

Políticas públicas e relações de gênero: uma análise da evolução da participação da mulher negra maranhense no ensino superior no período de 2003-2011

Public policies and gender relations: an analysis of the evolution of the participation of black women from Maranhão in higher education from 2003 to 2011

Políticas públicas y relaciones de género: un análisis de la evolución de la participación de las mujeres negras de Maranhão en la educación superior en el período de 2003 a 2011

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Resumo: O referido artigo propôs analisar se as políticas públicas voltadas para a educação, adotadas durante o período de 2003 a 2011 se tornaram um fator influenciador na entrada das mulheres negras no ensino superior. Em especial, durante o período em questão, políticas públicas educacionais direcionadas ao ensino superior foram criadas como canal para a entrada de jovens negros e de baixa renda nas Instituições de Ensino Superior Público e Privada. Esta pesquisa buscou demonstrar se de fato a criação de políticas públicas de educação superior impactaram quantitativamente na inserção da população negra feminina maranhense no ensino superior. Os efeitos da adoção destas políticas serão avaliados a partir da análise de indicadores oriundos de plataformas de coletas de informações, além de outras formas de fontes de pesquisa, como livros, revistas eletrônicas e outras obras que dialoguem sobre o tema.

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Palavras-chave: Políticas públicas, Educação superior, Mulher negra.

Abstract: The aforementioned article proposed to analyze whether public policies aimed at education, adopted during the period from 2003 to 2011, became an influencing factor in the entry of Black women into higher education. In particular, during the period in question, educational public policies directed at higher education were created as a channel for the entry of Black youth and those from low-income backgrounds into Public and Private Higher Education Institutions. This research sought to demonstrate whether the creation of higher education public policies quantitatively impacted the inclusion of the Black female population from Maranhão in higher education. The effects of the adoption of these policies will be evaluated based on the analysis of indicators derived from information collection platforms, as well as other research sources, such as books, electronic journals, and other works that engage with the topic.

Keywords: Public policies, Higher education, Black woman.

Resumen: El artículo mencionado propuso analizar si las políticas públicas dirigidas a la educación, adoptadas durante el período de 2003 a 2011, se convirtieron en un factor influyente en la entrada de las mujeres negras en la educación superior. En especial, durante el período en cuestión, se crearon políticas públicas educativas dirigidas a la educación superior como un canal para la entrada de jóvenes negros y de bajos ingresos en las Instituciones de Educación Superior Públicas y Privadas. Esta investigación buscó demostrar si, de hecho, la creación de políticas públicas de educación superior impactó cuantitativamente en la inserción de la población negra femenina maranhense en la educación superior. Los efectos de la adopción de estas políticas serán evaluados a partir del análisis de indicadores provenientes de plataformas de recopilación de información, además de otras fuentes de investigación, como libros, revistas electrónicas y otras obras que dialoguen sobre el tema.

Palabras clave: Políticas públicas, Educación superior, Mujer negra.

Introduction

The racial inequalities and gender discrimination have marked our society in various spheres of social life. The spaces occupied by the black female population in Brazil have been outlined against a backdrop of social exclusion, which ranges from the heart of the job market to the leading role in the 9pm soap opera. Although this scenario is nothing new, the debate focused on recognizing the promotion of affirmative actions for racial and gender equality is understood as something new.

In recent years, the affirmative action has become a much more present topic on government agendas. The debate previously held within social movements and academic spaces began to gain much more strength and followers over the years, thus enabling social inequalities to become a much more public and instigated issue in our country. The

affirmative action measures in higher education adopted during the Lula administrations (2003-2011) favored the inclusion of the black and low-income population in Brazilian higher education. Starting in 2004, affirmative action policies, both in the public sector through quotas and in the private sector through scholarships, began to change the ethnic-racial profile of Brazilian higher education students. And although affirmative action measures aimed at this area still need improvements, it is undeniable that in the last decade a series of advances in the educational field have enabled a restructuring of the participation of the black population in educational spaces, thus making it much more expressive.

