

Sustainable Rural Development: Productive Experiences of Quilombola Costneira/Tronco Community, Municipality of Paquetá - Piauí

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Abstract— Over many years, quilombola communities have been the target of social inequalities, victims of the exclusion process. However, they are symbols of struggles and persistence, which carry with them knowledge reproduced by their ascendants, which ensure the subsistence of their members without degrading sustainability. Thus, they are defined as ethnic-racial groups according to criteria of self-attribution, with their own historical trajectory, endowed with specific territorial relations, with presumption of related black ancestry. Thus, analyzing sustainable rural development from the productive experiences of the Custaneira/Tronco Community, located in the municipality of Paquetá, in the state of Piauí, made it possible to understand its particularities, consequently, also present ways followed by the community, aiming at greater awareness of socio-environmental causes.

I. INTRODUCTION

Due to the conflicts and struggles of the blacks for their freedom, the quilombola communities are present throughout the national territory. Currently there are about 170 communities in the State of Piauí [1]. The study was contemplated in the Quilombola Community Custaneira/Tronco, located in the microregion of Picos, which is in the process of legalizing the titration of its territory by official bodies, although the recognition of its identity as quilombolas is already explicit and concrete, both in the understanding of its members, as public institutions, like the National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN), responsible for protecting and promoting cultural goods.

Research has revealed that the local social changes are directly linked to the transformations regarding man's dependence on natural and cultural resources. Consequently, although they express vulnerability of

socioeconomic character, the quilombola community has manifested its strength and considerable adaptive ability in the face of social and environmental changes [2].

Thus, the feeling of belonging, territoriality, respect for nature, the cooperative spirit and richness of traditional knowledge provide the empowerment and spatial organization of this community [3]. In view of this, the traditional experiences of quilombola families carry a unique value that declare a representative meaning by demonstrating forms of persistences attributed to a sustainable productive model, which also expresses a symbolic meaning, contributing to the strengthening of local culture [4]. Beforehand, when considering the observations made in the Quilombola Costneira/Tronco Community, from a sustainable and socioeconomic point of view, it allows us to understand the degree of sustainability of the mechanisms adopted by the community and to know the unfolding of this situation.

Thus, the origins exposed to historical, environmental and cultural conditions determine the identity of the community and constitute the conjunction of its productive development. Because of this, this study presents an expressive scientific contribution not in the sense of presenting model proposals, but of emphasizing the competence and strength of the internal potential of its environment, seeking a more targeted look at the measures of productive organizations currently exhibited, which still show little expression, but nevertheless can be used as a strong provider at the local level.

However, the territory's economy is composed of agricultural activity, focused on family agriculture. Thus, the object of this study is based on the important role of analyzing sustainable rural development from the productive experiences of the Quilombola Custaneira/Tronco Community, in obtaining prerogatives for the preservation of local sustainability, above all, to maintain its social, cultural, historical and its identity conventions. In addition, natural and cultural resources form the foundation for the support of this community. However, they have suffered threats due to external factors such as drought and drought, which can limit and harm the maintenance of productive and economic activities, implying community income.

Therefore, this scenario emphasizes the usefulness of this study when perceiving the situations of economic instability experienced by these quilombola families, and concerns about the future life expectations and circumstances of this population. In this way, the apprehension of the productive space created particularly by members of the community, mediating relationships of trust and collaboration, allowed us to investigate cooperation with local development. Finally, in this perspective, the present study brings a brief discussion about the processes arising in the area, which, despite the daily difficulties, are in constant search for well-being and implementation of new information and assistance.

II. THEORETICAL REFERENCE

2.1 The Sustainable Rural Development and Family Farming

The predominant development model that was established in the 1950s is related to the idea of economic growth, and was characterized by technological domination and transformation of the environment. [5], such a process did not consider the social needs, or at least the competence to restore ecosystems, thus proposing a unique paradigm for an immense diversity, without taking into account the singularities of each region.

Thus, the concept of sustainable development, occurred only from the Brundtland report in 1987, providing subsidies for a new thinking around sustainable development and, diffuses with the notion that, to be sustainable it is necessary that development adapts to economic growth, wealth distribution and environmental conservation [6]. Soon, it came to be seen as a challenge, at the same time, an appeal for interventions that would ensure an effective balance between the economic and social dimensions allied with the rational management of natural resources against a capitalist model [7].

