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Education and ethnic-racial relations

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SUMMARY

This work conducted a historical survey (albeit brief) of Brazilian academic conditions, aiming to list the main causes of low student retention rates in educational institutions, and the low retention of Afro-descendant individuals in these institutions. We begin by demonstrating how the academic training of the peoples of the New World began (Jesuit Schools), describe Preto Cosme, a former slave who founded a school to educate quilombola (maroon community) blacks, and describe some achievements of the Black Movement, which were extremely important for the recognition and dissemination of Afro-Brazilian history and culture throughout the country. To support the research, publications (websites, magazines, and articles) with relevant information were used, demonstrating that the main cause of school dropout is linked to supplementary income, especially for black and mixed-race individuals, and teenage pregnancy. We used data from the 2023 PNAD-Continuada survey, which compared the last five years (excluding 2020 and 2021 – COVID-19), and demonstrated that Black or mixed-race people, born mainly in the Northeast region of Brazil, are the most affected by the late government action and the poor choices of the Portuguese Crown regarding education in the colonies. We identified some measures proposed by Brazilian governments since the Lei do Boi (First Quota Law), the Educational Credit Program (Creduc), which was replaced by Fies (Fies Social), the Quota Law, ProUni, and more recently the Pé-de-Meia (High School) and the Pé-de-Meia Licenciatura programs, the latter of which required future research to quantify their impact on student retention in secondary and higher education institutions. With this, we conclude that poor administration can cause long-term consequences, and that governmental and personal efforts will be necessary to reverse these problems.

Keywords: School, Afro-Brazilians, Programs.

ABSTRACT

This work presents a historical survey (albeit brief) of Brazilian academic conditions, aiming to list the main causes of low student retention in educational institutions and the low permanence of Afro-descendant people in these institutions. We begin by demonstrating how the academic formation of the peoples of the New World began (Jesuit Schools), describe Preto Cosme, a former slave who founded a school to educate quilombola blacks, and describe some achievements of the Black Movement, which were extremely important for the recognition and dissemination of Afro-Brazilian history and culture throughout the country. To support the research, publications (websites, magazines, and articles) with relevant information were used, demonstrating that the main cause of school dropout is linked to supplementary income, especially for black and brown people, and teenage pregnancy. We



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Keywords: School, Afro-Brazilians, Programs.

INTRODUCTION

Academic education in Brazil is a heterogeneous topic, facing several challenges, from the origins of its people's formation (colonial period), through the promulgation of the Golden Law, from the period of immigration, mainly of Germans, Italians and Japanese, up to the present day.

It was observed that in Brazil the education system was heavily influenced by colonization. Portuguese and consequently by their interests. That is why it was possible to notice the choices. The actions taken by the Portuguese crown continue to negatively impact the student-institution relationship to this day. teaching, although it is not the only cause.

This work aimed to provide a historical overview (albeit brief) of how academic training occurred in Brazil and demonstrate which factors positively or negatively influence it. This context is negative.

To carry out these surveys, publications (articles, books, websites) were used that They demonstrated the main reasons for the low settlement rate of people of Afro-Brazilian origin in The education system, and what measures governments are proposing to mitigate school dropout rates. We have demonstrated that despite the difficulties, a massive effort is underway by Black movements. in order to pressure the government to recognize their importance to Brazilian society and to demand measures to improve the living conditions of the population.

We have listed the main government measures to mitigate school dropout (Pé-de-half), to facilitate access to public institutions for low-income people (Quota Programs), the The University for All program (ProUni) provides scholarships for education in private institutions.

Education from the Colonial Period to the Present Day

Brazilian academic education began with the Jesuits, with José [name missing] being the main educator. Anchieta, who, according to Klein (2016), stood out for his intellectual agility and creativity. Pedagogical approach and flexibility in the face of children's customs are the main focus of Jesuit schools. They were children: indigenous children, mixed-race or mestizo children, and the offspring of Portuguese immigrants. Still



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According to the author, with the increase in the number of slaves on Jesuit farms, schools were built.

so that the education of black children would be possible.

According to Neto and Maciel (2008), the schools founded by the Jesuit priests were adequate for the historical moment being experienced, taking into consideration four aspects: the objectives of The Portuguese project for Brazil; the Jesuit educational project; the Brazilian social structure itself. of the time; and the ideal male model needed for the Colonial era.