Both racial and gender inequalities are understood as instruments of social exclusion that nullify, segregate and oppress women and their effects are constantly seen in our society. For this reason, this paper sought to demonstrate whether the changes proposed in education through affirmative action were in fact a determining instrument in the entry and permanence of black women in higher education in Maranhão. The approach for this article was constructed from two sections. The first section sought to provide a theoretical contextualization regarding the public policies adopted in our country, especially during the governments of Luís Inácio Lula da Silva (2003 to 2011), a period marked by the creation of public educational policies aimed at higher education in favor of the black and low-income population throughout the country. The second section will address the participation of black women from Maranhão in higher education before and after the creation and adoption of public higher education policies, as well as whether these policies benefited these women in terms of greater participation in higher education, demonstrating this inclusion based on data from the 2000 and 2010 Demographic Censuses, INEP (2003 and 2011) and Prouni (2003 to 2011).

Methodology

The data available on official higher education information platforms in Brazil will be used as reference for this article. The basis used to collect information on higher education are the microdata from the 2000 and 2010 Demographic Censuses, which are published by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) on its website (www.ibge.gov.br), the data from the 2003 and 2011 Higher Education Census, organized by the Anísio Teixeira Institute of Educational Studies and Research – Inep and those from the University for All Program – Prouni (2005-2011), made available by the Ministry of Education on the Open Data Portal.

For reasons of sample representation, only two racial categories were considered for the purposes of the research: white and black. The “Black” category is constructed from the sum of those who self-declared as black and brown.

Understanding the topic of public policies and their developments will be based on the works of theorists in the area, such as Antônio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães, Kabengele Munanga and others.

Theoretical framework

The trajectory of the black population in Brazil has been marked by relationships and practices full of disadvantages and rights violations, and although Brazilian legislation is a landmark against discrimination by stating that “all are equal before the law, without distinction of any nature, guaranteeing Brazilians and foreigners residing in the country the inviolability of the right to life, liberty, equality, security and property” (CF, article 5, item VIII), in practice legal recognition has proven to be contrary to the reality of our country. It is due to this reality that affirmative actions are configured as an important instrument to reverse the historical situation of inequality and discrimination to which certain groups of individuals are subjected.

Affirmative actions can be defined as a set of public or private policies of a compulsory, optional or voluntary nature created with the intention of combating racial, gender, disability discrimination, etc., in addition to correcting or reducing the current effects of discrimination carried out in the past, with the aim of promoting equal access to fundamental goods such as education and employment.

According to Bárbara Bergmann, affirmative actions can be understood in a broad way:

Affirmative action is planning and acting to promote the representation of certain types of people, those belonging to groups that have been subordinated or excluded. In certain jobs or schools. It is an insurance company making decisions to break with its tradition of promoting only white men to executive positions. It is the admissions committee of the University of California at Berkeley seeking to increase the number of blacks in the entry-level classes [...]. Affirmative action can be a formal, written program, a multi-party plan with officials in charge, or it can be the activity of a businessman who has consulted his conscience and decided to do things differently (1996, p. 7).

For Contins and Santana (1996), affirmative action can be interpreted as a special preference for members of a group defined by race, color, religion, language or sex, with the

purpose of ensuring access to power, prestige and wealth. The idea behind the idea is to allow socially inferior groups to be assured access to certain goods, whether economic or not.

For Munanga (2001, p. 31), affirmative actions aim to offer groups that are discriminated against and excluded “differentiated treatment to compensate for the disadvantages due to their situation as victims of racism and other forms of discrimination”. For Guimarães (1997, p. 233), affirmative actions consist of “promoting privileges of access to fundamental means – education and employment, mainly – to ethnic, racial or sexual minorities that, otherwise, would be excluded from them, totally or partially”.

These and other definitions tend to show that affirmative actions can be understood as measures that aim to favor women, black people, people with physical disabilities, the elderly, LGBT groups, indigenous people, that is, groups that have historically been socially discriminated against and that face barriers to accessing certain rights. It is worth noting that these policies are not necessarily policies to combat poverty, but rather to minimize inequalities and discrimination that affect members of this group.

In Brazil, proposals to combat racism and include the black population in various sectors through affirmative action began to gain greater notoriety and visibility at the beginning of the 21st century, especially during the governments of Luís Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2011). And one of the sectors impacted by the creation of affirmative action was higher education.