Based on the axis of this current discussion that seeks to deepen the dilemma, production, consumption and exploitation of natural resources, it can be seen that the expression "sustainable rural development" in Brazil is increasingly evident, especially, from the 1970s, when there were various behavioral changes and demarcations of the limits of economic rationality and the challenges of environmental degradation, however, important regional development policies have emerged by the government to reduce inequalities. Practically the same year there was also the Stockholm Conference, causing greater awareness and awareness of the socio-environmental and sustainable causes [5].

Thus, the approach of "sustainability" in rural development brought with it new expectations for the field and the notion of interdependence among the most varied segments of the development process. Therefore, due to the magnitude of the problems caused to sustainable development, occurred in the last decades of the twentieth century, the concern to put on the agenda the discussion on this theme and, consequently, the risks the life of the planet.

In this context, rural development is directly linked to social and economic development, so, although its projects have economic bases, they are usually judged not only by these merits, but also by the social impacts caused [8]. Because of this, the study includes rural development as a process resulting from actions established to provoke changes, both socioeconomic and environmental, improving family income, especially the quality of life and well-being of rural populations [9].

However, [10] rural development is geared towards poverty reduction, broadly shared growth, food security and sustainable management of natural resources. After all, the core of these demands is projected in the conditions necessary to achieve this development.

Having said that, the emergence of family farming for rural development comes with the adoption of a new paradigm that supersedes the previous thinking that treated it only with a factor of delay and misery and passes, then,

to be recognized as a bearer of unemployment solutions, in addition to, meet the basic needs of human beings, and give continuity to future generations. As a result, small farmers have been valued for stimulating rural life and maintaining the rural population [11].

Still on this thought [12], this image of a small-scale enterprise that makes use of relatively outdated mechanisms needs to be improved, considering the idea of deconstructing it, I try to look at the models of advanced capitalist countries. It is concluded that family agriculture incorporated into the market has the capacity for innovation and technical evolution, bringing within the field a diversification of activities and contributions in the environmental preservation process, where it can no longer be confused as peasants.

The concept of family farming was applied through Law 11,326 [13], by the Brazilian state and integrates several categories, among them, quilombola communities. In this sense, the same is defined as productive units where work and management are interconnected, and management is controlled by the head of household. It is understood that in these units, the diversification and durability of natural resources are essential for their progress, since the family and the land are inseparable in this process [14].

Since then, these categories have become more visible, one of the positive points was access to a range of federal public policies, including the National Program to Strengthen Family Agriculture (PRONAF), considered, then, one of the most important in the federal sphere and aimed at family farmers to boost sustainable rural development [15].

To this end, the link between sustainable rural development and family farming lies in the use and preservation of natural resources, which are considered the most appropriate because they apply more environmentally-friendly production practices, with the variation of crops and the lower use of chemical material, enabling the growth of sustainable agriculture.

Finally, the use of natural resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional changes are harmonized and reinforce the present and future potential, in order to meet human needs and aspirations [16]. However, it is important to link these issues to the progressive recognition of sustainable agriculture as a guide to programs, actions of governments and societal behaviors, with the theme being promoted in different arenas of government and civil society discussions [17].

2.2 Quilombola Community: A Historical Perspective

When discussing issues related to traditional communities, and the developments of social historiography, we refer to a historical past, constituted by a slavish and cruel regime, occurred worldwide. Thus, the black social movements took over the concept, in their material and symbolic expectations, for the organization of a political and cultural struggle, which would result in the inclusion of Article 68 of the Transitional Constitutional Provisions Act, existing in the Federal Constitution of 1988, in which it says: "To the remnants of the quilombola communities that are occupying their lands is recognized the definitive property, and the State must issue the respective titles".

In summary, the Federal Constitution granted an area to these traditional communities, allowing them greater freedom [18], but it was only from the 2000s that managers understood the urgency of minimizing inequalities in order to consciously achieve the promotion of social justice in those communities which, in fact, have always existed on the margins of society [19]. Then, in 2003, the Special Secretariat for Policies to Promote Racial Equality (SEPPPIR) was born through the recognition of the struggles of black movements, linked to the Ministry of Human Rights with the aim of minimizing these inequalities and conceiving these communities remnants of quilombos as traditional populations with their respective rights.

