

# The actions of an NGO in proposing contextualized education towards coexistence with the semi-arid region

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**Abstract**— *The purpose of this article is to discuss the actions of a non-governmental organization in proposing contextualized education towards coexistence with the semiarid region, taking into consideration its outcome when contributing to formal education and professional development in the community of Massaroca, in Juazeiro-BA. We start from the understanding that education in perspective will allow individuals to be re-signified in spaces in which they live and an expansion of flavors that they already dominate in their daily lives, while conditions are necessary for the construction of citizenship.*

**Keywords**— *Coexistence, Contextualization, Education, Semiarid.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the paper should explain the nature of the problem, previous work, purpose, and the contribution of the paper. The contents of each section may be provided to understand easily about the paper.

Contextualized education has become essential when thinking about the relationship between education, culture and territories as a way to overcome certain dichotomies and the homogenizing effect of decontextualized educational practices, but also to counter the worldview and thought that instituted a discourse on the Brazilian Northeastern semiarid region as being something behind the times, underdeveloped, where people are seen as ignorant and inferior.

It should be noted that this dominant worldview was conceived in the light of rationalist, mechanistic and utilitarian thinking, having in modern science the necessary support for the culture-nature, superior-inferior dichotomies, among others, to be established in the perceptions and values of the subjects.

This logic has perpetuated itself in Brazil since its colonization, in view of the ethnocentric concept of man and culture present in the dominant discourse, which in turn, further accentuated these dichotomies, for which this colonization meant not only the domination of territorial spaces, but above all, the imposition of European culture

to the detriment of local culture. However, this domination also took place through historical resistance and struggles of the indigenous peoples living in Brazil, where education was a mechanism for the alienation and the devaluation of the knowledge of these traditional peoples.

Nowadays, this hegemonic discourse is still prevalent in Brazilian education, since the idea of development rooted in global models is a camouflaged way of reproducing and reflecting the superior-inferior dichotomy around regions, places and people by means of the decontextualization of local realities.

Therefore, it will be necessary to break with this worldview in order to implement educational actions that bring new perceptions to the subject about himself and about the world in which he lives, in the perspective of coexistence with the semiarid region, through the appreciation of local knowledge and existing ways of life.

Given the above, we will present and discuss the contributions of the non-governmental organization Associação de Desenvolvimento de Ações Comunitárias (ADAC) in proposing a contextualized education in the perspective of coexistence with the semiarid region, in partnership with various sectors of society such as the Universidade do Estado da Bahia (UNEB), as part of a network that articulates and mobilizes people in the

community, highlighting the socialization of knowledge and successful experiences.

## II. METHODOLOGY

We started from a qualitative approach both in procedures and in analyses, with a view to deepening the discussions on the theme, understanding the institutional dynamics, as well as the value that the subjects give in this process of articulation of the contextualized education proposal and of the community.

We developed the study at the Associação de Desenvolvimento de Ações Comunitárias (ADAC), which is located at Rua dos Ingleses, Centro, Juazeiro-BA, utilizing interviews with two technicians responsible for the pedagogical coordination, as well as consulting the institution's documents and archives, such as photos, projects, plans, etc.

## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the researches developed by Carvalho (2011), Queiroz (2015) and Lima (2010) on the coexistence with the semiarid region, it is understood that the discourses instituted around this coexistence have been consubstantiated as an alternative for sustainable development, focused on the promotion of citizenship and the improvement of people's quality of life, that is, a re-appreciation of the nature and the subjects' perception of the world in which they live.

We notice that, throughout history, there have been several meanings for the term 'coexistence'. One of them culminated in the idea of inaction towards climatic conditions of the semiarid region, or rather towards the "problem of drought". On the other hand, another reading elicited the return to the past, in which the society would be sustained only by the primary activities that satisfied their basic needs.

However, Carvalho (2011) argues that the participation of several organizations in social networks made it possible to reflect on this "coexistence with the semiarid region" idea-project, mainly in view of the role of social actors in implementing programs and actions related to water and education.

For Lima and Silva (2010), the perspective of coexistence consists in changing attitudes towards nature in order to establish development parameters that take advantage of the potentialities offered by the environment, because

The coexistence with semiarid conditions requires a change in the way one looks at the reality of the place, as well as new insights that help to remove the blame attributed to natural conditions and look at the regional space with its own characteristics considering the stereotypical images that over the years have spread among the people of the semiarid region. (LIMA & SILVA, 2010, p.05)

This idea of semiarid in coexistence has been strengthened by the programs and actions developed by NGOs, the State, civil society and other institutions, since they have created alternatives and possible solutions for the problems that the people in the countryside face, but it has also contributed for the subjects to recognize themselves in this semiarid territory and to build their learning about the world.