A priori, before dealing with these specific impacts, it is necessary to clarify that the Lula administration was the bringer of a wide body of more substantive changes in the conduct of racial policies and in the State's relationship with the black movement (Júnior et al., 2012). Right after he took office in 2003, two nationally recognized black people signaled the inclusion of racial issues in public management: Benedita da Silva, a PT senator and one of the icons of the anti-racist and anti-sexist struggle, took office as head of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Promotion, and Gilberto Gil, as head of the Ministry of Culture. Another important fact was the appointment of the first black minister, Joaquim Barbosa Gomes, to the Supreme Federal Court (STF), the highest court in the judiciary, and later Matilde Ribeiro, head of the Special Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality (SEPPIR), which would close the range of representation of black people within the first echelon (Paula, 2011).

On March 21, 2003, President Lula created the Special Secretariat for Policies to Promote Racial Equality (SEPPIR), in response to the continuous demands of the black movement. Linked to the Presidency of the Republic and with the status of a ministry,

SEPPIR's mission was to “establish initiatives against racial inequalities in the country” and its main objectives were:

- 1) Promote equality and the protection of the rights of individuals and racial and ethnic groups affected by discrimination and other forms of intolerance, with an emphasis on the black population;
- 2) Monitor and coordinate policies of different ministries and other bodies of the Brazilian Government to promote racial equality;
- 3) Articulate, promote and monitor the implementation of various cooperation programs with public and private organizations, national and international;
- 4) Promote and monitor compliance with international agreements and conventions signed by Brazil, which concern the promotion of equality and combating racial or ethnic discrimination; and
- 5) Assist the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in international policies, with regard to the rapprochement of nations on the African Continent (Santos, 2010, p. 99).

The SEPPIR invested in creating spaces for dialogue between government agencies and civil society, created the National Council for the Promotion of Racial Equality (CNPQR), which was tasked with holding two National Conferences on Racial Equality, and the Intergovernmental Forum for the Promotion of Racial Equality (FIPIR), responsible for bringing together representatives from 26 states and the Federal District and some municipalities. In addition, policies to assist quilombola communities were also prioritized by SEPPIR. During the Lula administrations, the quilombola issue began to gain space on the political agenda; in 2004, the Brazil Quilombola Program (PBQ) was created and later the Quilombola Social Agenda (2007), which guided the actions of 23 ministries, in addition to other partnerships with public companies in the implementation of projects.

During his administration, Law No. 10,639 was also passed, making it mandatory to include the subject of African history and Afro-Brazilian culture in the curriculum of all elementary schools. Among other actions carried out in the educational field with a racial focus are the creation of the Secretariat of Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (SECAD), responsible for implementing several programs, such as Quilombola Education, Diversity at the University, Connection of Knowledge, etc. Other notable projects include the Gender and Diversity at School Project, the University for All Program (PROUNI), the Student Financing Fund (FIES) and support for affirmative action in public universities.

Regarding higher education, one of the major debates raised at the beginning of Lula's administration was regarding the inclusion of the black population in public higher education. During his administration, no federal law on affirmative action in public universities was created. However, this did not prevent these universities from starting their own programs.

In 2001 and 2003, some state universities such as UERJ (State University of Rio de Janeiro), UENF (State University of Northern Fluminense Darcy Ribeiro) and UNEB (State University of Bahia) adopted affirmative action policies, quotas, through state laws, as a way of admitting students from public schools, black people and people with disabilities into higher education.

In 2003, the University of Brasília became the first federal higher education institution to approve the quota system. The use by UnB was a decision approved by the professors who are members of CEPE (Teaching, Research and Expansion Council) and was autonomous in nature, since there was no law requiring federal public universities to adhere to such a system. CEPE approved the Plan of Goals for Ethnic, Racial and Social Integration, with three main characteristics:

- a) 20% quota of places for black candidates in all undergraduate courses;
- b) admission of indigenous students through cooperation activities with the National Indian Foundation (Funai);
- c) intensification of activities to support the local public school system (Mulholland, 2006, p.183).

The UnB was largely responsible for kicking off the process of adopting vacancies that would expand to all regions of the country and that would coincide with the approval of law nº 12.711. Little by little, affirmative action measures in Higher Education Institutions (IES) became more concrete and the number of institutions adopting some type of affirmative action policy gradually increased. Analyses regarding this inclusion process can be made taking into account some points, such as the policy adopted, whether these are quotas, reserved vacancies or bonus points, the nature of the universities involved, whether they are public, municipal, state, federal or private, the duration of the established inclusion goal, the subjects of rights promoted, the number of students who should enter through these policies and etc.

