ISSN Online: 2675-2735

Sertão Sustentável Journal
Volume 6, Número 1, 1-4, Jan-Jun 2024.

Editor's note

Agroecology as part of Environmental Education of Elementary Schools in Irecê, Bahia.

Cledson de Souza Silva *[1]

[1]*Universidade do Estado da Bahia (UNEB), DCHT XXVI, Xique-Xique, Bahia, Brasil.*

**Corresponding Author: Cledson de Souza Silva*

E-mail: cledson-h@hotmail.com

https://orcid.org/0009-0009-8369-2877

Environmental Education (EE) has been the subject of extensive debates in recent years in the light of improving the quality of life in the current global scenario through implementing environmental policies to mitigate socio-environmental impacts caused by industrial revolutions and adherence to linear production models for both products and services. The discussion emerged on a global scale in 1962, when American zoologist Rachel Carson published a book entitled "The Silent Spring", focusing on the problems associated with the indiscriminate use and reliance on the substance Dichloro Diphenyl Trichloroethane (DDT), a powerful pesticide used in agriculture.

Afterwards, in 1965, during the Education Conference held at Keele University in Great Britain, the term "Environmental Education" was formally adopted.

In Brazil, the institution of the National Policy for Environmental Education, through the enactment of Law No. 9.795, dated April 27, 1999, plays an emblematic role in structuring and consolidating national guidelines to implement EE in the broad educational context. This topic is as much an object of knowledge as a pedagogical practice that permeates all education system stages. Article 1 of the mentioned legislation defines environmental education as "the processes by which individuals and community foster social values, knowledge, skills, attitude, and expertise aimed at conserving the environment." (Brazil, 1999).

Article 2 of the same law adds that environmental education must be considered an essential and continuing component of national education and embedded at all levels and modalities of the educational process, whether formal or non-formal. That paves the way for countless possibilities of educational practices (Brasil, 1999).

Irecê is a municipality in the state of Bahia, Brazil, with a population of approximately 74,507 inhabitants, located 478 km from the capital Salvador, in the physiographic zone of the Northern Chapada Diamantina that entirely encompasses the area of the Polígono das Secas in the São Francisco basin. The city is in the semi-arid Caatinga biome (Ibge, 2022) where the climate situation is inappropriate for a healthy quality of life. Throughout history, both its nature and its people have been suffering from social stereotypes and the lack of adequate actions in education and public policies at the federal, state, and municipal levels. However, the initiative seems appropriate as a "starting point" to change the scenario in that area.

The Curriculum Framework for the Human Education Cycle (CFH) establishes on page 100 the adjustment of the proposition drafted by the Irecê Municipal Education System (RMEI) to the national guidelines. Adjusting Law No. 9.795/99 to the National Environmental Education Policies (PNEA) propositions in line with the 1997 National Curriculum Parameters enabled its compliance to support

pedagogical discussions in learning environments, develop projects and lessons, discuss practices, and analyze teaching-learning material. The Curriculum Framework for the Human Education Cycle broadly contextualizes environmental education in social, economic, ecological, and cultural primary aspects. These aspects propose to perceive the world from the place one belongs. In addition, EE for the CFH must be designed and grounded in diverse foundations, modalities, and segments of the pedagogic process in a cross-cutting manner in formal and informal education to promote social changes (Brasil, 1999).

The purpose of the Human Education Cycle (CFH) is linked to the environmental education undertaking, as endorsed by Ruscheinsky (2012, p. 13 and 14). The author argues that the effectiveness of EE requires a process of profound, politicized, and radical social adaption so the country can evolve into an authentic social democracy. The primary focus is to promote improved living conditions and autonomy for the Brazilian people. In addition, the author emphasizes the proper distribution of public resources to improve environmental conditions and proposes conducting society towards a reduction in excessive consumption and improved income distribution systems.

In this context, the RMEI adopts agroecology - or Agroecology Learning Environment (AAA) - as the guiding concept for the inclusion of environmental education in educational institutions (CHF, 2020, p. 100). This approach becomes possible through CFH policies as part of a systeming policy that emerged from the local implementation of comprehensive and integrated education actions.

