barros & Kastrup (2009) will say in this regard that:

[...] we are at the heart of cartography. When a research whose objective is the investigation of subjectivity production processes begins, there is already, in most cases, a process in progress. To that extent, the cartographer is always in the paradoxical situation of starting in the middle, between pulses. This happens not only because the present moment carries a previous history, but also because the present territory itself bears a procedural thickness (Barros & Kastrup, 2009, p. 52).

The present work had seven interviewees, all composing the team of the Laboratory of African Studies integrated to Activities and Occupational Therapy - Işé (Lab-Işé), of the Occupational Therapy Department of the Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), involved in research and extension actions, with different participation times, from participations with the implementation of Lab-Işé, in 2018, to those with less than 6 months of inclusion. It is noteworthy that the entire team was made up of black people, which was one of criteria for the composition of members in the laboratory. All agreed to participate, signing a Free and Informed Consent Form, including their identification.

In the period between January and April 2020, the curricular matrices of undergraduate courses in Occupational Therapy at public Higher Education

Institutions (HEIs) in Brazil were consulted on the digital platform e-MEC (Brasil, 2017), in order to investigate disciplines related to blackness. At the same time, there was a survey in the Directory of Research Groups of CNPq to identify groups and/or lines of research with the respective theme based on the following Search Terms: blackness; occupational therapy; afro-referenced activities. In the data collection, the research line AAAfroNTO was found: Afro-referenced Activities and Afro-cultural Accessibility, Blackness and Occupational Therapy, inserted in the research group Human Activities and Occupational Therapy (AHTO). In interviews with members of the Laboratory, it was identified that the line was driven to creation in the AHTO Group by the laboratory's researchers.

Among the curricular matrices of the Graduate Courses in Occupational Therapy of public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Brazil, six HEIs certified my e-MEC that offered disciplines related to blackness were found³, as mentioned below: Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio de Janeiro (IFRJ), Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES), Universidade Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP), Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE), Universidade Federal de Pelotas (UFPel) and Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Because the focus of this study is centered on the ISE Laboratory at UFRJ, the optional subjects AAfroNTO: Activities, Afrocentricity, Blackness and Occupational Therapy and Lab-Afro: Afrocentric Activities Laboratory will also be objects of analysis. The other institutions will be mapped in the future.

In this way, there was a cartographic systematization of the data collection related to the Lab-ISE based on the cartographic interview technique (Tedesco et al., 2013), having conducted four interviews in all with the effective members of the laboratory staff — three interviews had one participant each and one interview accounted for five participants, where one of these made an individual participation in one of the others —, which involved plots about teaching, research and extension in different thematic axes. To this end, it proposed a semi-structured script, following the question-answer procedure to start the interactive process of welcoming what would be verbalized, so that at a given moment it was possible to intervene through the procedural encounter that the cartographic research presupposes as a differential (Tedesco et al., 2013).

So, in affirmation:

In research and clinical work, somehow, it is always narratives that we deal with. The data collected from different techniques (interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation) indicate ways of narrating – either from the participants or research subjects, or from the researchers themselves – that present the data, their analysis and their conclusions according to a certain narrative position (Passos & Barros, 2009, p. 150).

Thus, narrative is a key concept to express, under different aspects, what makes up speaking and listening, in the face of the affections inherent in the experience and the receptivity of multiple factors that determine the meaning present in the experience of saying that is in progress (Tedesco et al., 2013). As soon as the analysis of the

³It should be noted that until April 2020, the time frame of the survey, in addition to UFRJ, only the other five HEIs presented with disciplines related to the theme existed on the e-MEC digital platform.

cartography involved the full transcription of the narratives from the access to the recordings through the Google Drive platform, aiming to produce a writing with the walk itself when recalling the reports in the process of the research meeting (Barros & Kastrup, 2009). The period during which the interviews were carried out, as well as the systematization and analysis of the data, comprised May to December 2021 and identified the following categories in the analysis process: a) Experimentation in the Ìbíri Study Group; b) Experimentation in Troca de Işé; and c) Interface with Afro-Cultural accessibility. All of them transversalized by the afro-referenced occupational therapy guidelines, which according to Costa et al. (2021) refers to an approach in occupational therapy that decentralizes universal conceptions, assuming an ethical-political commitment to theoretical and practical productions centered on black ancestral epistemologies, knowledge and practices, for and with black people.