According to Santos (2012), over the years, the debates about the adoption of quota policies have only intensified and the first proposal drawn up for the development of a bill was made by Congresswoman Nice Lobão, from the Liberal Front Party (PFL) with bill (PL) no. 73\99. In 2004, President Lula reignited the debate by submitting to Congress PL no. 3,627, which proposed reserving places for students from public schools, especially black and indigenous students, in federal public higher education institutions. In 2012, the quota law was approved², which made it mandatory to reserve 50% of all places in federal educational

² Law no. 12,711, of August 29, 2012.

institutions for students from public schools, with a per capita income of less than a minimum wage and who self-declared as black, brown or indigenous.

Regarding private higher education, the University for All Program – Prouni, was a relevant affirmative action policy adopted by the Federal government. Created in 2004, through provisional measure No. 213 and later institutionalized through law No. 11,096 on January 13, 2005, Prouni aimed to grant full and partial scholarships to high school students from public or private schools (as long as they were full scholarship holders) through tax exemptions for universities that joined the program. Scholarship students would enroll in undergraduate courses and specific training courses at participating private educational institutions. In addition, the program established a subquota:

The program also establishes a subquota among public school students who self-declare as black or indigenous. According to section II of article 7 of this law, there is also a “percentage of scholarships intended for the implementation of affirmative action policies for access to higher education for people with disabilities or self-declared indigenous and black people”, and this percentage must “be at least equal to the percentage of citizens who self-declare as indigenous, mixed race or black, in the respective unit of the Federation, according to the latest census by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics Foundation – IBGE” (Santos, 2014, p. 73).

The program has gradually gained support from hundreds of private higher education institutions across the country, becoming largely responsible for increasing access and inclusion of low-income students in Brazilian higher education. Since its creation, more than five million students have enrolled in the program, and 1,128,718 partial and full scholarships have been made available by 2010, with 353,813 of these scholarships being distributed to black students (Paula, 2011).

Another mechanism used as a way to access higher education was the Higher Education Student Financing Fund (FIES). Student financing, which existed before the Lula governments, became the replacement for the Educational Credit Program⁴ for needy students.

The Student Financing Fund (FIES) was created in 1999 by the Ministry of Education through provisional measure no. 1827 and made official on July 12, 2001 by law no.

⁴ CREDUC was a reformulation carried out by the Collor government of the Educational Credit Program (PCE) of 1992. Instituted in 1992, through law n° 8.436, the program began to be administered and supervised definitively by the MEC and among their objectives were to seek equality of educational opportunities, reduce dropout rates from higher education, provide the popular classes with financial resources to attend higher education, etc.

10.260/200, with the purpose of financing the undergraduate studies of students who are unable to fully cover the costs of their higher education. Since its creation, FIES has undergone constant reformulations, the purpose of which is to make the entry of lower-middle-class students into Brazilian higher education even more accessible, thus enabling greater social inclusion and the democratization of higher education.

Thus, the creation of these affirmative actions in higher education admissions is seen as an important instrument of social inclusion in the history of our country. However, the entry and permanence of the black Brazilian population in higher education is more than a problem of access. According to Guimarães (2003), the problem of black population admissions to universities is also characterized by the absence of university statistics. Until the 2000s, there were no records in public universities in Brazil on the racial or color identity of their students. It was only when the demand for affirmative actions in higher education was felt that the first initiatives emerged in the form of censuses and sample surveys to remedy this deficiency.