The definition of agroecology proposed by Leff is that “agroecology is a new productive paradigm, a constellation of sciences, techniques, and practices focused on sustainable production in the countryside.” According to Rosset and Barbosa (2021), “Agroecology is nourished and founded on historical resistance, on collective memories that imprint the legacy of struggle learned and comprehended in daily life through the world perspective." Although the thought-out concepts of agroecology study its meaning goes beyond definitions; however, if considering holistic implications its meaning can be grasped in both formal and non-formal educational scopes, as well as in people's lives and the environment where they live, whether the countryside or the city.

Distinct authors among them Freitas et al. (2013), Costa et al. (2021), Santos et al. (2023), and Costa et al. (2021) recognize EE integrated with agroecology dynamics and consider it as a solid alternative that highlights paramount concepts such as soil conservation and recovery. Freitas et al. (2013) emphasize the benefits of learning from green practices, addressing crucial topics like sustainable socio-environmental learning and culture, pedagogical methods, inducement to healthy habits, and contact with nature. Santos et al.(2023) mention the importance of green education according to local scenarios, emphasizing that sharing knowledge between rural and urban areas permeates educational training. Several arguments demonstrate the efficiency of agroecology as an EE instrument through research, teaching practices, investigations, exhibitions, and entertainment.

For the purposes mentioned above, the practice of AAA in the schooling system was started in 2017 by the Environment Technical Coordination, a branch of the Department of Education of Irecê. This action covers thirty-two schools of the municipal system, including those in the countryside and a Quilombo remnant community (table 1). AAA hierarchical organization (fig.1) facilitates its operationalization and (re)evaluation of strategies developed to improve the learning process of students and other social actors involved.

Chart 1: Schools covered with Agroecology Learning Environment in the Irecê Municipal Education System.

Number of schools	**Schools with practice at the head office**	**Schools with practice at the countryside**	**Schools with practice at the Quilombo remnant community**
32	19	6	1

Source: Irecê Municipal Education Department - BA (2024).

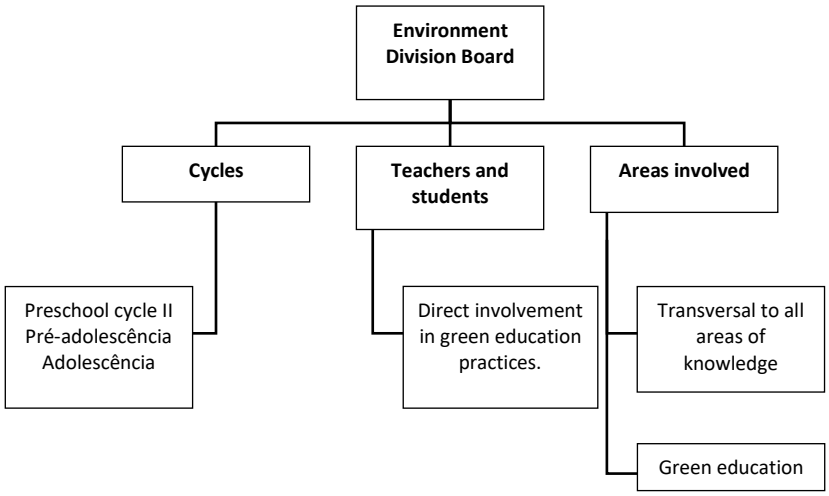

Figure 1: Hierarchy of the Municipal Agroecology Learning Environment.

Source: Irecê Municipal Education Department - BA (2024).

The practice of several strategies to integrate the agroecology environment into the education system includes adapting procedures to each school's particularities and school hours - full-time, part-time, or regular. The classes occur during the student's regular hours, with optional or compulsory participation in after-school hours, or by attending workshops at different times and days.

Consolidation and initiatives of the project include training meetings, lectures, and periodic gatherings that enable on-site discussions through TV Barriguda on the YouTube platform focused on general educational topics, lecturers, interviews, and presentations. In addition, the local system promotes events to encourage cross-cutting actions in these spaces.