Results and Discussion

The first trace of the cartography of this study is presented with the presentation of the construction of the *Laboratory Işé*, based on the narratives of the coordinator and founder of the action: Marcia Cabral da Costa, a black woman and the only black professor at the Occupational Therapy Department of the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Master and PhD in Psychology in Subjectivity Studies from the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Then, there will be a contextualization of the main results from the Lab- Işé, with the participation of the co-founder of honor about experimentation in the Ìbíri Study Group⁴: Anna Carolina Santos, black woman, at the time of the interview, a graduate student in Occupational Therapy at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), part of the Education Axis as a scientific initiation student of the Research Project *Işé: construção de abordagens clínicas, culturais e educacionais voltadas para a população negra*, and scholarship holder of the Troca de Işé Extension Project.

There will also be an exhibition of reports from the Troca de Işé extension workers regarding the experimentation of activities within the extension project, with two male members (Jean and Tiago) and three female members (Ana Célia, Anna Carolina and Janette), with the observation that three of the five extension workers are volunteers and two are fellows; and the creator and founder of the Opaxorô Institute of Afro-referenced Activities (IAAO): Juli Cabral da Costa, a black woman, graduated in Visual Arts from the University of Grande Rio (Unigranrio), graduated in Occupational Therapy and specialist in Cultural Accessibility from the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), acting as a partner and collaborator of the Afro-Cultural accessibility Axis of Lab-Işé.

Cartography of the Laboratory Işé

The Laboratory of African Studies, integrated to Activities and Occupational Therapy – Isé (Lab-Isé), is based on the path of decentralization of western perspectives in the construction of activities and experiments aimed at the black population. Prof. Dr. Marcia Cabral da Costa, throughout the interview, reflects that her base comes from

⁴Ìbíri is a composition of the Işé Laboratory that is elucidated in the process of discussing the results.

a trajectory initiated after the doctoral thesis that instigated the inclusion of themes related to the black population, in the second half of 2017, in the mandatory subject she teaches in the Graduate Course of Occupational Therapy at UFRJ called *Occupational Therapy, Anthropology and Sociology*. It was the discussions aimed at the black population in the discipline that made it possible to institutionalize the implementation of the theme in the teaching plan and in didactic materials on black subjectivities.

It was expected that, based on this study, there would be a promotion of the importance of studying activities from African and/or Afro-Brazilian perspectives in the area of occupational therapy, because, according to her:

It was from this mandatory course that I started to develop extension projects. So, at the end of 2017 and beginning of 2018, I designed and started to coordinate an extension project called "Open Identities", which was a project developed at the Museum of Afro-Brazilian History and Culture, the MUHCAB, which is located in the neighborhood of Gamboa here in Rio de Janeiro, in a region known as Little Africa, which is a region that had one of the largest ports that exported kidnapped black Africans to this territory called Brazil. It is there that there is an entire framework of Afro-Brazilian history and culture. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-Işê).

Based on pluriversal perspectives (Costa et al., 2020), the Extension Project *Identidades Abertas* (Open Identities), in partnership with the Municipal Secretariat of Culture of Rio de Janeiro, was dedicated to developing activities aimed at children and adolescents black and non-black residents of Little Africa through workshops for creating and experimenting with Afro-Brazilian cultural activities. Although established within a black cultural facility, the historical collection was coined at the time of Centro Cultural José Bonifácio and had several challenges regarding the supply of literary productions on the history and culture of African peoples in the Brazilian diaspora, presenting itself in a sparse and away from the reality of young people in the territory.

When we arrive and identify the children accessing various white literatures, that catches our eyes and really makes us feel the urgency of creating proposals for activities that dialogue with black history and culture, therefore, also being part of the children's history and black teenagers. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-Işê).

It is important to emphasize that prior to the development of Open Identities, the discipline of Occupational Therapy, Anthropology and Sociology vehemently claimed the possibility of meetings at the university that presupposed the primary identification with a black professor in the academic body by the students of the respective institution. A sense of community and not being alone was expanded, a practice that is centered on the principle of community sharing and, on the reception, resulting from these meetings that were established between the phase of the first teaching of the discipline and the creation of Open Identities.

