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**THE CONTRIBUTION OF
VOLUNTEERING IN A CULTURAL CENTRE
TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG ADULTS IN
SALVADOR, BRAZIL**

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES RELATED TO RACE, GENDER, RELIGION AND CLASS OPPRESSION

Thesis submitted by **Manon Coulon** for obtaining the Bachelor after Bachelor
International Cooperation for North – South Relations.

The Contribution of Volunteering in a Cultural Centre to the Development of Young Adults

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RELIGION AND CLASS OPPRESSION

MANON COULON

ABSTRACT

In a highly unequal society, many young Brazilians suffer oppression based on their class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion. In the transition to adulthood, a period that is already marked by important changes, this brings along specific needs that need to be met. This research answers how ICBIE, a cultural centre in Salvador da Bahia, tries to meet those needs by providing a space for young people to participate in activities and volunteer. Young adults from the region and volunteers of ICBIE have participated in a survey and in-depth interviews to find the answer to the central question of this thesis: *"How does volunteering at ICBIE contribute to the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?"*. Their answers, insights and stories were complemented by observations and were compared with, and analyzed through the lens of national data and concepts from Robert Havighurst, Social Justice Theory and Anti-Oppressive Practises. The results show that young adults face a multitude of obstacles, mostly related to oppressive practises. Classism is the form of oppression that stood out, connecting almost all of the respondents. And while ICBIE can't directly change the root of these oppressive practises, it mitigates the harmful effects caused by them, by creating a place where volunteers can learn, take up responsibility, open their view on the world, create meaningful bonds, feel safe and loved, and cultivate hope and resilience for the future.

Keywords: "[Brazil, volunteering, oppression, intersectionality, development]"

ACADEMIC YEAR 2019-2020

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~ *Dedicado a Marlene de Souza e Pietro Gallina*

Preface

In 2018 I travelled to Salvador for the first time. It was a dream I had cherished for a long time; and as a dancer, this has always seemed the Mecca of movement and music. I found out it was.

When I first arrived I experienced culture shock and I had a difficult time adapting to the environment of my internship. I didn't have any work experience with toddlers or education. I felt quite lost. Summer and Carnaval came, during this time I did quite a lot of dance classes and I started to discover Salvador's art scene. I was determined to find another place to do my internship. As a social worker I was naturally drawn to social justice movements. Unfortunately, it was very difficult to find another place to accept me during this season of the year on such a short notice. I wasn't able to find a new internship.

However, on a lovely evening I met a couple from Brussels who told me about "an Italian center", I found out it was very near the place I just moved to. I visited many times, but every time I came, it was closed. Until one day Marlene opened the door for me, and showed me around ICBIE. Three weeks before I was leaving, I received the amazing opportunity to conduct my research in the centre. I knew this was going to be a challenge compared with doing a five-month internship. I accepted it and soon my heart was won by the loveliness and warmth of this place that I wish I would have known sooner.

The challenge was harder than predicted, I couldn't get a grip on what it was that ICBIE would have liked me to research. And not knowing the people well, I felt uncomfortable harassing them with my many questions. I decided to report the deadline of this thesis to 2020. I went back to Salvador on the first day of the new year and stayed for three months in a totally different context, in a totally different area, with totally different people, doing dance courses 24/7.

In the last weeks, when my classes were finished I was supposed to go to ICBIE and spend some time in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, that's when the Covid-19 pandemic started and I had to fly back home. I continued my research at home, but this time with more determination to write something valuable, even though the situation I conducted my research in was quite atypical.

I'm a beginner to Academic Writing, but I'm a passionate social worker and human being and I hope this will reflect in this dissertation.

Brazil, and all the people I have met through this experience completely changed my life, and I hope that somehow, my presence has also meant something there.

Gratidão

A moment of gratitude

Mes parents et ma famille pour votre support inconditionnel.

Mariza e Yasmim

por ser minha primeira casa no Brasil, isso nunca será tomado como garantido.

Perrine et Maurice

pour m'avoir introduit au centre ICBIE. Il n'y a pas de coïncidences dans la vie.

Marlene and Pietro per avermi aperto le porte del tuo spazio.

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A família ICBIE

vocês são uma por uma pessoas incríveis que me levaram a rir e a chorar contando pequenas partes de suas histórias através de nossas entrevistas.

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por responder às minhas perguntas (às vezes difíceis), e por me ajudar imensamente com seus valiosos feedbacks. Sou grata por sua abertura e celebro todos vocês.

