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DE-FOLKLORIZATION OF THE CURRICULUM AND ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION: CHALLENGES IN VALUING AFRO-BRAZILIAN AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN BASIC EDUCATION

DESFOLCLORIZAÇÃO DO CURRÍCULO E EDUCAÇÃO ANTIRRACISTA: DESAFIOS PARA A VALORIZAÇÃO DOS SABERES AFRO-BRASILEIROS E INDÍGENAS NA EDUCAÇÃO BÁSICA

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ABSTRACT

An anti-racist education in Basic Education cannot be established as long as Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous cultures remain confined to the realm of folklore or isolated curricular content. Rather, it requires recognizing these forms of knowledge as legitimate components of school education, rather than merely mentioning them. In this context, the general objective of this study was to analyze the contributions of curricular defolklorization to the development of anti-racist education in Basic Education, considering the appreciation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge, the confrontation of stereotypes, and the transformation of pedagogical practices. To examine this issue, the study adopted a qualitative approach based on a literature survey and document analysis, covering scientific publications from 2018 to 2026 and institutional documents related to anti-racist education, ethnic-racial relations, and the recognition of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge. The selected material underwent interpretive analysis, organized into three thematic categories established according to the study's objectives. The findings indicate that curricular defolklorization addresses stereotypical representations, hierarchies of knowledge, and superficial approaches to these cultures. This process requires recognizing such knowledge as legitimate curricular references, in conjunction with teacher education, pedagogical planning, and its integration into the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP). The study concludes that defolklorization is not limited to the inclusion of specific content; rather, it calls for a reassessment of the conceptions and practices that shape school knowledge. Further empirical studies are needed to investigate the implementation of these proposals in different Basic Education contexts.

Keywords: Curricular defolklorization; Anti-racist education; Afro-Brazilian knowledge; Basic Education.

RESUMO

Uma educação antirracista na Educação Básica não se constrói enquanto as culturas afro-brasileiras e indígenas continuarem presas, no currículo, ao lugar do folclore ou de conteúdos pontuais. Trata-se de reconhecer esses conhecimentos como parte legítima da formação escolar, e não como citação. Nesse contexto, o objetivo geral deste estudo foi analisar as contribuições da desfolclorização curricular para a construção de uma educação antirracista na Educação Básica, considerando a valorização dos saberes afro-brasileiros e indígenas, o enfrentamento de estereótipos e a transformação das práticas pedagógicas. Foi para examinar essa questão que a pesquisa adotou uma abordagem qualitativa, por meio de levantamento da literatura e análise de documentos, abrangendo trabalhos científicos publicados entre 2018 e 2026 e documentos institucionais ligados à educação antirracista, às relações étnico-raciais e ao reconhecimento dos saberes afro-brasileiros e indígenas. O material selecionado passou por análise interpretativa, organizada em três categorias temáticas definidas a partir dos objetivos do estudo. Nos dados reunidos, a desfolclorização curricular enfrenta representações estereotipadas, hierarquias de saberes e abordagens superficiais dessas culturas. Esse processo exige reconhecer esses conhecimentos como referências legítimas do currículo, articulado à formação de professores, ao planejamento pedagógico e à sua inserção no Projeto Político-Pedagógico. A conclusão é que a desfolclorização não se esgota na inclusão de conteúdos específicos: ela pede uma revisão das concepções e das práticas que estruturam o conhecimento escolar. Estudos empíricos que investiguem a implementação dessas proposições em diferentes contextos da Educação Básica ainda são necessários.

Palavras-chave: Desfolclorização curricular; Educação antirracista; Saberes afro-brasileiros; Educação Básica.

1. INTRODUCTION

The school is, at least in principle, a place for human development, knowledge construction, and recognition of the different cultural identities that make up Brazilian society. The history of school curricula in Brazil, however, has favored Eurocentric perspectives that have marginalized, and in some cases completely erased, the knowledge, historical trajectories, and contributions of African, Afro-Brazilian, and Indigenous peoples. Educational legislation has made the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture mandatory. However, establishing this requirement in law is not enough. There is a gap between what legislation prescribes and what actually reaches the classroom, and implementing its provisions requires changes in content selection, pedagogical practices, and the conceptions that guide teaching and learning processes, rather than simply adding new topics to an otherwise unchanged structure (Cavalheiro; Pinheiro, 2025; Campos; Perrude, 2025).

It is within this gap between legislation and classroom practice that curricular defolklorization emerges as a proposal to transform the ways in which Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous cultures are represented and addressed in everyday school life. This does not mean adding another cultural expression to commemorative dates or presenting it through familiar stereotypes, but rather recognizing such knowledge as historical, social, scientific, and cultural production that constitutes Brazilian society itself, rather than an addition to it. In this regard, anti-racist education requires valuing

individuals and forms of knowledge that have historically been marginalized and reassessing the hierarchies of knowledge that continue to influence curricular organization and educational practices (Ferreira; Rios, 2024; Cavalheiro; Pinheiro, 2025).

In light of this issue, the following research question was formulated: **How can the defolklorization of the school curriculum contribute to the development of anti-racist education, considering the recognition, appreciation, and legitimacy of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge in teaching and learning processes in Basic Education?**

To address this question, the following general objective was established: **to analyze the contributions of curricular defolklorization to the development of anti-racist education in Basic Education, considering the appreciation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge, the confrontation of stereotypes, and the transformation of pedagogical practices.** The specific objectives were established as follows: (i) to examine the foundations of anti-racist education and curricular defolklorization, considering ethnic-racial relations, cultural diversity, and the historical construction of school curricula; (ii) to investigate how the selection, treatment, and appreciation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge in the school curriculum can contribute to confronting stereotypes and hierarchies of knowledge; and (iii) to analyze pedagogical and institutional strategies for curricular defolklorization, considering teacher education, pedagogical planning, and the incorporation of ethnic-racial relations education into the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP).