Prior to the idealization of Lab-Işê, Open Identities joined the accessibility agenda aimed at black people with disabilities in the month of Black Consciousness, in 2018, based on the voluntary participation of the occupational therapist Juli Cabral da Costa, at the time a student of the Specialization Course in Cultural Accessibility at UFRJ,

having as a result of this experience in the Open Identities project the defense of the Course Completion Work entitled, initially, as Cultural Afro-accessibility which, after revisions of the monograph of the specialization, was adapted to Afro-Cultural accessibility, and counted as advisor Prof. doctor Marcus Vinícius Machado de Almeida and co-supervisor the teacher and coordinator of Lab-IŞÉ. In view of this, it informs that Afro-Cultural accessibility is a concept that

thinks about providing and creating access conditions for black people with and without disabilities to black cultures. What often happens is that black people with disabilities access white culture and art. When you have accessibility resources, such as audio description, braille and many other assistive technologies to favor access to art and culture in these spaces, you often do not witness this in black cultural spaces or even in white cultural spaces that have their collections linked to black culture. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

Acting to instigate the social participation of the black population in the Afro-diasporic cultural facilities of the city of Rio de Janeiro, as a full exercise of citizenship and a subjectivity marked by ancestral know-how, concomitantly, students of the course demanded institutional actions for this direction, that is, for the investment in studies and actions for the black population. It was in this urgency that, towards the end of 2018, a brief reception action was created with black students of Occupational Therapy at UFRJ, coordinated by Professor Marcia, with the aim of promoting collective care practices permeated by activities based on African and/or Afro-Brazilians perspectives, which, later, with the experience of the Open Identities extension project, prompted the creation of a fixed device aimed at the black population in institutions for training occupational therapists in Brazil. Thus, in December 2018, the first device dedicated to these studies was created, the IŞÉ Laboratory, under the strong influence of the epistemological approach of *Afrocentricity*, by Asante (2009).

In this sense, converts the indispensability of

start thinking about a construction where black perspectives are agencies, that is, central and not parallel in the construction of an afro-referenced perspective in occupational therapy, which is an elaboration that is taking place within the laboratory. From this, the importance of afro-referenced occupational therapy. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

It is crucial to understand that Asante (2009) inflects the discussion in the permanent process of disagency⁵ in the growing territorial expansion of colonization, indication to observe the location of the African person apart from their origin in the dimensions of context, place, situation, and occasion to provide a new agency. Thus, the first step to think about the IŞÉ Laboratory is its own naming centered on African words. The word IŞÉ is chosen as the one that can express the sense in which it is intended to mark the ethics of the laboratory. IŞÉ has Yorùbá etymology (Beniste, 2011) and descends from the root of the verb “şe”, with a similar meaning in Portuguese to the concept of

⁵“We say that disagency is found in any situation in which the African is discarded as an author or protagonist in their own world” (Asante, 2009, p. 95).

“doing”. It is in this context of the act of doing that occupational therapy, in its methodology for the production of knowledge, will observe it as an activity, occupation or work, discerning what health science proposes in different societies.

The ISE Laboratory, guided by the Yorubá perspective, established three work plots in its composition: teaching, research, and extension. Regarding teaching activities, the interviewee highlights that:

The mandatory subject that is Occupational Therapy, Anthropology and Sociology, is where all Occupational Therapy students generally begin their studies related to occupational therapy and the black population. With the creation of Lab-ISE, two optional disciplines were also created that have a proposal to study the activities and to think about accessing black men and women authors, trying to build a more forceful perspective and exclusively on issues inherent to the black population. [...] The discipline AAfroNTO: Activities, Afrocentricity, Blackness and Occupational Therapy and Lab-Afro: Laboratory of Afrocentric Activities. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-ISE).

In the discipline AAfroNTO: Activities, Afrocentricity, Blackness and Occupational Therapy, the professor from UFRJ reflects that the study is consolidated in the survey of epistemologies and experiments of Afrocentric activities, structured in theoretical and, to a lesser extent, practical repertoires for the training of occupational therapists as mediators of processes of subjectivation and reontologization of the African being and/or African in diaspora, and which is still subordinated today to the various types of existing genocide (ontological, corporal, epistemological, ethnic, cultural, etc.). In reference to Lab-Afro: Laboratory of Afrocentric Activities, the order of attention is changed, and priority is given to experiments and experiences of activities oriented by African and/or Afro-diasporic culture, more entangled with practical repertoires than theoretical ones.

As an incompatibility of the Course's curricular matrix with the proposals of these two elective subjects, Marcia Costa states in the interview:

It's a full-time course, so there are few gaps for electives, as sometimes it's time for the mandatory subjects. It is a situation that we have been reflecting a lot about having mandatory discipline that deals exclusively with themes related to blackness and the black population and, in this case, occupational therapy focused on activities from black perspectives.