With the Pombaline reforms (1759-1772), the Jesuits were expelled from the entire territory. In Portugal, the responsibility for guaranteeing public education fell to the Portuguese crown. to all its citizens, even if it was not egalitarian (Gondra and Schueler, 2008), according to The authors state that the American colony (Brazil) received, between the late 18th and early 19th centuries, 17 royal masters of reading and writing, distributed among Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Pará and Maranhão.

Gondra and Schueler (2008) cite Cosme Bento das Chagas (Preto Cosme), a quilombola, in Farms in the Itapecuru-Mirim region of Maranhão, led one of the main insurrections. enslaved women during the Regency period (Balaíada), according to the authors, a significant event in the history of Preto Cosme was a former slave who had become literate and opened a primary school. Located on the Lagoa Amarela farm, the project aimed to teach literacy to approximately 3,000 Black people.

Oliveira et al. (2021) cite Santana; Moraes 2009; Garcia, 2007, in which the authors They describe that in 1854 decree no. 1,331, known as the Couto Ferraz Reform, dealt with... education for Black people, making access to primary and secondary schools free for them, with with the exception of slaves. Also according to Oliveira et al. (2021) citing Santana; Moraes 2009; Domingues, 2007, states that it was only in 1878, by decree, that the enrollment of freed black adults was permitted. from the age of fourteen in evening courses, and in 1879 through the reform of Primary and Secondary Education Leôncio Carvalho's administration made the education of Black children between the ages of seven and fourteen mandatory, including The frequency of slaves in public schools.

Despite decree no. 1,331 and the education reform proposed by Leôncio Carvalho (1879), Santana (2005, p. 34) discusses black children in slave-era Brazil, citing that... children were preciously "matured" (at five and six years old), since they anticipated the The demands and responsibilities of adults were placed on education, and education was integrated into slave labor. restricted to learning the tasks demanded by the masters. The author further adds that the Charitable institutions were considered spaces for social control, concerned with curbing... vagrancy and juvenile delinquency.

With the abolition of slavery on May 13, 1888, many slaves were expelled from the rural properties giving rise to a massive migration of white Europeans, mainly from Italians and Germans in order to "lighten" the Brazilian population, corroborating Nascimento and



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Medeiros (2010), who discuss the subject very well, when they say that many black people were

They were evicted from the farms and left without a place to live or survive. A large part of the Brazilian elite.

I didn't want black people to take over the new jobs (...) the concern was

whitening the country with immigrants from Europe, information that aligns with

publication by Maringoni (2012).

Maringoni (2012) apud Azevedo that:

The pull of these immigration proposals was so great that, in the end

of the century, the old concern with the fate of former slaves and free poor.

It was virtually overshadowed by the great debate surrounding the ideal immigrant.

or the racial type most suitable for purifying the 'Brazilian race' and engendering

to put an end to national identity.

Continuing, the author quotes a passage from Joaquim Nabuco in **Contos populares do Brasil** (Popular Tales of Brazil).

(1885) says:

Of the three races that constitute the current Brazilian population, the one that left the deepest trace was certainly the white race, followed by the black race and then the indigenous race. However, as the direct action of the latter two tends to diminish, with the internalization of the indigenous population and the extinction of the slave trade, European influence tends to grow with immigration and the natural tendency for the strongest and most skilled to prevail. The mixed-race person is the condition for this victory of the white race, strengthening their blood to enable them to withstand the rigors of the climate.

With these actions, the newly liberated peoples were left with the misery of slums and favelas, places of great unsanitary conditions and lacking educational infrastructure, which for this new urban population would be of It is extremely important to place them in decent working conditions.

The hope of some abolitionists was that these "new" members of the urban class, They could "evolve" through education, as Maringoni (2012) cites the historian Robert Conrad.

which says:

Radical abolitionists, such as Nabuco, André Rebouças, José do Patrocínio, Antônio Bento, Rui Barbosa, Senator Dantas, and others hoped that the extension of education to all... classes, mass political participation, and an expansion of economic opportunities for millions. so that blacks, mulattos, and other less privileged sectors of Brazilian society would allow... that these groups would assume a place of equality in a more homogeneous and prosperous nation.

However, this was not verified for years, especially among residents of peripheral areas. Black people were treated with contempt by the rulers; they were only remembered during times of... Political campaigns with outlandish promises that were never fulfilled.