From a methodological perspective, this study is qualitative in nature and combines a literature review with documentary research. The corpus comprises scientific articles and other scholarly publications from 2018 to 2026, as well as institutional documents related to anti-racist education, ethnic-racial relations, and the recognition of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge. This material was subjected to interpretive analysis and subsequently organized into three thematic categories, established in alignment with the research objectives.

In addition to this introduction, the article is organized into three further sections. The second presents the theoretical framework, divided into three subsections: the foundations of anti-racist education and curricular defolklorization; the relationship between curriculum and hierarchies of knowledge; and, finally, pedagogical and institutional strategies for valuing Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge. The third section describes the methodological procedures adopted in the study. The fourth and final section revisits the research question and established objectives, presenting the concluding remarks and the study's main contributions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Anti-Racist Education And Curricular Defolklorization: Conceptual Foundations And Ethnic-Racial Relations

The school curriculum is not a neutral organization of knowledge, and recognizing this premise is a prerequisite for considering anti-racist education in Basic Education. It reflects historical, cultural, and political choices, which, in practice, determine which social groups are granted greater recognition within the school environment.

Eurocentric references occupy a central position, whereas knowledge rooted in African, Afro-Brazilian, and Indigenous traditions is relegated to a secondary position or, in some cases, entirely excluded. This arrangement perpetuates hierarchies of cultural and epistemic value within the school itself. Addressing this situation requires curricular reorganization that treats ethnic-racial diversity as a constitutive dimension of the educational process rather than an occasional topic, incorporating other historical, cultural, and intellectual traditions into everyday school practices (Campos; Perrude, 2025; Mello, 2025).

Anti-racist education is not limited to the formal recognition of diversity. It represents a political and pedagogical stance that involves confronting discriminatory practices, stereotypes, and mechanisms of invisibilization that permeate school relationships. Pereira and Bazzo (2024) identify teacher-led curation as a possible approach to improving the treatment of ethnic-racial relations through the careful selection of content, audiovisual materials, and cultural references. This proposal makes clear that teachers continuously make pedagogical decisions: by selecting what is included in classroom activities, they can expand the representation of historically marginalized groups and create opportunities for students to develop critical interpretations of the formation of Brazilian society.

Within this discussion, it is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of folklore and folklorization, since their indiscriminate use may undermine an understanding of the relationships among culture, identity, and power. Cavalheiro and Pinheiro (2025, p. 8) explain:

> *The distinction between folklore and folklorization, therefore, constitutes a central element in the implementation of Ethnic-Racial Relations Education (ERER). While the former may serve as a source of memory, ancestry, and resistance, the latter operates as a symbolic technology of domination and silencing. Within this perspective, defolklorization emerges as a practice of reconstructing meanings and reorganizing the curriculum according to the principles of racial and epistemic justice.*

Valuing cultural expressions does not, in itself, constitute anti-racist education, particularly when these expressions are presented out of context, without considering their historical and social meanings. This is what occurs through folklorization: cultural knowledge and practices become decorative elements, entertainment at school events, or supplementary content, often addressed only on commemorative dates. In contrast to this approach, Cavalheiro and Pinheiro (2025, p. 8) state:

> *In opposition to the logic of folklorization, which empties cultural expressions of their meanings and transforms living knowledge into caricatured or decorative representations, some pedagogical practices have sought to reconfigure the presence of Indigenous, African, and Afro-Brazilian knowledge in everyday school life through an educational, political, and epistemic approach. These practices take shape as forms of symbolic resistance, challenge the prescribed official curriculum, and broaden the horizons of pedagogical communication. They are grounded in the principles of ERER and in engagement with continuing education processes that strengthen reflective, collective, and ethical teaching practices. More than simply adding content to lesson plans, these experiences transform ways of teaching and learning and restore historical context, complexity, and agency to forms of knowledge historically relegated to the exotic, the festive, or the supplementary.*

Based on the authors' discussion, defolklorization necessarily involves changing how knowledge is addressed. African, Afro-Brazilian, and Indigenous cultures must be presented in their historical context and diversity, and recognized as producers of knowledge and thought rather than as an exotic repertoire.

In Brazil, education for ethnic-racial relations acquired legal status through Law No. 10,639/2003, which amended the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB) to establish the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian History and Culture, followed by Law No. 11,645/2008, which extended this requirement to include the History and Culture of Indigenous Peoples. These two legal provisions constitute regulatory milestones that require curricular revision and recognize the role of these groups in the country's

social, historical, economic, and cultural formation. However, legislation alone does not translate into classroom practice. This gap is examined by Fontenele and Cavalcante (2020), who investigate teaching practices related to Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture, and by Pereira, Lima, and Fernandes (2022), who approach the issue from the perspective of teacher education, relating curricular reorganization to the need to reconsider how teachers are prepared to address ethnic-racial relations in education.

In this regard, it is necessary to consider that the implementation of both Law No. 10,639/2003 and Law No. 11,645/2008 should encourage teachers to reassess their practices, moving beyond stereotypical activities that reinforce the folklorization of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous cultures. This shift should advance an anti-racist educational perspective that promotes racial equity by aligning the legal requirements with curriculum guidelines and ensuring the teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture. It also requires recognizing that the struggles of Black and Indigenous peoples in Brazil are rooted in their own historical experiences and that anti-racist education should play a leading role in schools by valuing the cultural roots of these peoples and recovering the contributions of Black and Indigenous populations to Brazil's social, economic, and political formation. The National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, a document that complements Law No. 10,639/2003, state in Article 2: “The guidelines, principles, and foundations for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Education aim to promote the education of citizens who are active and aware within Brazil's multicultural and multiethnic society, fostering positive ethnic and social relations toward the construction of a democratic nation.”