Even though execution difficulties prevail due to the obstacles of the academic body, the founder of Lab-ISE has sought, amidst these issues, to promote a mutual construction with the public served. Cyclically, the tendency to isolate and produce as unique and individual bodies makes the perpetual rhythm of acting as a colonized being and it is for this reason that they report the following:

There is a study here inside the UFRJ laboratories and rooms where one thing was done together with the children, which made the reports interesting, of students finding themselves questioning “how am I going to do this if the children are not quiet?” and “how do I coordinate this activity?”. The interesting thing is me,

present, trying to carry out the mediation process with the students, and after that meeting ended, we would sit down to supervise and talk about the difference between building this activity, where we outline the target audience and the objectives, and the other is the encounter with reality and real subjects. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

Sustained in transgressing this prism, Lab-IŞÉ starts its research activities in 2019 with the *IŞÉ Research Project: construction of clinical, cultural, and educational approaches aimed at the black population*, inaugurated to support the concept of authentically afro-referenced activity, scrutinizing its use in different axes: Education Axis, Clinical Axis and Afro-Cultural accessibility Axis. Trying to conceive the first axis, it tracks ethnic-racial issues within undergraduate courses in Occupational Therapy at public HEIs in Brazil, also establishing scientific productions to facilitate access to black epistemologies incorporated into the life and demands of the black population with or without disability.

In the Education Axis, we have three sub-axes, which are: History 1, History 2, and Methodology. The sub-axis History 1, Sankofa 1, is to be mapping black influences in the construction of occupational therapy, that when we look for the stories of occupational therapy, we do not have any theoretical construction that points to a black personality that has built an occupational therapy practice. Today, there is an article that came out this year that recalls Ms. Ivone Lara⁶, our sambista ancestor who worked with Nise da Silveira, a psychiatrist who worked in the 1940s at the Hospital Psiquiátrico do Engenho de Dentro, today the Instituto Municipal Nise da Silveira. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab- IŞÉ).

It is reaffirmed that, from the 2000s onwards, a movement of black occupational therapists began in different fields of knowledge, which also led to thinking about these other pioneering personalities in occupational therapy. The construction of the Dona Ivone Lara Group, which is connected with the history of Dona Ivone Lara, opens space to give visibility to a black influence in the constitution of occupational therapy (Leite Junior et al., 2021), entering as a catalyst for the action of the History 1 sub-axis, in the IŞÉ research, having a new finding with the story of another great ancestor of occupational therapy, Margarida Trindade.

Margarida's story is also a story that needs to be told. We know that Ivone Lara was in charge of the proposals to bring samba groups into Engenho de Dentro so that psychiatric patients at the time could have these experiences with samba. Therefore, we also want to know about Margarida Trindade, what she took as a cultural proposal, whether or not she took it and the like, but following a cartography proposal. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

Narrating the action of the History 2 sub-axis, the function of making a survey of stories of black approaches in Occupational Therapy courses in Brazil is delimited.

⁶The article mentioned is entitled "Dona Ivone Lara e terapia ocupacional: devir-negro da história da profissão", authored by occupational therapists Leite Junior et al. (2021).

It is important to emphasize that Brazil is a country built by people who declare themselves to be black, so more than 50% of the population, apart from those who, due to the successful project of whitening, do not recognize themselves as black people, but as brown. So, if we have a country where the majority is black, we need to build approaches aimed at this population. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

The Methodology sub-axis, the heart of the genesis on an Afro-referenced perspective, formalizes the modus operandi of acting, perceiving, conceiving, and doing within the IŞÉ Laboratory. It is in this sub-axis that the İbırı Study Group was created, claiming a new orientation for working, studying, and composing the activities experienced in institutional action.

This study group has always been guided by texts by black authors, but as we studied it, we saw that it was impossible to handle all the black materials and perspectives. So, we made a cut of starting to look into the Yorubá perspectives, which are more of a terreiro perspective, dedicating ourselves to these studies because the Laboratory itself also carries in its symbol the elements of the Orişà Oyé, Yánsàn, which are elements that mark very much a perspective of transformation. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

The other axes, Clinical and Afro-Cultural accessibility, are faced, respectively, with the validation of the black population and professionals from the most diverse fields of knowledge interested in studying these activities and with the strengthening of cultural accessibility proposals within an African and Afro-Brazilian perspective, extending the urban, architectural, communicational and attitudinal barriers that come to block access to people with disabilities, but that these are not the only ones due to a new barrier discovered: the black historical-cultural barrier. With that, recount:

When we study and listen, for example, to the philosopher and Dr. Marimba Ani who will say: “Our culture is our immune system”, we understand that, for example, if we are talking about a period of Pandemic and that it is very much about the issue of immunity, having this call that culture is the immune system of people, we thought “wow, we need to create an action in which people can access these activities that increase their immunities”. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