Thus, with the 1988 Constitution, these communities came to be considered as "groups that developed, over time, practices of resistance in the maintenance and reproduction of their characteristic ways of life in a given place" [20]. In this perspective, these communities began to be inserted in Brazilian public obligations through public policies, as well as in academic debates.

After all, these groups are characterized in a culturally differentiated way, which recognize themselves as such, have their own forms of social and economic organization, occupy and use territories and natural resources as a condition for their cultural, social, religious and ancestral reproduction, using knowledge and innovations, which are generated and transmitted by tradition [21].

With similar elements [22], describes quilombo as, a rural black community inhabited by descendants of enslaved Africans, with kinship ties, who live on agriculture, on land donated, purchased or secularly occupied by their ancestors, who maintain their cultural traditions and experience them in the present as their stories and their code of ethics, propagated orally from generation to generation. In this follow-up, it can also be said that they are seen as ethnic-racial groups according to

criteria of self-acceptance and with resistance to the historical oppression suffered [23].

The National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA), charged with recognizing and formally consenting to the titration of quilombola territories, estimates that there are around three thousand communities in Brazil. Specifically in the state of Piauí at the moment registered a total of 88 certified communities [1].

It is essential to recognize that the areas occupied by the quilombolas are perceptibly marked by social and cultural vulnerabilities, especially economic.

In the cultural scenario, the subsistence of the communities is demarcated by their territories that live through traditional productive activities such as farming, livestock, fishing, growing small vegetable gardens, among others. However, the experiences derived from patrimonial knowledge, are generally favorable for the maintenance, centered on the exploitation of natural resources, with little technology, precarious articulation with the market, intense use of family labor and basically sustainable [24]. In this way, the economic life of the quilombolas is predominantly rural, containing skills that reproduce various activities in the family unit of production without the use of instruments [25].

Therefore, fostering discussions between scientific knowledge and the empirical knowledge of quilombola communities is a way of exposing the rich knowledge present in its environment to thus understand its role in the cultural and social construction of Brazil, in addition to seeking greater awareness of socio-environmental and socioeconomic causes through research.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research was carried out in the Quilombola Custaneira/Tronco Community (figure 01), located in the Northeastern Semiarid, within the limits of the municipality of Paquetá - PI. Located in the micro-region of Picos, semi-arid Piauiense. Distance about 309 km from Teresina - PI, and 26 km from Picos - PI. Due to the geographical proximity and socio-cultural, commercial, family, political and administrative relations established throughout its history, the community receives influences from the municipalities of Picos, Santa Cruz and Oeiras. In this Mesoregion there are voluminous concentrations of afrodescendant population. At the moment the community aggregates 167 people, 48 families and is in the process of legalizing the titration of its territory by official bodies [26].



Fig.1: Custaneira/Tronco Community, located in the City of Paquetá - PI.

Source: Reproduction/Internet (2020)

The methodological path followed was, first, a bibliographic/documentary search from the available records and resulting from previous research with access to the documentary field and database of official agencies, among them, Fundação Cultural Palmares and IPHAN. This being a research that unceasingly seeks knowledge, mainly theories that direct the paths to scientific work [27].

This study was conducted based on exploratory and descriptive research [28]. It should be noted that the work was developed and supported in the experiences experienced in the community, during the work in the field, especially through the conviviality with it, where there was the concern to describe thoroughly from the observation, of the records and the interpretation that, happened in a natural and effective way.

Thus, descriptive research has as main objective to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon [29]. As for exploratory research, it can provide a broad view about a fact, allowing a deepening on the subject addressed, especially in the scientific field.

Finally, the typology of procedures of this study has a qualitative approach, which have the ability to report a problem, analyze the interactivity of certain variables, consequently, understand the dynamics of social relations [30].

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The history of the Quilombola Custaneira/Tronco Community, belonging to the municipality of Paquetá - PI, began with the arrival of blacks in the territory, however, it was only known as black community. Soon, from the first national meeting of quilombola communities in Brasilia in 1996, with the participation of leaders, this context began to be repackaged, bringing to this people, through its history and culture, the task of being legally recognised as an organised quilombola community. Finally, only in 2012 they obtained the certificate, giving them full rights to their

declared identity and assured by the Palmares Cultural Foundation.