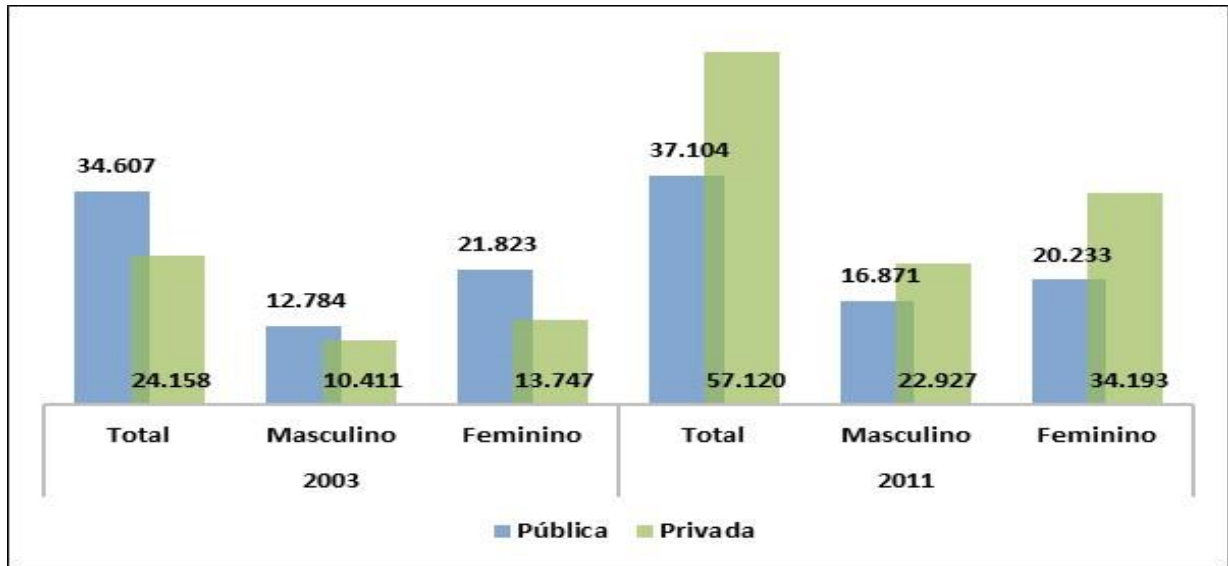
Thus, in an attempt to clarify this greater participation of the black population in higher education, the next section aims to describe and analyze the changes that occurred in the field of higher education in Maranhão in favor of black women during the years 2003 to 2011, a period marked by the inclusion of the black and low-income population in higher education.

Through the results obtained through the analysis of statistical data, the effects of the adoption of public education policies will be evaluated, aiming to report whether there was, in fact, a favorable opening for these women in higher education in the state of Maranhão.

Results and discussion

Higher education in Maranhão showed significant progress in the first decade of the 2000s in terms of enrollment. This indicator is important because it measures the number of students enrolled in some higher education course. In 2011, undergraduate enrollments were 94,224, 35,459 more than in 2003. Of this total, 60.6% (57,120) were in private HEIs and 39.4% (37,104) in public HEIs. Regarding this increase in enrollment, it is also worth noting that during the period analyzed, more than half of these enrollments were female.

Chart 1 - Higher education enrollments, by education network - Maranhão (2003 and 2011) - In absolute numbers

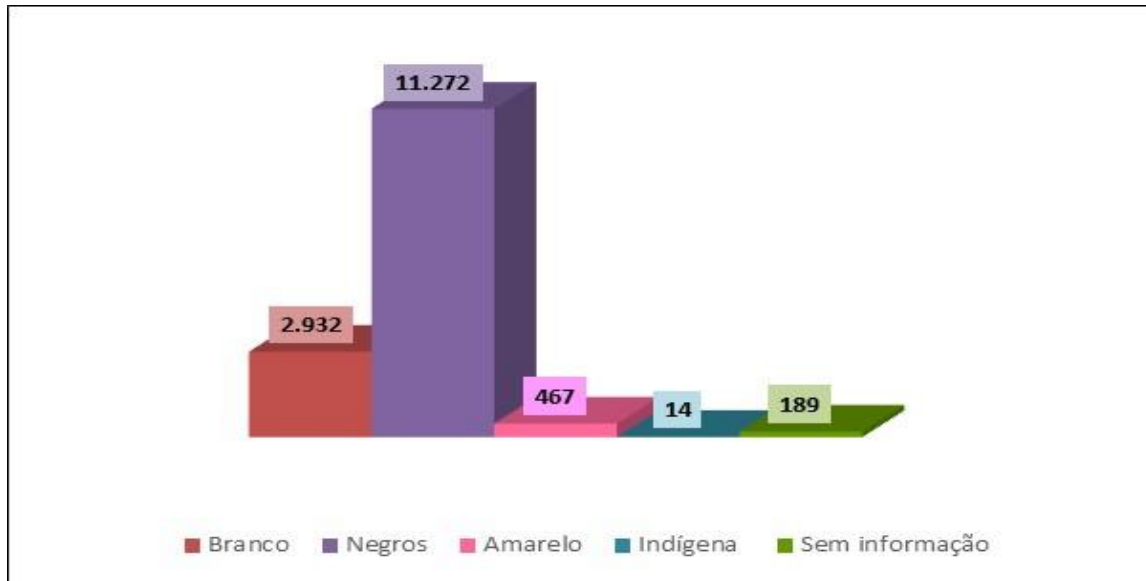


Source: INEP Higher Education Census. Prepared by the author.