In an attempt to modify this parameter, a document was prepared and presented at the III World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and its Forms



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Related to Intolerance, in which the government acknowledged historical responsibility "for slavery and the economic, social, and political marginalization of descendants of Africans. (Cavalleiro, 2006 p.20).

Alongside this recognition, there were strong campaigns promoted by the Movement. Black, which enabled the formulation of a bill to promote public policies and programs for the Afro-Brazilian population, valuing their history and culture (Cavalleiro, 2006 p.21). The author cites the creation of Law No. 10.639/2003, which makes education mandatory, as a positive milestone. Regarding Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in Basic Education, recognize the 20th of... November as "National Black Consciousness Day," the consequent approval of Opinion CNE/CP 3/2004, which establishes the Curricular Guidelines for Education on Ethnic-Racial Relations and the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture to be carried out by the establishments. teaching at different levels and modalities. Adding to this, Oliveira et al. (2021) also cites as Law No. 12.711/2012, which allocates places for black candidates in universities, and Law [missing information] are important. Law No. 12,990/2014, which allocates positions to Black people in public service examinations.

Aiming for equity and opportunity for all, the Federal Government launched programs that They allow access to higher education in both the public and private sectors.

The first program to be implemented was the Educational Credit Program (Creduc), which It existed since 1975 during the government of Ernesto Geisel (Ferreira 2025). This program was replaced. through the Student Financing Fund (FIES) (Ferreira 2025), a program of the Ministry of Education (MEC), established by Law No. 10.260/2001, which aims to grant funding. to students in non-free higher education courses, with a positive evaluation in the National System of Evaluation of Higher Education (Sinaes), published by Inep/MEC, offered by institutions of private higher education institutions participating in the program (BRAZIL, 2001), despite the initiative of The government recorded several defaults, of which up to 92% were forgiven. The Bolsonaro government (Ferreira 2025), in 2024, during the Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva administration, created through Resolution No. 60/2024 establishes the Desenrola Fies program—a debt renegotiation program of the Student Financing Fund. Student Financing (Fies), which could reach up to 99% discount (BRAZIL, 2024).

The FIES program underwent an update and was renamed FIES Social by Resolution No. 58/2024. This version's main objective is to offer better conditions for obtaining FIES (student loan program), such as... 50% of the places are reserved in each edition of the program's selection processes, and up to 100% of the educational expenses are financed for students registered in the Unified Registry. (BRAZIL, 2024).

Another program is the University for All Program (Prouni), established by [Law No. 11.096/2005](#) (BRAZIL 2024) offers full and partial scholarships (50% of the value of the tuition fees), in undergraduate and sequential specialized training courses, in institutions



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private higher education institutions. The target audience for the program is students without a degree.

superior.

Aiming to facilitate student access to the public higher education system, the Ministry of

In 2010, the Ministry of Education (MEC) created the Unified Selection System (SISU), replacing the previous system. traditional entrance exam.

In 2012, Law No. 12.711/2012 created the quota law, an attempt by the federal government.

guarantees the reservation of 50% of enrollments per course and shift in federal universities and institutes.

education. The places were subdivided in half for students from public schools with income.

gross family income equal to or less than one and a half minimum wages per capita, and half for students of

Public schools with family incomes exceeding one and a half minimum wages. In both cases,

a minimum percentage corresponding to the sum of black, brown and mixed-race people will also be taken into account.

Indigenous people in the state, according to the latest demographic census from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics.

and Statistics (IBGE) (BRAZIL, 2012).

The first known quota law in Brazil was the "Boi Law" (Law No. 5465/1968), created in

The government of Costa e Silva, during the period of the Brazilian military dictatorship, based this law on...

to provide places in agricultural secondary schools and higher schools of Agriculture and

Veterinary institutions, maintained by the Union, will annually reserve, preferably, 50% of their vacancies for

Candidates must be farmers or their children, whether or not they own land, and reside with their families.

in rural areas and 30% to farmers or their children, whether or not they own land, who reside in

Cities or towns that do not have secondary education establishments (Official Gazette of the Union, 1968).

From the perspective of secondary education to reduce school dropout rates, the Luiz Inácio Lula government

da Silva, in 2023, created the Pé-de-meia program — a program that functions as a savings plan for

to promote the retention and completion of schooling by students at this stage of education—with the goal

to democratize access and reduce social inequality among young people, as well as to guarantee more

social inclusion through education, stimulating social mobility (BRAZIL 2023).