Equally fitting within the last contextualized axes, the Troca de IŞÉ Extension Project continues with the purpose that its name carries: exchanging activities, which the creator contextualizes as

an idea linked to this African perspective that we are always in a movement of exchange that we should cultivate under a view of the circularity of knowledge and practices. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

Its actions were applied during the period of the COVID-19 Pandemic, in 2020, shortly after the completion of the activities of the Open Identities Extension Project, which required face-to-face actions, but that period required social distancing as a

protective measure. The Troca de ISE Extension Project was then created based on the identification of the need to create strategies to promote self-care and professional improvement for the black population. As informed by the coordinator,

Troca de ISE is organized in four monthly meetings, currently being conducted on Thursdays for 2 hours from remote meetings through Google Meet. We thought of weekly meetings, but today we have another group with fortnightly meetings with technicians and users of a CAPS AD. The public we started the work with continues weekly with the registrations that are published on the Laboratory's social networks. (Marcia Costa, founder of Lab-ISE).

Signed in mid-2021, Troca de ISE establishes a partnership with a Psychosocial Care Center for Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAPS-AD), located near the campus of Cidade Universitária/UFRJ. From the moment understood by its beginning until the survey of the present research, it counts 4 (four) modules instructed in the remote model, coordinated interspersed by the Troca de ISE extension workers and black professionals who focus on Afro-referenced or Afrocentric activities, invited to integrate the actions. From this experience, it was possible to identify reports from the teams about how much the activities developed by the project with the users had repercussions in new ways for black subjects to be heard and welcomed. The inclusion of black perspective activities incited by the project in the CAPS made it possible to question the place of ethnic-racial discussions in the service's mental health care practices, as well as the implementation of new care practices anchored in Afro-referenced perspectives. Feedback from users and technicians about the value of these activities in mental health care processes engendered in the project members a search for new care practices, based on black ancestral knowledge and practices.

Furthermore, the ISE Laboratory has also conquered, along its journey, the strengthening of this Afro-referenced discussion in the field of knowledge production in occupational therapy beyond the walls of UFRJ. The AAAfroNTO Research Line: Afro-referenced Activities and Afro-Cultural Accessibility, Blackness and Occupational Therapy, registered in the Human Activities and Occupational Therapy Research Group (AHTO), is one of these achievements. Coordinated by professor Marcia Costa, from UFRJ, it was built in partnership with other members of the Federal University of São Carlos, with the aim of affirming the importance of discussions about activities in the black perspectives at the national level, within one of the most renowned development agencies production of knowledge, as is the CNPq. As a result of this creation, in December 2020, the extension event was created to celebrate the inauguration of the Line in 2021, the 1st Meeting of Occupational Therapy, Afro-referenced Activities and Black Population, in celebration of the 3 years of Lab-ISE, 1 year of line AAAfroNTO and the official launch of the partner Instituto de Atividades Afroreferenced Opaxorô (IAAO), former Opaxorô Cultural Organization, which articulates with cultural accessibility from an African and/or Afro-Brazilian perspective, aimed at black people with and without disabilities (Costa et al., 2020).

Experimentation in the Ìbí Study Group

One of the main attributions of the Laboratory's body is the Ìbí Study Group. The format devised for the discussions within the team was not content with just raising studies and promoting them in the fields of science, but equitably enabling the incorporated reach of the people who maintain contact with this living and imposing organ. Anna Carolina Santos, leader of the study group that a priori did not have the term Ìbí linked to its name, provides an overview of the resourcefulness of this action, which started at the beginning of 2020, in the pandemic period of Covid-19. About the perspective of studies of activities related to the terreiro culture, she narrates:

We at the Laboratory have always had a position that for us it made a lot of sense to think of activities as a power of what we are. (Anna Santos, co-founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

In this regard, the co-founder expresses that discussions about violence and negligence with black bodies are important and must be accompanied in what perpetuate the modifications to existing productions; however, the greatest care is about not subjugating the black population in this racist system and discarding the great deeds of the ancestors. As a study group, it warns that the timeline of texts brought by members had different ethnic guidelines from African peoples at the beginning of the studies. However, due to the plurality of knowledge and practices of the Brazilian diaspora, she verbalizes:

We had a guideline which was the Yorùbá perspective, and the people who were approaching the Laboratory were not close to this perspective. So, I started to bring some propositions in that sense, thinking “wow, we are inside the Laboratory that receives the name of IŞÉ, which has in its logo the technologies of Oyá...” and we started to bring some discussions in our meetings [...] asking the members of the IŞÉ Laboratory if they knew why those technologies were used, why it was Oyá and why we thought of this logo for the Laboratory. We started to understand that our team needed to research the Yorùbá perspective. (Anna Santos, co-founder of Lab-IŞÉ).