Moisés, Gabriel e Marinalva

por me receberem em sua casa na Ribeira,
e Moisés, por seu apoio mental durante o início da minha pesquisa.

Manon Dois and Matjildji

for your amizade and wisdom, for being the parceiras I could always count on and have fun with. Valeu meninas!

Sonja, Amias, Lisette, José & Milan

for having faith in me, voice messaging me hours on end from miles away through a global pandemic, for always welcoming me for some quality time, for taking me to salsa, or forbidding me to come to salsa so I can focus, ... For the friendship you give me that mean the world to me.

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Kim for her valuable feedback.

All the writers, filmmakers and activists

I have cited in this work and the opportunities they give for people to learn in informal ways through media like youtube and instagram.

UCLL

for all the efforts of creating this programme and the beautiful experiences that come along with it.

[Manon Coulon]

Intersectionality is the term that came to mind when I entered ICBIE and understood that before me I had a diverse group of people, who each in their own way question what society has to offer them, and at times doesn't allow them to have. It is the word that made me understand that looking at one system of oppression is far from enough, we have to look at the sum of oppressive practises that have been fabricated historically in order to benefit a very select group of people on this planet and create division and oppression among all the others. It is this sum of oppressive practises that on one hand make organisations like ICBIE struggle, and on the other hand make powerful corporations thrive. But as the young volunteers work hard, and with their hearts, and as they develop important skills and attitudes, form bonds and develop determination, they become the citizens of a new era. And step by step, they deconstruct these mechanisms and create loving and inviting spaces, where entering the front door is often enough to feel how they can have a transformational effect on our lives, through the light they bring, the love they share, and the hope and faith they create in the hearts of the ones open to receive.

Manon Coulon

Resumo da gestão

Além dos desafios pessoais de passar da adolescência para a idade adulta, que são bastante universais, os jovens adultos da Península de Itapagipe, em Salvador, enfrentam desafios específicos relacionados à sua área de vida, como desemprego, violência e desafios que dependem da situação socioeconômica, a raça, o gênero, a religião e orientação sexual da pessoa.

Classismo, racismo, sexismo, homofobia e discriminação religiosa são mecanismos de opressão que ainda estão presentes em 2020. Enquanto os movimentos ativistas brasileiros como o *movimento feminista negro*, "*Vidas Negras Importam*" (o slogan brasileiro de "Black Lives Matter") e "*Marielle Presente*" (movimento que apóia pessoas negras, LGBTQ+, pessoas em situação de pobreza e favelados) já existem e estão surgindo, o eleitorado brasileiro (que elegeu a extrema-direita Jair Bolsonaro) e as várias estatísticas fornecidas por diferentes instituições, como IBGE e IPEA, mostram que o Brasil está longe de alcançar a igualdade entre seus habitantes.

Nenhum lugar no mundo está livre da desigualdade, é um desafio que precisamos enfrentar globalmente. No entanto, precisamos entender as realidades locais para enfrentar a desigualdade sob diferentes perspectivas, ouvindo as vozes das pessoas que estão sendo silenciadas pelas estruturas de poder (capitalismo, patriarcado e supremacia branca) que moldam nosso mundo altamente desigual .

Acredito firmemente que a construção da comunidade, reunindo-se e trabalhando juntos em projetos participativos (e especialmente criativos), tem o poder de elevar e emancipar. Quando as pessoas se reúnem nas circunstâncias certas, há uma chance de aprendizado e crescimento.

O objetivo desta tese foi mapear as razões pelas quais este local tem efeitos positivos em seus voluntários, todos jovens da Península de Itapagipe, para que a dinâmica que cria esse ambiente possa ser reforçada e a dinâmica que está trabalhando contra esses resultados positivos possa ser analisado e alterado.

Questões de pesquisa

As perguntas que pesquisei foram:

Como o voluntariado no ICBIE contribui para o desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional de jovens adultos residentes na Península de Itapagipe, em Salvador, Bahia?

Com uma divisão de duas sub-perguntas:

A. Quais são os obstáculos; relacionados a mecanismos estruturais de opressão baseados em classe, raça, gênero, orientação sexual e religião; no desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional de jovens adultos residentes na Península de Itapagipe, em Salvador, Bahia?