To encourage teacher training, the government at the time launched the "Pé-de-Meia" program.

Bachelor's degrees are an initiative carried out by CAPES, within the scope of [the More Teachers Program](#). for the

Brazil, established by the Ministry of Education through [Decree No. 12.358/2025](#), this program

Its objective is to attract students who achieved high scores on the National High School Exam.

Medium - ENEM for on-campus undergraduate courses, offering financial and academic support in order to

to reduce dropout rates in undergraduate courses (BRAZIL, 2025).

METHODOLOGY

For the preparation of this article, publications of scientific articles, books and... were gathered.

journals so that it would be possible to prepare a literature review that included the



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to maximize the impact on ethnic-racial relations, focusing on teaching and learning and the school structure.

addressing potential cases of school dropout, the origin and socioeconomic conditions of the students.

To answer these questions, historical data on social formation were gathered.

Brazilian society, under what conditions the population was formed, and how it was and is being treated by the relevant authorities.
competent.

We discussed measures established by governments in order to increase the inclusion of peoples.
shapers of Brazilian society in an attempt to mitigate any deficit that may have been created
Over the years, there has been an attempt to improve academic training.

To better understand Brazilian educational development, a survey was conducted.
From the formation of colonial Brazil to the present day.

To better understand government actions, comparative data was collected.
How was and how is the educational relationship in Brazil, in order to demonstrate if any changes have occurred?
evolution and try to propose some improvements.

To standardize the information and avoid unnecessary errors, we use data provided by...
The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), through its publication — PNAD Contínua,
Education 2023—. Published in 2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Brazil has been striving to increase the educational level of its population independently of
race, gender, and region. To measure this effort, a National survey has been used since 2012.
Continuous Household Sampling (PNAD Continuada), this survey is conducted
quarterly, through the basic questionnaire (IBGE, 2023).

The 2023 PNAD (National Household Sample Survey) compares the results with those of the same quarters of previous years.
Previous years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2022; the years 2020 and 2021 were not included because
The number of questions in the original questionnaire was reduced because they were being carried out...
exclusively by telephone during the COVID-19 pandemic (IBGE, 2023).

Table 1 below shows the illiteracy rate by age, sex, and race; it is possible
Note that people over 60 years of age who are black or brown-skinned have the highest rate of
Illiteracy can be explained by the early need to supplement family income.
Forte (2024) states that socioeconomic issues are one of the biggest causes of the rates of
Illiteracy in Brazil.

Table 1: Illiteracy rate.

Taxa de analfabetismo (%)						
Grupos de idade (1)		15 anos ou mais	6,7	6,1	5,6	5,4
		18 anos ou mais	7,1	6,4	5,9	5,7
		25 anos ou mais	8,3	7,4	6,8	6,5
		40 anos ou mais	12,1	10,8	9,8	9,4
		60 anos ou mais	20,5	18,1	16,0	15,4
Sexo	15 anos ou mais	Homem	7,0	6,4	5,9	5,7
		Mulher (1)	6,5	5,8	5,4	5,2
	60 anos ou mais de idade	Homem	19,7	17,9	15,7	15,4
		Mulher (1)	21,1	18,2	16,3	15,5
Cor ou raça	15 anos ou mais	Branca	3,8	3,3	3,4	3,2
		Preta ou parda (1)	9,1	8,2	7,4	7,1
	60 anos ou mais de idade	Branca (1)	11,8	9,5	9,3	8,6
		Preta ou parda	30,7	27,2	23,3	22,7
			2016	2019	2022	2023

Source: IBGE, Directorate of Research, Coordination of Household Sample Surveys, Continuous National Household Sample Survey 2016/2023. Note: The differences between 2016 and 2023 are significant at the 95% confidence level. (1) The differences between 2022 and 2023 are significant at the 95% confidence level.

Gadotti (2008 p11) says that illiteracy represents the denial of fundamental rights, resulting from a set of social problems: lack of housing, food, transportation, school, health, employment.

Illiteracy is a chronic problem in Brazil, according to research by Ferraro (2002). This shows that even during the Monarchy, illiteracy rates were high, reaching 82% of the population. In an attempt to improve these indicators, due to political problems that linked corruption to Regarding the parliamentary system to combat illiteracy, Law 3.029/1881 (Saraiva Law) was discussed and created, which It required the ability to read and write in order to vote (Bráulio 2021).