Between the two periods, it is noted that the expansion of enrollments is markedly privatized. According to the Ministry of Education (2013), the growth in enrollments in the private sector is attributed to programs such as Prouni (University for All Program) and Fies (Student Financing Fund). According to Rosemberg et al. (2013), it was the affirmative action policies adopted by governments at the federal and state levels and in private institutions in Brazil in the last ten years that encouraged the increase in the participation of black people in higher education, thus contributing to the reduction of social differences that exist not only between black people and white people, but also among indigenous people. Artes and Ricoldi (2015) state that during this period in question, there was a greater inclusion of black people in Brazilian higher education. The graph below shows the number of scholarships offered by Prouni to students from Maranhão who attended public schools between 2005 and 2011.

Of the 14,874 full and partial scholarships granted during the analysis period, 11,272 were distributed among black people, corresponding to 75.8% of the places made available by private HEIs.

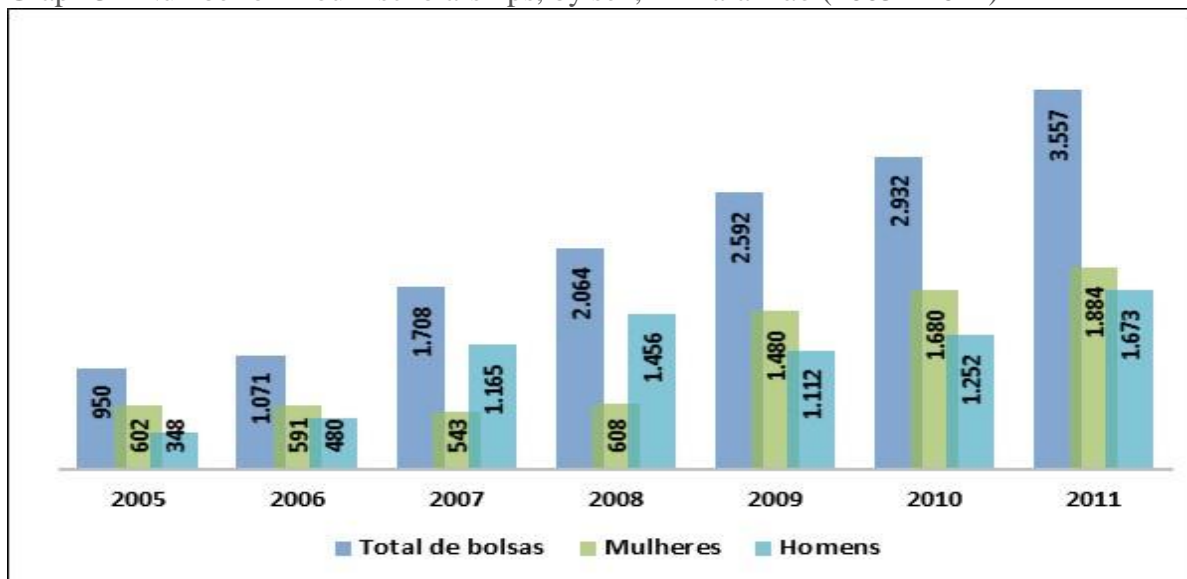
Graph 2 - Distribution of Prouni scholarship holders by race/color in Maranhão from 2005 to 2011



Source: Ministry of Education – Open data. Own elaboration.

The graph below shows that throughout the series there was a continuous increase in the number of scholarship holders. In 2011, more than 3,000 scholarships were offered, the highest peak recorded in the period. Regarding the gender profile, on average, women were the main entrants to private higher education through Prouni; among the beneficiaries, both men and women had a similar participation in the total number of scholarships offered. Of the 14,874 scholarship holders between 2005 and 2011, 49.7% were women and 50.3% were men.

Graph 3 - Number of Prouni scholarships, by sex, in Maranhão (2005 - 2011)



Source: Ministry of Education – Open data. Own elaboration.