B. Como o voluntariado no ICBIE ajuda a superar esses obstáculos?

Métodos

Os métodos utilizados para coletar histórias, conhecimentos e insights foram: uma pesquisa (survey), entrevistas e observação participativa.

A pesquisa on-line foi realizada em abril de 2020 e teve como objetivo responder à primeira subquestão. Foi preenchido por 27 jovens adultos da Cidade Baixa / Península de Itapagipe. As perguntas giravam em torno dos cinco tipos de opressão que discuti amplamente em minha revisão de literatura: classismo, racismo, sexismo, fobia LGBT e

intolerância religiosa. Outras perguntas da pesquisa giraram em torno de outros possíveis obstáculos que os jovens adultos experimentam e percebem. Idéias para soluções e mecanismos de enfrentamento ao lidar com a opressão também foram respondidas através desta pesquisa.

As entrevistas foram realizadas em março de 2019, um ano antes. As perguntas foram baseadas em uma pergunta de pesquisa anterior que eu finalmente decidi não usar. Eles, no entanto, cobriram uma ampla gama de assuntos, tornando-os utilizáveis no contexto desta nova pesquisa. Usei a grande quantidade de informações coletadas para responder à segunda subquestão, como mencionado acima.

A observação participativa foi limitada, pois eu só conheci o ICBIE nas últimas três semanas em que estive no Brasil em 2019. Não foi possível fazer mais observações na minha segunda viagem, por causa do surto da pandemia de Covid-19, que me obrigou a voltar para casa. As poucas ocasiões de observação, no entanto, me ajudaram a estabelecer algumas conexões com os participantes do ICBIE e a observar dinâmicas interessantes, o que me ajudou a complementar as respostas das entrevistas, no processo de responder à segunda subquestão.

Resultados da pesquisa questão 1: obstáculos

Para responder à primeira subquestão:

Quais são os obstáculos; relacionados a mecanismos estruturais de opressão baseados em classe, raça, gênero, orientação sexual e religião; no desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional de jovens adultos residentes na Península de Itapagipe, em Salvador, Bahia?

Os resultados da pesquisa me motivam a escrever o seguinte:

Ao comparar as estatísticas que usei no meu estudo da literatura sobre diferentes tipos de opressão, como classe, raça, gênero, orientação sexual e religião, e as estatísticas derivadas da pesquisa, há alguma sobreposição. As respostas nos mostram que todo tipo de opressão descrito em meu estudo da literatura é experimentado até certo ponto por um determinado grupo de entrevistados desta pesquisa.

O classismo se destacou como o fator geral que oprime quase todos os entrevistados. As dificuldades financeiras foram mencionadas muitas vezes nas perguntas abertas e 40% dos entrevistados não tinham possibilidades financeiras de pagar pela educação. Outras questões, como falta de espaço e privacidade, ter muitas responsabilidades além da educação e dificuldades em encontrar emprego, estão relacionadas à desigualdade econômica e ao classismo.

Racismo, foi sofrido pelos negros, e especialmente pretos. Fatores como não ter emprego, sofrer discriminação religiosa e sofrer violência no bairro foram experimentados em maior grau entre eles. Mais da metade de todos os entrevistados negros alegou ter sido impactado pelo racismo ou altamente impactado pelo racismo.

Um certo grau de sexismo demonstrou ser vivenciado por 75% das mulheres, experimentando graus mais elevados de insegurança e com mais dificuldades para encontrar um emprego, especialmente entre as mulheres negras.

Mais de um terço dos LGBT se sente fortemente impactado pela fobia LGBT. Nenhum deles não se sente impactado. As mulheres LGBT alegaram ser mais impactadas pelo sexismo do que as mulheres heterossexuais e, comparadas aos homens heretossexuais, os homens LGBT foram mais impactadas pela masculinidade tóxica.

De todos os entrevistados, 63% afirmaram ter sido impactados até certo ponto por discriminação religiosa.

Embora todas as formas de discriminação tenham sido vivenciadas, é o classismo que conecta a maioria dos entrevistados e destaca o principal problema que os jovens da Península de Itapagipe devem enfrentar. Os obstáculos relacionados ao classismo se traduzem em: baixa renda familiar, alto desemprego, baixa escolaridade, transporte precário, violência e desafios psicológicos relacionados à opressão.