Following this ontology, it is clear that, in Brazil, the Yorùbá culture has an intrinsic influence brought by the matriarchs who created Candomblé, a religion of the Brazilian diaspora with an African origin. Aiming to have this connection between black perspectives, black people and the diasporic context for the experimentation of activities, the perspectives of terreiro begin to be studied in the study group, moved by authors with research on the subject in different fields, such as education, philosophy, literature, among others. Through this new proposition, a methodology has been raised that is expressed in the daily interaction in the terreiro, exalting the wisdom, exchange, appreciation and preservation of these activities. Anna, in an interview, continues to provide the understanding that it is not simply about talking about Candomblé and its secrets, but about how an Afro-referenced community organization is constituted:

And what I also find interesting to talk about is that this process, including thinking about the propositions that are brought by the people from the Laboratory team, is also very much a kind of relationship of abyan⁷, you know? When you're there, wanting to know everything and anything the elderly say, you go there and ask, and then the elder goes there, sometimes they talk, sometimes they don't... So I've noticed some similarities in relation to this methodology that we chose and that composes a lot, even with when we think about our own activity in occupational therapy, this construction of meaning with the other, this idea that, as occupational therapists, we are not there proposing something that the other is not have, but we are there collectively building.

In the past, between Ogò and Ìbírí to name the Study Group, the second term was instituted based on the correlation with the tool of Òrişà Nàná that is present as an ancestral technology. For Anna Santos,

To think of Nàná's clay as this material that was used in the creation of human beings is to think of the material that helped in this process of sculpting a human being, that the human being is there acting in the world and aligning themselves with their purposes. So, being able to think about this representation of Ìbírí and the use of this material is also to reaffirm this, that these afro-referenced activities, from this creation process, produce a life and even help us to increasingly align with what we have as the purpose of the our Ori⁸.

It is with this orientation that the Grupo de Estudos Ìbírí solidifies a base of references thinking about the ìtans (Yorùbá tales that portray the stories of the Òrişàs in their earthly experiences), proverbs, literary productions, such as the book "A Pele da Cor da Noite", by Vanda Machado, and the everyday know-how within the terreiro in connection with non-human bodies⁹. Experiencing the challenges of how to put into practice the communication of something that is based on actions understood in their own experience, the group has been seeking alternatives for the training process, which is in constant motion, by meeting proposals for weekly activities that do justice to a coordinated professional-personal qualification among internal members. This first approximation with the activities driven by this perspective must be done within the Ìbírí Study Group so that it can be expanded with the external public at Troca de IŞÉ.

Experimentation in Troca de IŞÉ

In the extension action, the Afro-referenced activities go beyond the limits of Lab-IŞÉ and align with the active manifestation of the external public. With verbal and bodily experiments based on the expression of orality, the reconnection with the African-based and Afro-diasporic episteme is permeated by conducting activities not

⁷Means "the one who was born from yan", in Yorùbá, and expresses, within Candomblé, the condition of "newbie". In this case, it is someone who has not yet gone through the initiatory precepts (Machado, 2013).

⁸Orí, a Yorùbá term, is linked to the idea of both physical and spiritual head. Following your purposes is synonymous with aligning yourself with your own destiny (Odu) in the world.

⁹Costa (2017, p. 2) highlights how "objects, things and materialities very present in our clinical experience of interfacing art, culture and health. [...] non-human bodies have the power to affect and be affected in relations with human bodies, and that these assemblages result in subjectivation processes".

only with those interested in actions for personal attribution, but professional as well. With this, the Troca de Içé Extension Project gains purposes that the extensionists of the action share according to their specific demands:

The idea is that the participants of our modules are multipliers of actions and activities, with the aim of multiplying this exchange, taking these activities to their work environment, their family, and their study routine and so on. (Tiago, extensionist, Occupational Therapy student).

I think it is important for us to also explain and emphasize that Troca de Içé, as a UFRJ extension project proposal, in addition to having this expertise of bringing the external public of UFRJ and professionals from different areas, also serves and is a training field for students and members of the project itself. [...] So, in addition to having the proposal of professional improvement and self-care with the black population, it is also a training field for those who are mediating the actions in the extension body, serving and understanding this place as a proposal for applicability of what we have studied inside and outside UFRJ, whether from UFRJ or not. (Jean, extensionist, student of History of Art).

In addition to applying some alternatives here that are not offered by the university, we, as a black population, are also able to look at ourselves from a personal to an interpersonal perspective. (Ana Célia, extensionist, nutritionist).