Table 2: Illiteracy rate by region

Grandes Regiões	Taxa de analfabetismo (%)					
	15 anos ou mais					
	2016	2019	2022	2023	Variação	
					2022/2023	2016/2023
Brasil	6,7	6,1	5,6	5,4	↓	↓
Norte	7,9	7,0	6,4	6,4	→	↓
Nordeste	13,9	12,9	11,7	11,2	↓	↓
Sudeste	3,5	3,0	2,9	2,9	→	↓
Sul	3,3	3,0	3,0	2,8	→	↓
Centro-Oeste	5,2	4,4	4,0	3,7	→	↓

Source: IBGE, Research Directorate, Labor and Income Coordination, Continuous National Household Sample Survey 2016/2023. Note: Arrows indicate significant variation when pointing upwards (growth) or downwards (decline), or non-significant variation when pointing to the right (stability), at a 95% confidence level.

In Brazilian regions, the illiteracy rate reflects regional inequalities, to the extent that... in which the Northeast and North regions have higher illiteracy rates (11.2% and 6.4%, respectively) respectively) in 2023 among people aged 15 and over. The South-Central region of Brazil It has much lower rates: 2.9% in the Southeast, 2.8% in the South and 3.7% in the Midwest (BRAZIL, 2024).

Pietri (2024), analyzing the illiteracy rate by region, says that the whitening of

The country's success was more effectively realized in the Southeastern states, which helps to understand why in those states...

In some states we have lower illiteracy rates, and in the Northeastern states, higher rates, policies of

migration, they ensured a minimum of reception infrastructure for these populations that arrived in

Brazil; however, the opposite happened with Afro-descendant populations, a large part of which are concentrated in certain states.

like Bahia.

Table 3 below shows the relationship between people (Gender, Race, and Region) who completed the

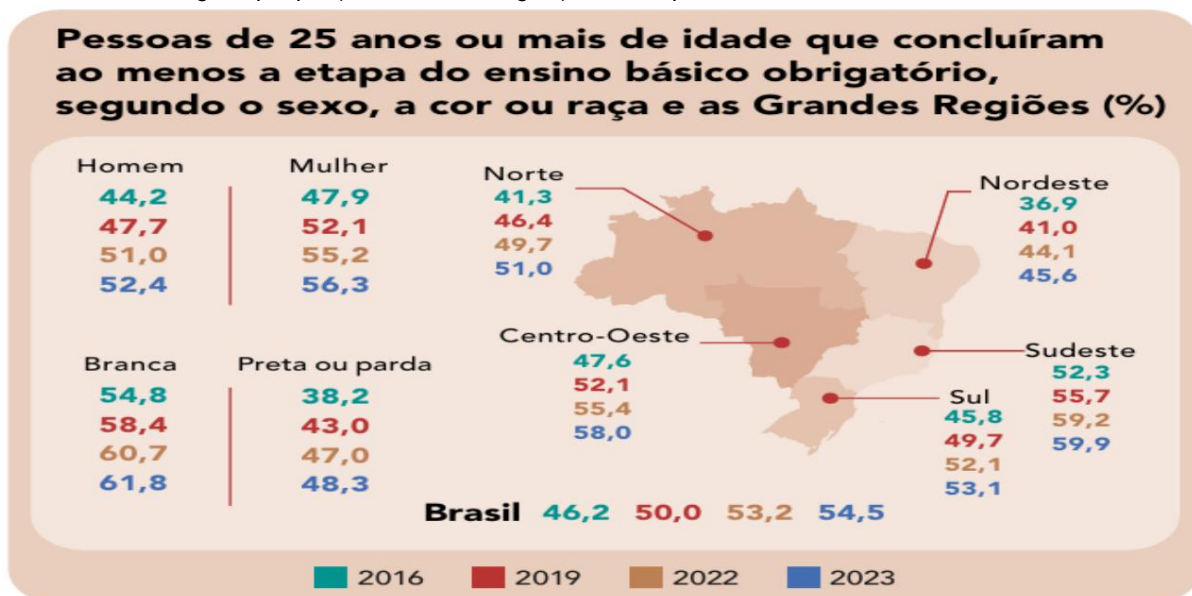
In secondary education, once again the positive highlight goes to the Central-West, Southeast, and South regions.

This has a major influence due to the level of poverty and inequality, and lack of investment.

public need to work to supplement family income (BRAZIL 2020,

Educational Ecosystem 2025, Abdala 2024).