Resultados da pesquisa pergunta 2: superando obstáculos

Para responder à segunda subquestão: “ *Como o voluntariado no ICBIE ajuda a superar esses obstáculos?*”, resumi:

O ICBIE tem funções na vida de seus voluntários. Essas funções respondem às necessidades de desenvolver certos tipos de tarefas presentes na transição da adolescência para a idade adulta, como desenvolver autonomia ou tornar-se parte de uma comunidade. Essas funções geram uma ampla gama de benefícios ligados ao voluntariado no contexto específico do ICBIE.

Distingui 17 funções de como o ICBIE afeta positivamente o desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional de jovens adultos:

1. um lugar de primeiras experiências
2. um local de crescimento pessoal através da participação em atividades
3. um lugar para assumir responsabilidades e desenvolver iniciativas próprias
4. um espaço de autodescoberta, um lugar para descobrir talentos e aspirações.
5. um lugar para se conectar com as raízes e valorizar o próprio país e a história
6. um centro de conhecimento através da aprendizagem de línguas e educação artística
7. um lugar para ampliar a perspectiva sobre o mundo
8. um lugar para praticar a reflexão, o pensamento crítico e a expressão disso
9. um lugar para aprender habilidades interpessoais
10. um local de comunidade e ampliação da rede social
11. um lugar de desafios e cooperação intergeracionais
12. um lugar de desafios e cooperação interculturais
13. um lugar de segurança e amor
14. um lugar de alegria e pequenas vitórias
15. um lugar para descansar e recarregar
16. um lugar de esperança e novas perspectivas.
17. um lugar de desafios

Estes podem ser classificados em 5 funções principais:

- organização de atividades e facilitação de assumir responsabilidades que refletem positivamente na personalidade e no senso de identidade
- facilitar a obtenção de conhecimento e a implementação desse conhecimento em visões de mundo pessoais
- estimular relações interpessoais e adquirir habilidades para melhorá-las
- criando bem-estar e cura
- criar esperança para o futuro e habilidades desafiadoras de resolução de problemas para melhorá-lo

Essas funções são formas indiretas de realizar o trabalho anti-opressão através da busca do reconhecimento da opressão; através do conhecimento e conscientização crítica, mitigando os efeitos da opressão, criando um espaço comum de possibilidades, que visa igualar o desequilíbrio de poder na sociedade.

Conclusão geral

Nesta tese, pesquisei como o voluntariado no ICBIE contribui para o desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional de jovens adultos da Península de Itapagipe, enfocando diferentes formas de opressão (classismo, racismo, sexismo, fobia LGBT e intolerância religiosa) que são experimentadas como obstáculos.

Eu discuti como o voluntariado tem efeito positivo sobre os indivíduos. Esses efeitos podem estar relacionados ao trabalho (como o aprendizado de novas habilidades) ou a sentimentos de alegria e prazer que levam a resultados positivos na saúde física e mental.

Esbocei alguns aspectos da sociedade brasileira pelas lentes de diferentes grupos que, inevitavelmente, fazem parte de sistemas que beneficiam um determinado grupo através da opressão do outro; destacando o capitalismo, o patriarcado e a supremacia branca, que descrevi como as causas-raiz do classismo, racismo, sexismo, fobia LGBT e intolerância religiosa, cinco formas de opressão que validei explicando seus principais conceitos e apoiei fornecendo dados de diferentes fontes de pesquisa.

Enquadrei o ICBIE na prática do trabalho anti-opressão; e através dos métodos da pesquisa (survey), entrevistas e observação participativa, confirmei que o ICBIE de fato participa de práticas anti-opressivas, tendo várias funções positivas na vida de seus voluntários.

A pesquisa, que teve como objetivo responder à primeira subquestão, examinou os obstáculos enfrentados pelos jovens adultos da Península de Itapagipe. Ele trouxe à tona uma infinidade de obstáculos presentes: estes são estruturais e pessoais, uma dimensão que não pesquisei extensivamente nesta dissertação. No entanto, essa dimensão pessoal geralmente está relacionada aos problemas estruturais que se infiltram em nossas vidas cotidianas.

Mesmo que todos os cinco mecanismos de opressão discutidos estivessem presentes na vida de diferentes entrevistados, reconhecidamente em diferentes medidas de acordo com os grupos aos quais pertencem, foi o classismo e suas conseqüências que mais se destacaram; sendo um fator que conectou a maioria dos entrevistados da pesquisa, criando uma realidade compartilhada para os habitantes da Península.