The foundations of anti-racist education, however, cannot be understood solely through the relationship between legislation and curriculum, as political disputes also play a significant role. This is the central issue revisited by Campos and Perrude (2025) in their discussion of decolonial and anti-racist approaches in the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), drawing on Santos's interpretation of changes in the Brazilian political landscape and their implications for policies promoting inclusion and the recognition of racial inequalities.

According to Santos (*apud* Campos; Perrude, 2025, p. 10):

> *[...] following the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff and, subsequently, the election of Jair Messias Bolsonaro, initiatives aimed at inclusion, the expansion and enforcement of human rights, the recognition and reparation of the harm caused by slavery, and the development of anti-racist education experienced a significant reversal in their progress.*

This interpretation demonstrates the extent to which political disputes influence the continuity of educational policies aimed at recognizing diversity and confronting racism. This aspect must therefore be included in a critical analysis of official curricular guidelines.

A curriculum committed to anti-racist education requires simultaneous action on three fronts: educational policies, teacher education, and the revision of the knowledge selected for teaching and learning. Santos and Petrúcio (2024) discuss the current status of African History teaching in Basic Education and demonstrate how this knowledge continues to occupy a limited place in curricular

organization. Mello (2025), in turn, addresses the disputes surrounding Afro-referenced curricula and the recognition of Black epistemologies as a political issue. The guidelines issued by the Ceará State Department of Education (Ceará, 2023) provide institutional references for addressing ethnic-racial relations across curricular components. Taken together, these three works demonstrate that curricular transformation cannot be achieved by simply inserting isolated content into different subjects. Diversity must become a guiding principle of pedagogical practice.

In this context, curricular defolklorization emerges less as an additional curricular topic and more as a reorganization of the elements that give meaning to school knowledge, including its references, practices, and sources. Its implementation requires recognizing African, Afro-Brazilian, and Indigenous peoples as historical subjects and producers of knowledge, rather than as objects of homogeneous or stereotypical representations restricted to commemorative cultural expressions. Table 1 summarizes the conceptual foundations of this discussion, identifies the ways in which folklorization manifests itself, and highlights the contributions required to develop an anti-racist curricular perspective.

Table 1. Foundations of anti-racist education and dimensions of curricular defolklorization in Basic Education

Dimension of analysis	**Characterization and identified issues**	**Contributions to anti-racist education**	**Author and abbreviated title of the work**

Distinction between folklore and folklorization	Folklore may express memory, ancestry, and resistance, whereas folklorization reduces cultural expressions to caricatured or decorative representations.	Recognizing the historical, political, and cultural meanings of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous expressions, thereby overcoming decontextualized approaches.	Cavalheiro and Pinheiro (2025), *Pedagogical Communication and Curricular Defolklorization*.
Teacher-led curation and representativeness	The selection of materials and cultural references influences how ethnic-racial groups are represented in the school environment.	Diversifying content, audiovisual productions, and intellectual references while valuing different cultural perspectives.	Pereira and Bazzo (2024), *Didactics and Anti-Racist Education*.
Prescribed curriculum and decoloniality	Curricular guidelines may present limitations regarding the recognition of epistemological diversity and ethnic-racial relations.	Developing a critical reading of curricular documents and expanding the presence of historically marginalized knowledge.	Campos and Perrude (2025), *Decolonial and Anti-Racist Education in the BNCC*.
Teacher education and ethnic-racial relations	Gaps in teacher education hinder the systematic incorporation of racial issues into educational practices.	Integrating initial and continuing teacher education, historical knowledge, and pedagogical planning committed to racial equity.	Pereira, Lima, and Fernandes (2022), *Curriculum and Teacher Education for Ethnic-Racial Relations*.

Implementation of educational legislation	Legal requirements alone do not ensure the incorporation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous content into everyday school practices.	Transforming legal provisions into permanent pedagogical practices integrated across different areas of knowledge.	Fontenele and Cavalcante (2020), *Teaching Practices in Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture*.
Eurocentrism and historical invisibilization	Curricular organization may privilege Eurocentric references and limit the presence of African History.	Broadening historical perspectives and recognizing the participation of African peoples in the formation of societies.	Santos and Petrúcio (2024), *Teaching African History in the Curriculum*.
Afro-referenced curriculum and epistemic justice	The devaluation of Black epistemologies reproduces hierarchies of knowledge and disputes over curricular legitimacy.	Recognizing Black intellectual production and incorporating Afro-referenced perspectives into school curriculum organization.	Mello (2025), *Afro-Referenced Curriculum and the Anti-Racist School*.
Institutional guidelines for ERER	Addressing ethnic-racial diversity must be integrated across different curricular components, avoiding isolated initiatives.	Guiding pedagogical planning and the transversal incorporation of education for ethnic-racial relations into everyday school practices.	Ceará (2023), *Education for Ethnic-Racial Relations: Guidelines*.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2026), based on Cavalheiro and Pinheiro (2025), Pereira and Bazzo (2024), Campos and Perrude (2025), Pereira, Lima, and Fernandes (2022), Fontenele and Cavalcante (2020), Santos and Petrúcio (2024), Mello (2025), and Ceará (2023).

Table 1 demonstrates that curricular defolklorization encompasses interdependent conceptual, regulatory, and pedagogical dimensions. The distinction between cultural appreciation and folklorization makes it possible to understand that the presence of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous cultural expressions in the school environment does not necessarily represent recognition of their knowledge. For anti-racist education to be effectively implemented, it is necessary to confront epistemological hierarchies, strengthen teacher education, and transform legal guidelines into permanent educational practices. Thus, the discussion of conceptual foundations and ethnic-racial relations establishes the basis for examining, in the following subsection, how the selection and legitimization of school knowledge can contribute to valuing Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge.