Regarding the state of Maranhão, according to census data from 2000 and 2010, the period analyzed shows noticeable advances in the schooling of the female population. Through the results in Table 1, it is possible to verify that in 2000, only 0.6% of the Maranhão population was composed of women who had 15 or more years of schooling, in 2010 this participation was 2.7%, a result also higher when compared to men (1.5%).

When we consider the color/race criterion, we notice that there was an increase in the levels of education among the two groups of women. In 2000, only 0.4% (12,396) of the population was composed of white women with 15 or more years of education; in 2010, this rose to 1.1% (48,593). Among black women, these results were 0.4% (10,439) and 1.5% (70,245), respectively. It is also noted that among black women the variation was the most pronounced, with rates reaching 425.7%, followed by black men with 235.2%.

Table 1 - Distribution of the population with 15 or more years of schooling by sex, color/race - Maranhão (2000 and 2010)

Education by sex/color and race	2000	%	2010	%	Variation
Total number of women in Maranhão	2.843.062	50.3	3.313.274	50.4	0.2
Total number of women with 15 or more years of schooling	22.997	0.6	121.138	2.7	350.0
Total number of black women	2.003.113	35.4	2.505.863	38.1	7.6
Black women with 15 or more years of schooling	10.439	0.3	70.245	1.5	425.7
Total number of white women	800.300	14.2	749.945	11.4	-19.7
White women with 15 or more years of schooling	12.396	0.4	48.593	1.1	205.8
Total number of men in Maranhão	2.814.490	49.7	3.261.515	49.6	-0.2
Total number of men with 15 or more years of schooling	21.091	0.6	68.780	1.5	150.0
Total number of black men	2.063.720	36.5	2.522.550	38.4	5.2
Black men with 15 or more years of schooling	8.704	0.2	37.347	0.8	235.2
Total number of white men	712.024	12.6	687.711	10.5	-16.7
White men with 15 or more years of schooling	12.162	0.3	30.478	0.7	95.8

Source: IBGE/Demographic Census, 2000 and 2010. Prepared by the author.

Although we have seen substantial progress in the number of years of schooling among the black population, especially among black women, it is clear that there is still underrepresentation. The number of black people with 15 or more years of schooling in relation to their representation in the population of Maranhão is significantly low. In 2010, black women and black men represented 38.1% (2,505,863) and 38.4% (2,522,550) of the population of Maranhão, respectively, rates that decreased to 1.5% (70,245) and 0.8% (37,347) among those who had 15 or more years of schooling. In contrast, among the white population, women represented 11.4% (749,945) and men 10.5% (687,711) of the Maranhão

population, 1.1% (48,593) of these women and 0.7% (30,478) of the men already had higher education.

The data presented shows that the black population, and especially black women, had a greater presence in higher education in the first decade of the 21st century, which can be attributed to higher education admission policies. The increase in schooling has a positive impact on the lives of these women, since this educational qualification reflects on their social and economic development, increasing their productivity, bringing economic growth, increasing their salaries and their quality of life. A group of people with little schooling face greater difficulties in entering the labor market and tend to find more precarious jobs. Public policies aimed at education play a very important role among the less privileged population, because in addition to democratizing the chances of social advancement and reducing inequalities, they work with a public that will, for many years, be part of the country's workforce, impacting the productive and competitive potential.

Final considerations

This article sought to demonstrate how affirmative action is an essential tool for democratizing access to higher education in the state of Maranhão. Over the years, and especially during the Lula administration, the country has experienced important changes in the educational field, which have also impacted our state.

The growth in the participation of black women from Maranhão in higher education attests to the effectiveness and need for continued adoption of public policies. This action is seen as an active part in the process of transforming the reality experienced mainly by the black population, a reality marked by exclusion and social inequality. Through the data, it was possible to verify that there were significant improvements in higher education for the black population in the State of Maranhão. It was also noted that there was a greater participation of black women than black men in the educational field, thus demonstrating a reduction in social inequalities, albeit unilaterally. These changes generate direct consequences on the profile of participation of the black population in the workforce. However, regardless of women presenting the best educational results, the reality not only of our state, but of the country attests that these women continue to be at the base of income inequality.

In this way, showing that gender and color/race are factors that create disadvantages between women and men helps to support the political decisions that need to be constantly made to address them. Affirmative action policies were one of these decisions used to change

the existing gaps, not only in education. Measuring the application and results of these policies is a path that must be constantly followed.

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