Table 3: Percentage of people (sex, race and region) who completed basic education.



Source: IBGE, Directorate of Research, Coordination of Household Sample Surveys, Continuous National Household Sample Survey 2016/2023. Note: The differences between 2022 and 2023 are significant at the 95% confidence level, except in the North, Southeast, and South Regions.

Rodrigues et al. (2017), conducting a study on inequality in municipalities in the Northeast,

It was found that per capita income, net school attendance, the presence of higher education institutions, and GDP per capita

Municipal factors contribute to reducing inequality, and the low impact of related variables...

The long-term impact of the educational system can be attributed to its importance, and therefore, it is emphasized that...

The importance of investment and public education policies will only be reflected in the reduction of...

Educational inequality in municipalities in the future. Also according to the author, in terms of policy.

In education, the need to improve basic education drew more attention, considering that

This can reduce dropout rates in primary and secondary schools, leading to better...

Academic performance in a quantitative sense.

Table 4 shows us data on school dropout, which according to IBGE (2024) has the

The main reasons men give for needing to work are, followed by a lack of interest in studying.

For women, the main reason was found to be the need to work, followed by pregnancy and lack of interest.

Miquilena (2021) states that pregnancy and parenthood in adolescence are exogenous factors of

School dropout rates for high school students in Latin America, according to a [study conducted by the Bank.](#)

of the development of Latin America and the Caribbean. Early pregnancy and motherhood represent an opportunity cost for women, given the lack of conditions, understanding and

Inadequate approaches to the problem result in the interruption of the process or abandonment of the system.

Educational issues affecting adolescent girls. In the region, 36% of school dropout cases involve girls.

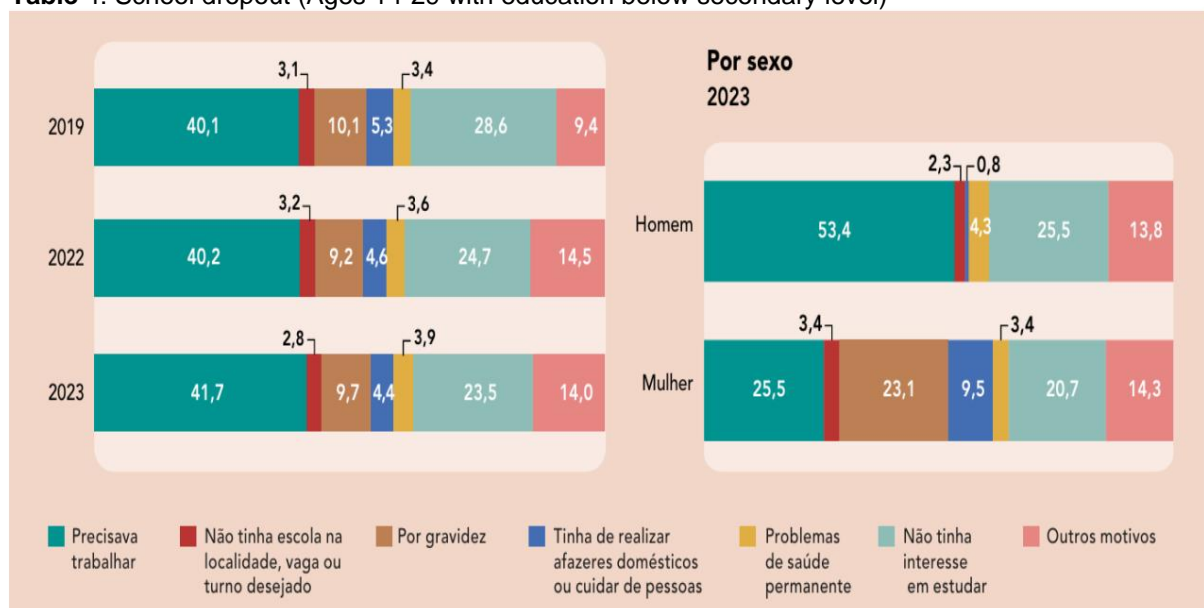
These factors can be attributed to teenage pregnancy or motherhood. This information corroborates...

Based on data from Souza et al. (2018), it is concluded that young women who worked and became pregnant...

Those with recurring issues were the most likely to drop out of school. The author adds that living with

A family income of up to one minimum wage increased the chance of dropping out threefold.