2.2. School Curriculum, Hierarchies Of Knowledge, And The Appreciation Of Afro-Brazilian And Indigenous Knowledge

No school curriculum organizes content in a neutral manner. Its development involves decisions about which forms of knowledge are included, legitimized, and transmitted through educational processes. These decisions reflect political, historical, and cultural relations that ultimately determine which social groups and forms of intellectual production gain visibility and which remain overlooked. When Eurocentrism predominates, epistemological hierarchies are

reinforced, placing African, Afro-Brazilian, and Indigenous knowledge in secondary positions or presenting it in fragmented and decontextualized ways, as an appendix to a body of knowledge that claims to be universal without actually being so. Developing anti-racist education therefore requires critically examining the criteria that guide this organization and recognizing the plurality of cultural traditions that shape Brazilian society, a process that cannot be achieved merely by inserting isolated content into the curriculum.

Afrocentric education offers concrete contributions to this discussion by proposing a reorganization of the references that underpin the production and circulation of school knowledge. Ferreira and Rios (2024) approach Afrocentricity as a perspective capable of shifting the prevailing Eurocentric centrality, fostering educational practices grounded in the historical trajectories, cultural expressions, intellectual work, and agency of African peoples and their descendants. It is important to emphasize that this approach is not limited to including cultural expressions in occasional activities, as frequently occurs. Rather, it involves recognizing Black individuals as producers of knowledge and participants in the construction of societies. From this perspective, curriculum revision also means questioning the narratives that have historically restricted the participation of these groups in school content.

Finally, this discussion also involves a dimension of rights. The need to reorganize these references is related to the right of historically marginalized groups to participate in the production of knowledge and narratives that constitute school education. Ferreira and Rios (2024, p. 08) emphasize this dimension by stating:

> *It is urgent to consider and develop alternative ways of looking at curricula, not only because of the processes of violence and denial of humanity, but especially because of our right to our past, present, and future, and to act as self-aware agents in the educational process and in life. We have the right to detach ourselves from the failure projected by the educational system and to break with the narratives, practices, and theories that generate the erasure of different peoples' contributions to the structuring of societies, as well as the erasure of the life experiences of children, young people, and adults within educational spaces.*

Valuing Afro-Brazilian knowledge cannot be achieved simply by allocating it some space in the curriculum. It requires recognizing the historical and contemporary participation of the Black population in scientific, cultural, political, and social production, which goes far beyond inserting content at the margins of other subjects.

Part of this process of appreciation depends on which individuals and groups are represented across curricular components, not merely in those where their presence is traditionally expected. Gonçalves, Souza, and Gusmão (2025), in their analysis of Afrocentric pedagogical experiences, describe initiatives that incorporate Black references through biographical research, artistic activities, technological prototyping, and engagement with the community. These experiences make it possible to discuss Black intellectual production beyond conventional approaches, which are often exclusively associated with slavery, religiosity, or cultural expressions. When these references are incorporated into different areas of knowledge, it becomes more difficult to sustain the automatic

association between scientific production and European thought, while students gain access to a broader range of intellectual trajectories with which they can identify.

Regarding Indigenous knowledge, the starting point is different because there is no single, homogeneous body of Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous peoples are highly diverse, with their own ways of organizing social life, culture, and knowledge itself, and this diversity must be taken seriously. Rodrigues and Cordeiro (2023) examine the development of intercultural curricula in Indigenous schools and demonstrate that the participation of communities, leaders, teachers, and elders in organizing educational proposals is not merely an additional component but a fundamental condition for the existence of these curricula. Similarly, Vieira and Moreira (2024) question the Westernized organization of mathematical knowledge and argue that Indigenous mathematical practices and knowledge should be recognized on their own terms. Taken together, these studies suggest that Indigenous knowledge does not need to be fully adapted to conventional school frameworks to be considered legitimate. What matters is that educational processes recognize how this knowledge is produced, transmitted, and applied.

Another relevant issue concerns how Indigenous peoples are represented in teaching materials, where these hierarchies of knowledge become particularly visible. Santos (2020) examined History textbooks intended for the sixth grade of Elementary Education and identified representations that remain grounded in colonial conceptions, including stereotypes that erase the ethnic and cultural diversity of these peoples. Rufino and Senna (2025), in their analysis of texts and images in Geography textbooks, identify a

different trend: although progress has been made in representing Indigenous agency, limitations in the portrayal of these identities remain. The authors emphasize:

> *Pedagogical materials, by reorganizing narratives about Indigenous peoples, redirect systems that reinforce restrictive interpretations. In this context, school materials become instruments for reshaping deeply rooted conceptions by highlighting dynamics that restrict diversity and perpetuate standardized discourses. Challenging established patterns regarding Indigenous peoples through texts and images in teaching materials is a central issue in promoting an inclusive education. The historical representation of Indigenous peoples in educational content has frequently reinforced stigmas by disregarding their cultural diversity and contributions to society. Revising these representations makes it possible to break with colonial paradigms and creates opportunities for the emancipation of diverse and multifaceted identities (Rufino; Senna, 2025, p. 07).*

To systematize the contributions of the works examined, Table 2 brings together dimensions related to the selection, representation, and appreciation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge, highlighting their implications for confronting the hierarchies of knowledge that permeate the school curriculum.