Partnerships with public and private institutions interested in contributing to sustainable practices are undoubtedly allowed and encouraged. Collaborators can make specific or pervasive donations of seedlings, seeds, tools, and other equipment.

Establishing environmental education as a foundation of public education faces uncountable challenges; however, agroecology is crucial in this process. Similarly to any project, it requires substantial and adequate investment and diligence in keeping it steady. In conclusion, some essential aspects for achieving the AAA's goals and objectives are the ongoing reflection on mistakes and successes, students' motivation and interest in green practices, and the annual production of learning material.

Bibliography

BRASIL. Secretaria de Educação Fundamental.**Parâmetros curriculares nacionais**: meio ambiente,saúde / Secretaria de Educação Fundamental. – Brasília:128p.

BRASIL. Lei n° 9.795, de 27 de abril de 1999. **Dispõe sobre a Educação. Ambiental, institui a Política da Educação Ambiental e dá outras providências.** Disponível em: <http://www.lei.adv.br/9795-99.htm>. Acesso em: 17out 2006.

COSTA, V. C da; GUTIERREZ, D. F; CARVALHO, A. C. da C.; *et al*. Educação Ambiental e agroecologia: relato e análise de um curso para agricultor(a) orgânico(a) e agroecológico(a). **Revista Brasileira de Educação Ambiental (RevBEA)**, v. 16, n. 1, p. 359–377, 2021. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.unifesp.br/index.php/revbea/article/view/10266/8317>. Acesso em: 25 jan. 2024.

FREITAS, H. R.; GONÇALVES-GERVÁSIO, R.C.R.; MARINHO, C. M.; *et al*. Horta escolar agroecológica como instrumento de educação ambiental e alimentar na Creche Municipal Dr. Washington Barros - Petrolina/PE. **EXTRAMUROS - Revista de Extensão da UNIVASF**, v. 1, n. 1, p. 155–169, 2013. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.univasf.edu.br/index.php/extramuros/article/view/621/399>. Acesso em: 25 jan. 2024.

IBGE – INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA. **Panorama: Irecê, Bahia**. 2022. Disponível em: https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/ba/irece/panorama>. Acessado em: 25 jan. 2024.

IRECE. Rede Municipal de Educação. **Referencial Curricular por Ciclo de Formação Humana Para a Rede Municipal de Educação de Irecê.**Irecê, 2020.

LEFF, E. Agroecologia e saber ambiental. **Agroecologia e Desenvolvimento Rural Sustentável**.Porto Alegre, v.3, n.1, p. 36 – 51, jan. – mar, 2002.

BARBOSA.L.P.; ROSSET, P. EDUCAÇÃO DO CAMPO E PEDAGOGIA CAMPONESA AGROECOLÓGICA NA AMÉRICA LATINA: APORTES DA LA VIA CAMPESINA E DA CLOC. **Educação & Sociedade**, v. 38, n. 140, p. 705–724, 2017.

RUSCHEINSKY, A. **Educação Ambiental**. [s.l.] Penso Editora, 2009.

SANTOS, F. C dos; AZEVEDO, S. L. M. de; SANTOS, M. H. L. C.; *et al*. A Educação Ambiental do campo como ferramenta de valorização da agroecologia. **Revista Brasileira de Educação Ambiental (RevBEA)**, v. 18, n. 5, p. 115–128, 2023. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.unifesp.br/index.php/revbea/article/view/14750/11023>. Acesso em: 25 jan. 2024.

SOUSA, R. da P. AGROECOLOGIA E EDUCAÇÃO DO CAMPO: DESAFIOS DA INSTITUCIONALIZAÇÃO NO BRASIL. **Educação & Sociedade**, v. 38, n. 140, p. 631–648, 2017. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/es/a/NVYdW7qx7dNfFNC9fS9FQKK/?lang=pt&format=pdf>. Acesso em: 29 set. 2021.