Table 4: School dropout (Ages 14-29 with education below secondary level)



Source: IBGE, Directorate of Research, Coordination of Household Sample Surveys, Continuous National Household Sample Survey 2019/2023. (1) Including people who declared themselves to be of indigenous, yellow or unknown color or race.

Among men, one of the main factors contributing to school dropout is linked to the need for Working to help supplement the family income.

Santillana Educação (2024) conducts a survey on the main causes of dropout.

school-related factors include family factors (income, parents' education, domestic violence, pregnancy, child labor, lack of parental support, family breakdown), health problems (both physical

as well as mental health issues), financial problems (working to help support the household or to pay the bills Tuition fees and school supplies) are cited as the main causes of this illness.

Table 5 shows the distribution of students by study conditions and situation in

Occupation. The data can be divided into three groups, first, younger people (15 to 17 years old)

They dedicated themselves almost exclusively to studying, according to those in the intermediate age groups (18 to 24 years old).

In the third age group (25 to 29 years old), the majority of people who worked predominated.

worked (IBGE, 2024).

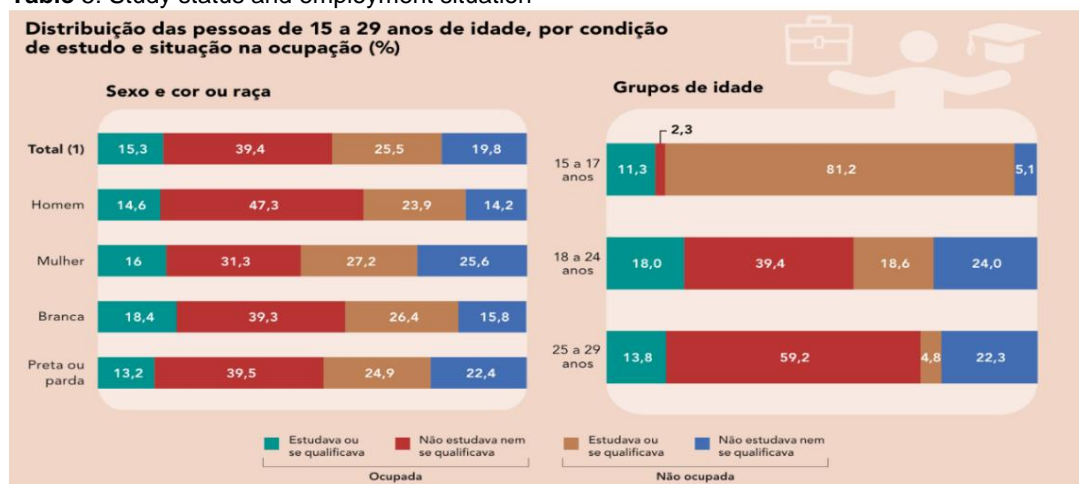
Comparing genders, it's noticeable that women in the category do not...

The occupied areas represent the largest portion; therefore, based on the information already gathered, we can conclude that a

One of the reasons for this data is the "obligation" that falls to women to be housewives, making it difficult

The search for qualifications and paid employment.

Table 5: Study status and employment situation



Source: IBGE, Directorate of Research, Coordination of Household Sample Surveys, Continuous National Household Sample Survey 2023. (1) Including people who declared themselves to be of indigenous, yellow or unknown color or race.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The topic of education in Brazil is very heterogeneous, despite the efforts we see from...

The government's efforts to improve access to school still face many obstacles.

The main dissemination factor is school dropout to supplement income, followed by pregnancy.

early.

The "Pé-de-Meia" program can be a major factor in retaining low-income students.

at school, since the program "rewards" students who attend school and pass.

in the current school year and those who complete their studies. This is a new program and we will only know for sure.

your real contribution to future research.

The Northeast region of Brazil needs greater attention from public authorities (Municipal,

State and Federal), given that it is the region with the worst education rates, which may be a

The influence of the region's colonization, given that it was a region with a high percentage of enslaved people.

for the cultivation of sugarcane, a product highly coveted by the Portuguese crown.

The Brazilian colonial period contributed to lower educational attainment rates among Afro-Brazilian populations.



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Brazilians and natives were considered inferior, since the policies of the time advocated for the education of People with high financial standing, children of Portuguese immigrants, even after the end of slavery in the country. We haven't seen a massive investment in encouraging academic training, because the great Brazilian elite... He did not accept that the now-freed blacks should perform more complex activities.

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