Table 2. Curricular dimensions for valuing Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge and confronting hierarchies of knowledge

Dimension of analysis	Characterization and identified issues	Contributions to the appreciation of knowledge and anti-racist education	Author(s) and abbreviated title of the work
Afrocentric education and curricular reorganization	Predominance of Eurocentric references and marginalization of knowledge rooted in African traditions.	Recognition of the history, culture, intellectual production, and agency of African and Afro-Brazilian peoples as references for curricular organization.	Ferreira and Rios (2024). *Njila ku kibuku: Afrocentric Education and New Ways of Educating*.
Afrocentric curriculum and representativeness	Limited presence of Black intellectuals, scientists, and prominent figures in school content.	Broadening the cultural repertoire of Black youth and valuing intellectual and scientific contributions that have historically received little representation.	Gonçalves, Souza, and Gusmão (2025). *Afrocentric Curriculum and New Cultural Repertoires*.
Indigenous representation in textbooks	Reproduction of stereotypes, generalizations, and colonial perspectives regarding Indigenous peoples.	Revising school narratives and recognizing the ethnic, cultural, and historical diversity of Indigenous peoples.	Santos (2020). *Cultural Representation of Indigenous Peoples in History Textbooks*.
Indigenous identities and teaching materials	Limited representations of Indigenous identities in texts and images used in education.	Recognizing Indigenous agency and valuing plural identities in school materials.	Rufino and Senna (2025). *Indigenous Identities in Textbooks*.

Indigenous mathematical knowledge	Predominance of Westernized and homogenized references in the organization of school mathematical knowledge.	Recognizing Indigenous mathematical practices and promoting dialogue with ethnomathematics and social justice.	Vieira and Moreira (2024). *Mathematics Education "of" Indigenous Peoples*.
Intercultural curriculum in Indigenous schools	Disregard for the specific ways in which Indigenous communities produce and transmit knowledge.	Participation of teachers, students, leaders, and elders in developing curricula connected to community realities.	Rodrigues and Cordeiro (2023). *Indigenous School Education: Curriculum and Interculturality*.
Indigenous representations in the 2024 PNLD	Persistence of cultural generalizations and elements of the colonial imaginary, despite changes in forms of representation.	Critical analysis of textbooks and recognition of the symbolic disputes surrounding the representation of Indigenous peoples.	Bonin, Kirchof, and Figueiredo (2026). *Indigenous Representations in Textbooks*.
Curricular guidelines and Indigenous educational rights	Need for educational proposals that consider the ethnic, cultural, and territorial specificities of Indigenous peoples.	Guidance for developing curricula and Political-Pedagogical Projects connected to Indigenous identities and educational rights.	Feitosa and Lopes (2025). *Curricular Guidelines for Indigenous School Education in Ceará*.

Source: Prepared by the author based on Ferreira and Rios (2024), Gonçalves, Souza, and Gusmão (2025), Santos (2020), Rufino and

Senna (2025), Vieira and Moreira (2024), Rodrigues and Cordeiro (2023), Bonin, Kirchof, and Figueiredo (2026), and Ceará (2025).

Bonin, Kirchof, and Figueiredo (2026) also examine this dispute surrounding the representation of Indigenous peoples through an analysis of Portuguese Language textbooks approved under the 2024 National Textbook and Teaching Material Program (PNLD). Their findings reveal an ambivalent situation: although changes have occurred in the ways Indigenous peoples are named and recognized, cultural generalizations and representations associated with the colonial imaginary remain present in the very materials approved by the program. In the context of Ceará, the most directly relevant institutional reference is the Curricular Guidelines for Indigenous School Education, developed by Feitosa and Lopes (2025) at the request of the Ceará State Department of Education. These guidelines provide direction for developing curricular proposals and Political-Pedagogical Projects that take into account the identities, territoriality, and specific characteristics of Indigenous peoples. Considered together, these studies support the understanding that curricular transformation involves more than critically reviewing teaching materials. It also requires recognizing the participation of Indigenous communities in determining the knowledge incorporated into their own educational processes.

2.3. Pedagogical And Institutional Strategies For Curricular Defolklorization And The Consolidation Of Anti-Racist Education

Anti-racist education cannot be sustained through isolated initiatives. It requires schools to incorporate ethnic-racial relations into the everyday organization of teaching. This transformation involves reviewing pedagogical conceptions, curricular content, and

institutional practices that have historically contributed to making the Black population and Indigenous peoples invisible within the school environment itself. In this context, teacher education emerges as a central element. It provides the foundation for educational practices capable of recognizing diverse historical and cultural experiences, questioning discriminatory representations, and ensuring that Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge is continuously incorporated into teaching and learning processes.

Such education must encompass theoretical and methodological foundations that enable teachers to understand racism as a historical and structural phenomenon while recognizing its manifestations in everyday school life, which are not always explicit. Lopes, Souza, and Dionisio (2024) discuss the pedagogical experiences of teachers committed to anti-racist education and draw attention to an aspect we consider particularly relevant: starting from students' prior knowledge to critically examine socially constructed conceptions. In this regard, the authors state:

> *In the teaching and learning process, it is important to consider students' prior knowledge and critically examine it so that it can be reflected upon and addressed, ultimately contributing to the development of anti-racist education, since a teaching and learning process that renders the Black population invisible is no longer acceptable (Lopes; Souza; Dionisio, 2024, p. 15).*

This perspective reinforces the need for teacher education that integrates critical reflection, scientific knowledge, and pedagogical intervention. Initial teacher education must also provide future teachers with the necessary conditions to identify and confront racist and Eurocentric conceptions embedded in school content and

practices. Carvalho and Silva (2025), in their research on the pedagogical practices of teachers in the early years of Elementary Education, specifically discuss the importance of such professional preparation for education committed to ethnic-racial relations. In this discussion, the authors draw on the contribution of Almeida *et al.* (2021 *apud* Carvalho; Silva, 2025, p. 18), according to whom:

> *During initial teacher education, future teachers are prepared to develop approaches that promote the learning of children, adolescents, and young people in schools through the treatment of concepts relevant to teaching practice. Concepts and practices can be reflected upon, questioned, refined, reshaped, understood, and/or challenged through the knowledge conveyed in teacher education programs or through the various experiences, interactions, and learning opportunities encountered by undergraduate students. Therefore, initial teacher education for ethnic-racial and anti-racist education is also important, as it must be capable of questioning and rejecting false assumptions rooted in racism and Eurocentrism while making African and Afro-Brazilian history and culture visible, recognized, and legitimate.*

Continuing teacher education should extend this process by promoting the updating of teachers' knowledge and the analysis of discriminatory situations that permeate the school environment. Initial teacher education must also prepare future teachers to identify and confront racist and Eurocentric conceptions embedded in school content and practices. This is precisely the issue raised by Carvalho and Silva (2025) in their examination of the pedagogical work of teachers in the early years of Elementary Education: without professional preparation specifically focused on these issues, it is not

possible to sustain, in everyday classroom practice, an education genuinely committed to ethnic-racial relations.