It is noteworthy that, in the analysis process of the interview with the members, it was noticed a strong repercussion of the Ibiri Study Group in the actions of the Extension Project. The titles of the modules were inspired by terms linked to black ancestral knowledge and practices, such as Module V “Earth: Source of care for the black population”. In the highlighted example, the use of terms linked to elements of nature is, according to the members, structuring elements in the perspectives of the terreiro. In this way, in processes of articulation and invitation to partner professionals, leaders of the activity, the reference is affirmed from the perspective of the terreiro, enabling the construction of the idea that the earth is a source of life and the germination of new beings, therefore, a channel of care building. Having a reality coupled in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the members of the extension project, illustratively in the formalized modules, have been creating strategies so that their objectives are contemplated and eternalized, united with the purpose of providing self-care and professional improvement of the participants.

It is also worth mentioning that Troca de Içé has some axes, such as the Clínica Axis, which works to ensure that people who are participating in the modules are experiencing the activities in their daily lives. And then we thought about creating a WhatsApp group to have this moment of sharing, how the week is going and what was possible to be done, and in that sense, it is also important to point out how much accessibility helps us in this guarantee, thinking about this process of making this language accessible. (Anna Carolina, extensionist, Occupational Therapy student).

The dynamization of afro-referenced activities continues to reintroduce black African subjects with the act of teaching, a tradition that is “to place the other within your *odu*, within your own fate, your path, your way of being in the world the way it is” (Machado, 2013, p. 41), a proposition vehemently discussed in the meetings of the *Ìbírí* Study Group and which invites to the wisdom of the pre-existing experience in black communities, understanding that the path of learning and teaching only are echoed when they start from being and not from being.

The proposal to think about the methodologies that are brought by the participants of Troca de Işé. So, in Module IV, in which we worked with body care, we realized that from the experimentation of the afro-referenced activities of this module, the narratives that the guests and participants brought was that in this pandemic period it has been a challenge to have a good diet and a contact with the earth, in the broadest sense. We have been thinking about how we are producing our actions because each Troca de Isé meeting is mediated by a guest, but there is also a meeting that we mediate as a person from the extension team. It is necessary to have this active listening to have a look and attention to what our participants are bringing to us. (Jean, extensionist, student of History of Art).

*The same axes that are present in the research project are present in the extension project. [...] And we have realized that, for example, the axes also help us to build the modules. How much the Education Axis, by defining the methodology, helps us in the elaboration of these activities from the perspective of the *terreiro*, how much this perspective of the *terreiro* also helps us in this process of the Clinic's relationship, in this follow-up with black people that are part of the modules and how much this *terreiro* perspective is also present when we think about this dimension of Afro-Cultural Accessibility, understanding that it invites us to a more individualized care based on what each one has as a specific demand. (Anna Carolina, extensionist, Occupational Therapy student).*

I don't know if it's because it's the axis where I'm involved, but I think what suffers the most reformulations is Afro-Cultural Accessibility because our goal is to reach black people with and without disabilities at different levels of schooling. That's a question. Just being in an online meeting, you have access to the social network, access to e-mail, access to a computer, access to the internet, so all this must be thought out by us, otherwise it is not enough. (Janette, extensionist, Occupational Therapy student).

Afro-Cultural accessibility has been shown to be a differential in the actions of *Troca de Işé*; has been central to the elaboration of the extension workshops and how much it is focused on changing the capacist structure of the system. This not only contests actions of the Eurocentric West, but reorients towards tools, resources, methodologies, perspectives, and narratives that are agencies to black people. Others, to persist and coexist in the Afro-Cultural Accessibility guideline is to be in balance with the principles of doing in a community, needing to know this intervention so that Afro-accessible activities to black people are carried out.

Interface with Afro-cultural Accessibility

Approaches to this configuration that aims to make Afro-accessible resources, technologies, spaces, activities and the so-called non-human bodies for the inclusion of black people did not appear unintentionally. Juli Cabral da Costa, adopting the role of occupational therapist and black woman, has been contributing with her research and initiatives to aggregate a black population with different specific needs, understanding the context within multiple experiences. Sharing her contributions in the area to the team that integrates Lab-Işé, the researcher reports that:

As a development of these Afro-referenced activities, I provide this supervision to Lab-Işé itself, which is a way of disseminating and maintaining this work with the girls who are part of the Afro-Cultural accessibility Axis. [...] The supervision that I provide is already an intervention because they come with activities that are directed to the public of Troca de Işé, who carry out the intervention there at CAPS AD, but also to the people who register for activities in virtual meetings. Since then there has been this awakening! (Juli Costa, president of the IAAO).