It is in this sense that contextualized education is largely linked to the idea of coexistence with the semiarid region, because it is necessary to contextualize knowledge so that there is meaningful learning that contributes to the awareness of the subjects and that makes it possible to open new paths for local development and also collaboration among these social actors in the construction of a new rationality.

## IV. ANALYSES AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, we will discuss the importance and role of the Associação de Desenvolvimento de Ações Comunitárias (ADAC) in proposing projects aimed at contextualized education, under the perspective of coexistence with the semiarid region, since the education offered at most schools is based on misconceptions and wrong values about the reality of the region and of the local culture.

The Associação de Desenvolvimento de Ações Comunitárias (ADAC) is a non-governmental organization (NGO), formed from the idea of some researchers associated with Embrapa Semiárido and others, whose goal was to develop projects related to solving problems experienced by urban and rural communities in the semiarid regions through participatory methodologies.

This NGO initially appeared in 1989, but only on December 29, 1994 was it legally constituted in the territory of Juazeiro-BA as a private nonprofit organization. Among the actions developed by the ADAC, the most noteworthy of these is its role in proposing a contextualized education through pedagogical assistance to

the Secretarias Municipais de Educação (SEC) and in the continuous training of teachers and educational managers. Although they have several lines of action, such as: education, gender, environment, municipal planning and promotion of the rights of children, adolescents and rural youth, their predominant focus is on contextualized education.

Throughout its history, the ADAC has developed approximately 16 projects related to sustainable development. Since they depend on funding from other bodies and/or institutions, this entity's action is subject to the approval of proposals obtained by submitting projects in public notices. In addition, they promote the certification of managers and deputy managers of schools in the municipality of Juazeiro-BA.

According to information provided by the ADAC, the greatest experience of this entity was in articulating the construction of the proposal for the Escola Rural de Massaroca (ERUM) and for the Centro de Formação Rural de Massaroca (CENFORM), located in the municipality of Juazeiro-BA, which had an international Brazil-France cooperation through the Associação Serra Serrana and other partnerships.

It is noteworthy that this experience culminated in the discussions held in the community where they sought to develop a local development project. And education was of paramount importance in this process, since being a socializing element and disseminator of knowledge, it would meet the community's aspirations. (REIS, 2011)

Thus, this project was elaborated in 1992 with the effective participation of the community and had the support of *Communauté Economique Européenne* (CEE) and *Comité Catholique Contre la Faim et pour le Développement* (CCFD). They sought to develop a new education, or rather, to contribute to formal education so that it could elevate its productive processes through the professional development of human resources in the community of Massaroca.

We observe the contributions of the ADAC to this project not only in the development of techniques and the dissemination of knowledge, but above all, in the strengthening of the community as civil society and its participation in the formulation and achievement of proposals suitable to the place. It can be said that these actions and practices dialogue with the concept of education that is based on environmental sustainability and the construction of new coexistence relationships between people and nature. For Carvalho (2011), this orientation

towards coexistence results in a new "institution" because it associates its educational, productive and organizational actions based on a dialogic, contextual and relativist rationality, with the semiarid nature, culture and territory. Therefore, it argues that:

The basis for this environmental rationality is the "contextualization of knowledge". More than a methodological foundation, present in the actions of "Coexistence", in its different ways of using them, is the recovery of the thinking subject, the appreciation of non-scientific knowledge and of perception as valid forms of knowledge, so denied and set aside by Modern Science. (CARVALHO, 2011, p.187)

In this perspective, it is understood that the defense for contextualized education, present in the ADAC proposals, is justified by the need to empower the subject so that he broadens his view on the reality in which he lives and can perceive the existing possibilities.

Hence, it is necessary to contextualize knowledge with the local culture in the teaching-learning process, so that the potentialities and limitations of the semiarid region are highlighted as a means of producing new knowledge and disseminating technologies suitable to the semiarid reality.

## V. CONCLUSION

The experiences we have encountered when getting to know some practices and projects have enabled us to reflect on the importance of these actions as strategies for coexistence with the semiarid region, which in turn, reinforce the idea of re-appreciating the concept of semiarid nature, when exposing its potentialities.

The good use of natural resources and the appreciation of the countryside's cultural identity are aspects identified in this new rationality, in addition to the feeling of belonging that is attributed to this territory. The ADAC plays a role in that, in a way that mobilizes people and communities under the perspective of "learning to coexist" as well as in the articulation of networks for the exchange of knowledge and collective experiences.

A conclusion might elaborate on the importance of the work or suggest applications and extensions.

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