However, teacher education alone is not enough. Anti-racist education becomes institutionalized only when it is incorporated into school planning and the documents that guide institutional practices. Gatinho (2020) examined practices related to the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in public schools in Acre, providing insights into the participation of teachers and school administrators in implementing these requirements. Marques and Diallo (2020), in turn, relate the teaching of these histories and cultures to both teaching practices and institutional organization, identifying the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP) as a central component. From this perspective, teacher education must be accompanied by collective planning so that ethnic-racial knowledge permeates objectives, content, methodologies, and assessment processes rather than remaining confined to commemorative events.

Pedagogical practices, in turn, must foster school experiences in which the identity, history, and agency of the Black population are recognized from the earliest years of Basic Education. Batista, Ribeiro, and Cavalcanti (2024) examine curricular approaches related to Black identity and literacy, identifying experiences in which affection, identity, and resistance are interconnected in teaching practices. This perspective broadens the discussion on teacher education because the selection of texts, images, narratives, and other teaching resources directly influences the references children develop about themselves and different social groups. Teacher education therefore involves providing educators with criteria for

selecting materials that represent the Black population in its historical, cultural, intellectual, and social diversity.

Finally, interdisciplinary approaches emerge as a means of overcoming the fragmented treatment of education for ethnic-racial relations. Nascimento, Silva, and Scalabrin (2020) discuss pedagogical practices in rural education focused on teaching Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, contributing to reflections on integrated curricula, contextualization, and connections across different areas of knowledge. Calado *et al.* (2025), in their examination of shared teaching practices, identify opportunities for collaboration among education professionals in developing emancipatory and anti-racist education. These studies indicate that teacher education can foster joint planning, the exchange of experiences, and the development of pedagogical proposals that connect school knowledge with students' sociocultural realities without confining ethnic-racial issues to a single subject.

The revision of historical narratives and teaching resources is also part of the strategies for curricular defolklorization. Rosa, Almeida, and Fonseca (2024, p. 17) emphasize that:

> *For a long time, Brazilian history was narrated from a Eurocentric perspective, which often perpetuated the claim that the Portuguese discovered Brazil. This line of reasoning maintains a Eurocentric curriculum and reinforces the colonizer's version of history. It is important to emphasize that Indigenous peoples already inhabited Brazilian territory before the arrival of the Portuguese. Following the arrival of the Portuguese Court in Brazil, a process of human exploitation began, bringing African peoples aboard slave ships to work under conditions of enslavement. This construction of Brazilian history resulted in the country's intense multicultural character. However, years of Eurocentric education frequently led to the overvaluation of European culture and the devaluation of the cultures of Indigenous peoples and people of African descent. Consequently, the use of derogatory adjectives and the difficulty of identifying oneself as a historical subject stem from this colonialist way of thinking.*

This highlights the need for teacher education capable of addressing two tasks simultaneously: identifying Eurocentric approaches in teaching materials and developing alternatives that effectively recognize the participation of Indigenous and African peoples in the formation of Brazilian society. This critical analysis, moreover, cannot remain an individual undertaking. It must become part of pedagogical planning and the school's institutional decision-making processes.

Table 3 brings together the strategies discussed, organized into pedagogical and institutional dimensions: teacher education, collective planning, revision of teaching materials, and incorporation of education for ethnic-racial relations into the Political-Pedagogical Project.

Table 3. Pedagogical and institutional strategies for curricular defolklorization and anti-racist education

Dimension of analysis	**Identified strategies and issues**	**Contributions to curricular defolklorization and anti-racist education**	**Author(s) and abbreviated title of the work**
Teacher education and anti-racist practices	Need to prepare teachers to critically examine prior knowledge, stereotypes, and situations that render the Black population invisible.	Development of pedagogical practices grounded in critical reflection and recognition of students' knowledge and experiences.	Lopes, Souza, and Dionisio (2024). *Anti-Racist Teachers and Their Pedagogical Experiences*.
Initial and continuing teacher education for ethnic-racial relations	Insufficient theoretical and methodological knowledge to confront racism and Eurocentrism in everyday school life.	Professional preparation to identify, question, and overcome discriminatory conceptions while valuing African and Afro-Brazilian history and culture.	Carvalho and Silva (2025). *Pedagogical Practices of Teachers Addressing Ethnic-Racial Diversity*.
Institutionalization of anti-racist practices	Uneven implementation of the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in public schools.	Participation of teachers and school administrators in incorporating the topic into institutional planning and practices.	Gatinho (2020). *Practices Related to Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in Public Schools in Acre*.
Political-Pedagogical	Risk that education for	Incorporation of the topic into the	Marques and Diallo (2020).