The president of the IAAO, throughout the narrative, alludes to the awareness process. She claims that, before thinking about making accessible and Afro-accessible, it is first necessary to sensitize people with the disability agenda and their access rights. Thus, the observation and subjectivation of the audience being assisted are important points for conducting Afro-Cultural accessibility, which is also a proposal for the Işé Laboratory.

It is important to pay attention to what is around us and to what we do with the activity, so that this communicational information can be directed to specific and differentiated audiences within the Afro-Cultural Accessibility axis itself. Let's put it like this... "Oh, we are dealing with the black population", there are thousands of possibilities, we cannot speak in an academic way to a person who is arriving and now understanding an Afro-referenced perspective. So, the path I've been tracing is closely linked to these interventions that are being carried out at Lab-Işé. (Juli Costa, president of IAAO).

Acting not only as a supervisor, but as a partner with the Institute of Afro-referenced Activities Opaxorô, she maintains a history of articulation with other organizations and institutions for the promotion of Afro-Cultural accessibility in the spaces of Lab-Işé and outside it. Marking these steps, the construction of the IAAO, in what delimits its name to its actions, also correlates with the proposals of the Lab-Işé due to the perspective in terreiro and Yorubá culture. Through the term Opaxorô, he explains:

This name came from what I call "ancestral assistive technology" because Oşálá, the Òrişà of the creation of human beings, has this technology, where he uses the Opaxorô to move around. And I, thinking about this public that we work with, people with disabilities who need technologies for their daily lives, I saw Opaxorô a lot as the representative of this technology. [...] Also think that Oşálá is the maker of humanity from the raw material of Náná, which is the matter of clay or clay, and that at the

time of making these people, when getting drunk with wine of palm, shapes bodies said to be “non-normative”. (Juli Costa, president of the IAAO).

At that time, correlating the tales of the Òrìṣà Òṣàlá with the practices developed was to resume and do justice to ancestral techniques and knowledge. For this purpose, Juli qualifies the intervention process, emphasizing that the way in which the action plan will be developed with this population does not lack a specific and unique meaning depending on who it is being directed to. Finally:

Together with occupational therapy, we see a whole tactile perception, attention, spatial organization, in which we need to be in a circle and have a sequence, and many other elements. So, these activities brought leisure, which is playing, but also other axes worked on in occupational therapy. When we propose an activity, it always has a meaning. It follows a cultural and existential sense, but also a sense of the therapeutic intervention that this organization is. (Juli Costa, president of the IAAO).

Final Considerations

Faced with the need to trace the final guiding threads of this cartography, some of the accomplishments of the IŞE Laboratory stand out, but from now on affirming the impossibility of presenting a conclusion. It affirms, however, a proposal for the subjective reconstruction of black people based on training processes and experimentation with Afro-referenced activities, as proposed by Afro-referenced occupational therapy. They are proposals for care and professional improvement that germinated in the community experience of the Ìbírí Study Group. This experience guides processes to eradicate the “whitening” of subjectivity for the bodies and minds of black people, as well as the daily activities of these black subjects with and without disabilities.

Thus, this study aims to be an invitation to discuss, perceive, sensitize, affect and be affected by African and/or Afrodiasporic thinking and acting, following the tradition of elders and the composition between human bodies and non-human bodies that are precursors of Àṣẹ, that is, of vital energy that emanates from the uniqueness of each subject. Therefore, with the criticism of the preponderant western bases in society, it is possible to show the commitment with the development of a new orientation of the black-African epistemologies, conduction of practices and ancestral knowledge and historical location of the black people. Thus, as an exercise against epistemic, ontological and structural racism, it is intended to show that the existence of the black population is not linked to diasporic ills, as society has always wanted to affirm, but rather to power as a people.

Furthermore, the research serves as a device for the incorporation of Afro-referenced perspectives in educational, research and intervention institutions in occupational therapy in Brazil. It is hoped that this work will be a dream dreamed of along with the entire field of occupational therapy, and that new times can design curricular matrices and theoretical-practical approaches in occupational therapy aimed at the black population as an agency and power, and thus restore their processes of afro-referenced subjectivation.

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Author's Contributions

Afeyika Feyikemi Bukola: contributed to the production, systematization and categorization of data, preparation of analyses, organization of sources and writing of the article. Marcia Cabral da Costa and Anna Carolina Santos: contributed to the design of the project, idealization and orientation of the research and relevant critical review of the intellectual content. All authors approved the final version of the text.

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