Regarding the appropriation of land, it is worth mentioning that the Costneira/Tronco Community itself, purchased by their families from former landowners, has about 440 hectares, Families use approximately 35 hectares for planting and subsistence of these families.

However, the quilombola community under study has as its main means of subsistence family farming, through the cultivation of manioc, corn, beans and rice, sometimes beating carnauba, or receiving government social resources as a family grant, and distribution of basic baskets. However, in the summer or in times of drought men go out in search of various jobs in other states, in order to ensure the survival of their families [31].



Fig.2: Manioc plantation.

Source: Personnel file (2021)

As for the economic activities more developed by the community is to livestock, put in the following figure (03), with the rearing of chickens, goats, pork and cattle, consecutively, the handicraft. Also noteworthy is the commercialization of organic sesame for companies in other cities, the sale of chestnuts, sweets and cakes, in addition to the sale of medicinal plants taken from the forests of the territory, for the manufacture of medicines and baths, sold to society at free trade fairs, exhibitions and even in the community.



Fig.3: Goat Rearing.

Source: Personnel file (2021)

One of the most striking difficulties that the community faces is the scarcity of rainfall, which directly

interferes with its production and quality of life. Seen from this, the community was benefited with the design of cisterns, as shown in the figure (04), that captures the water in the rainy season, which together with the help of the well contributes to the planting and use of the community.



Fig.4: Cistern for rainwater collection and use.

Source: Personnel file (2021)

Another benefit that favors the community economy through the partnership of municipal management with the state is the inclusion of these small farmers in the Food Acquisition Program (PAA) where part of the school meal budget is earmarked for the purchase of food from these family farmers and distributed to municipal and state schools, strengthening local trade, at the same time, promoting and privileging them. In short, the municipality has worked in social, cultural, economic and sustainable support, since, to ensure production in the community it is necessary to take care of the local territory, because both are interconnected.



Fig.5: Vegetable and fruit plantation.

Source: Personnel file (2021)

As shown in figure 05, the quilombola families make conscious use of the territory, seeking the balance between sustainable and economic development, since, everything that the community has comes from the forests. In short, there is no use of natural resources without the necessary use, constantly maintaining the vitality of these resources, an example is the removal of firewood without degrading the environment.

In recent times the community has carried out together with the quilombola youth a work of awareness, in the

sense of preserving and improving what the earth can offer, transforming this into their present and future livelihood, so that there is no need to work in other lands, or even in other states, but that they understand that with the continuous care the community can guarantee sustenance.

Certainly, because it is an organized and active community in its decision-making processes, recently was entered in the Rural Environmental Registry (CAR), a kind of electronic record of environmental information of rural properties, aiming the monitoring and control of the situations of the areas of permanent preservation.

Therefore, it was also possible to highlight the important role of the association in strengthening family ties in order to unify the quilombola struggle in guaranteeing their rights. Finally, it is observed that the residents of the Quilombola Custaneira/Tronco Community live with natural restrictions typical of the semiarid regions of Brazil, with high temperatures and scarce rainfall. In this way, they seek in the potentialities of the region the resources for the maintenance of life in the locality.

V. CONCLUSION

Therefore, this research sought to bring questions inherent to the productive experiences of the community studied, socioeconomic factors and the housing mode of these families in the direction of sustainable development. Therefore, to show the importance of this theme not only in the environmental context, but in the action of knowing and valuing other cultures, attitudes and values.

Thus, it expects this study to stimulate the construction of other works and encourage the sustainable preservation of the environment and its cultures. To this end, the reflections made through observation in living with the community sought to ensure the veracity of the facts, above all, enable information that subsidize decision-making in planning and sustainable management local, generating mutual benefits to the community, from the strengthening of the productive forces.

In this way, given all the requirements, after the study is carried out, it is necessary to make clear that the results will be returned to the community, reinforcing its knowledge, practices and life history. It is understood that all these developments obtained with the performance of the study will also contribute to motivate economic growth allied to the preservation of natural resources.

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