Project and school planning	ethnic-racial relations remains dependent on individual initiatives or occasional activities.	PPP and coordination between institutional planning, teaching practices, and curricular organization.	*Teaching Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in Public Schools*.
Curriculum, literacy, and Black identity	Insufficient references that value Black identity and the agency of Black children in literacy practices.	Organization of curricular experiences that integrate identity, belonging, affection, and recognition of the Black population.	Batista, Ribeiro, and Cavalcanti (2024). *Teaching, Curriculum, and Black Identity*.
Integrated curriculum and interdisciplinarity	Fragmented treatment of content related to Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture.	Integration across areas of knowledge, curricular contextualization, and planning of interdisciplinary pedagogical practices.	Nascimento, Silva, and Scalabrin (2020). *Pedagogical Practices in Rural Education*.
Shared teaching practices and collective planning	Need to expand collaboration among education professionals in the development and implementation of anti-racist educational practices.	Collective development of pedagogical strategies and integration of different teaching experiences in support of emancipatory education.	Calado *et al.* (2025). *Contributions of Shared Teaching Practices to Emancipatory and Anti-Racist Education*.
Revision of teaching materials and	Persistence of Eurocentric perspectives that devalue the	Critical selection of materials and revision of school narratives,	Rosa, Almeida, and Fonseca (2024). *Pedagogical*

historical narratives	knowledge and contributions of Indigenous peoples and people of African descent.	recognizing cultural diversity and historical subjects.	*Practices for Ethnic-Racial Appreciation*.

Source: Prepared by the author based on Lopes, Souza, and Dionisio (2024), Carvalho and Silva (2025), Gatinho (2020), Marques and Diallo (2020), Batista, Ribeiro, and Cavalcanti (2024), Nascimento, Silva, and Scalabrin (2020), Calado *et al.* (2025), and Rosa, Almeida, and Fonseca (2024).

The Basic Education curriculum still organizes much of its content according to a Eurocentric framework, while Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous histories and cultures continue to appear, when they appear at all, confined to commemorative dates, decorative elements, or secondary content. This persistent situation makes curricular defolklorization a relevant subject of discussion in this article, not so much as an agenda for including additional content, but rather as a reassessment of how schools select, organize, and legitimize the knowledge they teach. Understood in this way, defolklorization becomes part of a broader project aimed at valuing ethnic-racial diversity and recognizing that Brazilian society is historically, culturally, and epistemologically plural.

3. METHODOLOGY

The choice of a qualitative approach stems from the nature of the research problem itself. Understanding and interpreting how curricular defolklorization and the development of anti-racist education take place in Basic Education requires examining historical, cultural, pedagogical, and institutional dimensions that

cannot be reduced to numerical data. This approach makes it possible to capture the meanings attributed to ethnic-racial relations, the appreciation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge, and the organization of the school curriculum without reducing these aspects to statistical measurements. Lösch, Rambo, and Ferreira (2023) reach a similar conclusion, arguing that qualitative research facilitates precisely this type of examination of educational issues within their specific contexts and particularities.

The research procedures consisted of a literature review and documentary research, which were used in a complementary manner. The literature review brought together and examined scientific publications related to anti-racist education, ethnic-racial relations, curricular defolklorization, Afrocentric education, interculturality, and pedagogical practices aimed at valuing Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge. Lakatos and Marconi (2020) describe this type of review as systematic engagement with the existing body of work on a given subject. Braucks *et al.* (2025), in turn, characterize the same process as identifying, selecting, and analyzing academic publications related to the research problem. Given the nature and purpose of this study, the review was not classified under a specific systematic approach, such as an integrative or scoping review. Instead, it was conducted according to a thematic and interpretive orientation.

The identification of publications was based on the central themes of the investigation, with searches conducted through academic search engines, scientific journal websites, and publication DOI records. The descriptors used, all in Portuguese, were: “educação antirracista” (anti-racist education), “desfolclorização curricular” (curricular defolklorization), “relações étnico-raciais” (ethnic-racial

relations), “currículo afrocentrado” (Afrocentric curriculum), “saberes afro-brasileiros” (Afro-Brazilian knowledge), “educação escolar indígena” (Indigenous school education), “representações indígenas nos livros didáticos” (Indigenous representations in textbooks), “formação de professores” (teacher education), and “práticas pedagógicas antirracistas” (anti-racist pedagogical practices). The combination of these terms followed the relationship between the research problem, the specific objectives, and the three theoretical framework areas, covering expressions associated with the curriculum, ethnic-racial diversity, and educational practices. Consultation of editorial records and DOI registrations also helped verify the identification, authorship, and publication details of the selected works.

The time frame covered the period from 2018 to 2026, allowing for the inclusion of recent studies relevant to the proposed discussion. Priority was given to scientific articles published in academic journals and institutional documents addressing ethnic-racial relations education, Indigenous school education, and curricular guidelines. The selection process considered the thematic relevance of the publications, their alignment with the research objectives, their contribution to the discussion of the concepts under investigation, and the availability of bibliographic information required for identification. Only texts written in Portuguese were included in the corpus, particularly scientific articles and official documents. Publications that were not directly related to the research subject or did not contribute to understanding the thematic areas were excluded. Since no consolidated quantitative record was maintained of the materials retrieved and excluded during the search, this study does not report the number of documents identified, discarded, or selected.

The collected material was examined through an interpretive reading of titles, abstracts, keywords; and the content of the selected publications; with particular attention to each work's contribution to understanding the research problem; The analytical organization was guided by the specific objectives of the investigation and structured around three thematic categories: the conceptual foundations of anti-racist education and curricular defolklorization; the school curriculum; hierarchies of knowledge; and the appreciation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge; and pedagogical and institutional strategies aimed at curricular defolklorization; These three areas emerged from the intersection of the research problem; the established objectives; and the topics most frequently addressed in the selected publications; This organization made it possible to bring together the authors' contributions around conceptual; curricular; and pedagogical dimensions.

Documentary research, in turn, complemented the literature review through the examination of institutional documents and educational guidelines related to the research subject. These materials included two publications issued by the Ceará State Department of Education: *Educação para as relações étnico-raciais e semana da consciência negra: orientações* (Ceará, 2023) and *Diretrizes curriculares para a Educação Escolar Indígena do Ceará* (Ceará, 2025). These documents were selected because of their direct connection to policies and guidelines aimed at recognizing ethnic-racial diversity and valuing the knowledge of Indigenous peoples. As Salge, Oliveira, and Silva (2021) point out, documentary research requires careful attention to the identification, selection, and interpretation of sources, taking into account their nature and relationship to the subject under investigation.

The documentary analysis considered three main dimensions: guidelines for addressing ethnic-racial relations in the school context; guidelines for recognizing and valuing the knowledge and sociocultural specificities of Indigenous peoples; and opportunities to integrate these guidelines into the curriculum and pedagogical practices of Basic Education. The documents were examined through interpretive reading to identify principles, recommendations, and guidelines that were consistent with the categories established in the literature review. Documentary research therefore did not function as an independent procedure but rather as a complement to the literature review, bringing academic discussions into dialogue with institutional guidelines addressing anti-racist education and the appreciation of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge.

4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Basic Education curriculum still organizes much of its content according to a Eurocentric logic, while Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous histories and cultures, when included, remain confined to commemorative dates, decorative elements, or secondary topics. This persistent pattern made curricular defolklorization a relevant subject for discussion in this article, not so much as an agenda for adding content, but rather as a reassessment of how schools select, organize, and legitimize the knowledge they teach. Understood in this way, defolklorization becomes part of a broader project aimed at valuing ethnic-racial diversity and recognizing Brazilian society as historically, culturally, and epistemologically plural.

The research question that guided this study, namely, how the defolklorization of the school curriculum can contribute to the

development of anti-racist education, considering the recognition, appreciation, and legitimacy of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge in teaching and learning processes in Basic Education, was addressed within the scope of what bibliographic and documentary research can establish. The analysis indicates that this contribution is expressed primarily through changes in the criteria used to determine whether Afro-Brazilian or Indigenous knowledge is incorporated into the curriculum. Inclusion alone is insufficient. Such knowledge must be recognized as a legitimate reference for the production of school knowledge. This requires revising stereotypical representations, questioning hierarchies among different knowledge systems, and ensuring that ethnic-racial relations remain an ongoing part of pedagogical work rather than being treated as a separate topic.

The general objective and the three specific objectives are considered to have been achieved within the same bibliographic and documentary framework. The research process involved examining the conceptual foundations of anti-racist education and curricular defolklorization, discussing how Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge is selected and valued, and identifying pedagogical and institutional strategies related to teacher education, planning, and the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP). Taken together, these lines of inquiry made it possible to address the research problem in an integrated manner, connecting the foundations of ethnic-racial relations with curricular choices and the institutional conditions required for incorporating them into everyday school life.

Regarding the theoretical foundations, the analysis showed that anti-racist education is not limited to teaching content about

historically discriminated groups, as it also requires questioning the conceptions that sustain inequalities, silencing, and stereotypical representations. Within this debate, it was necessary to distinguish the appreciation of cultural expressions from their folklorization, understood as an approach that may reduce complex historical experiences and forms of knowledge to superficial representations. Whereas schools previously addressed education from an exclusively folklorized perspective, treating these elements merely as cultural manifestations, they must now reassess their practices and recognize that anti-racist education requires a broader and deeper approach. Educational practices should no longer be restricted by the stereotypes associated with Eurocentric education; rather, they should be meaningful and emancipatory, valuing the agency of the individuals who are part of the educational process. This distinction matters because defolklorization does not mean excluding cultural heritage and traditional expressions from the curriculum, but rather overcoming their decontextualized presentation by recognizing the historical, social, and political meanings they convey.

The second section addressed the curriculum as the framework that determines, in practice, which forms of knowledge are considered legitimate and, consequently, which cultural and historical references are made available to students. The discussion of teaching materials and the representation of Indigenous, African, and Afro-Brazilian peoples showed that it is not enough to ask whether these groups are included in school content; it is also necessary to examine the perspectives through which they are portrayed. This analysis made it possible to distinguish thematic visibility from epistemological recognition: mentioning these peoples in textbooks does not necessarily ensure that their knowledge systems and forms of social organization are valued.

Defolklorization requires presenting them as historical subjects who produce knowledge, rather than merely as objects of others' representations, while also ensuring that they can recognize themselves as historical subjects and rights holders.

The third topic led to a broader institutional perspective. Establishing anti-racist educational practices requires teacher education, pedagogical planning, and institutional commitment to work together. Initial and continuing teacher education should provide the theoretical and methodological knowledge teachers need to critically examine teaching materials, question Eurocentric approaches, and develop proposals consistent with ethnic-racial relations education. At the same time, the analysis made clear that responsibility for curricular defolklorization cannot rest solely on individual initiative. When this agenda is incorporated into the PPP, collective planning, and school management decisions, it acquires an organizational dimension that can support the continuity and coherence of educational initiatives, while taking into account the specific conditions of each institution.

As its contribution, this article systematizes curricular defolklorization through the articulation of three dimensions that are interdependent in practice: the conceptual and historical recognition of ethnic-racial relations, the revision of the hierarchies that guide the legitimization of school knowledge, and the organization of pedagogical and institutional conditions for addressing the topic continuously. This articulation indicates that valuing Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous knowledge cannot be achieved through the occasional inclusion of content alone, as it also involves changes in the references used to teach, select materials, plan, and organize school activities.

Regarding its limitations, it must be acknowledged that, given its bibliographic and documentary nature, the study did not involve observations, interviews, or interventions in Basic Education institutions. Therefore, its findings do not allow for claims about concrete outcomes resulting from the adoption of the strategies discussed. Future research could investigate how the proposals systematized in this article are interpreted and incorporated into different education systems through case studies, research involving teachers and school administrators, and analyses of PPPs, teaching materials, and pedagogical practices. It would also be worthwhile to examine the teacher education and management conditions required to sustain these initiatives over time. Such investigations could help assess their limitations, possibilities, and practical implementation across schools with different institutional contexts.

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