A segunda subquestão, como o ICBIE contribui para superar esses obstáculos, foi respondida com muitas informações e histórias pessoais sobre o ICBIE. Concluindo, são as 17 funções positivas que o ICBIE assume na vida de seus voluntários que fazem a diferença. Tornando-o um lugar onde eles possam aprender, assumir responsabilidades, abrir sua visão do mundo, criar laços significativos, sentir-se seguros e amados e cultivar a esperança e a resiliência para o futuro.

A relevância de pesquisar a opressão está dentro das realidades que aprendemos a nomear e conceituar, dando-nos a oportunidade de tornar certos problemas mais discutíveis e apoiados estatisticamente, fornecendo mais fontes de conhecimento para quem deseja assumir uma posição ativa contra todas as práticas opressivas, enquanto dando uma chance de educação adicional para aqueles que não estão cientes de como a opressão está incorporada em nossos sistemas fundamentais.

Recomendações

Das conclusões que tirei nesta pesquisa, existem dois tipos de recomendações que fiz. Por um lado, para o ICBIE, e por outro, para mais pesquisas sobre esse assunto.

Para ICBIE

Para os voluntários, o ICBIE é conhecido como lugar que tem um impacto positivo em suas vidas. No entanto, muitos expressam que seu primeiro encontro com o ICBIE foi um pouco desconfortável, e foi necessária coragem para entrar no local. Como o ICBIE às vezes luta para atrair novas pessoas, sejam novos visitantes, novos alunos, novos voluntários, novos professores ou novos artistas que desejam criar projetos, é importante trabalhar na visibilidade e acessibilidade do ICBIE. Um lugar que às vezes parece um pouco inacessível.

Algumas sugestões incluem:

- Clareza sobre as atividades e possibilidades do ICBIE através de seus canais de mídia social, mas também tornando isso visível no próprio edifício, por exemplo, participando de um programa. Isso poderia despertar mais curiosidade e sinalizar que o ICBIE realmente acolhe novas pessoas.
- A clareza sobre a missão do ICBIE pode dar às pessoas mais informações sobre o que exatamente acontece no centro cultural. Funcionários e voluntários podem se unir e escrever a missão, com base em suas próprias experiências no ICBIE e em como vêem o ICBIE evoluindo no futuro.
- Clareza sobre o horário de funcionamento e as pessoas a entrar em contato, para não desencorajar as pessoas que desejam dar o primeiro passo em direção ao ICBIE.

Outras coisas que eu sugeriria é pesquisar novas maneiras de envolver ativamente a comunidade local. Ao fazer disso uma prioridade, o ICBIE terá mais pessoas envolvidas, o que aumenta o nível de interesse no centro cultural, gera mais mãos para ajudar e cria uma rede maior de apoio na busca de fundos.

Para mais pesquisas

Como essa pesquisa foi bastante atípica; fazendo entrevistas em um prazo muito curto e mudando a questão da pesquisa posteriormente, seria interessante continuar explorando a pesquisa participativa com o ICBIE e com os habitantes da Península de Itapagipe.

Como essa pesquisa foi construída com base em um foco muito variável de assunto, seria recomendável criar novas entrevistas mais conectadas à pesquisa.

Idealmente, os cinco tipos diferentes de opressão deveriam ser pesquisados separadamente, o que poderia dar a possibilidade de fazer perguntas mais aprofundadas e especificar com casos e exemplos. Porém, pesquisar temas de opressão separadamente não pode ser um pretexto para apagar as realidades da interseccionalidade.

Como os sujeitos da pesquisa também implicam a compreensão de conceitos complexos, pode ser interessante organizar oficinas participativas em torno desses assuntos e conceitos, a fim de criar um senso comum de conscientização. Esses workshops podem ser através de formas diretas de aprendizado, como conversas, mas também de formas mais indiretas, como workshops artísticos. O processo coletivo de intercâmbio e aprendizado pode ser monitorado e discutido em pesquisas futuras.

Comparar o ICBIE com outros lugares que se envolvem no trabalho anti-opressão também pode trazer informações úteis.

List of Abbreviations

BPSF	Brazilian Public Security Forum
IBGE	Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Queer +
POC	People/Person of Color
STF	Supremo Tribunal Federal
UFPE	Universidade Federal de Pernambuco
IPEA	Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada

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1. INTRODUCTION

Aside from the personal challenges of going from adolescence to adulthood that are quite universal, young adults in the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador face specific challenges related to their living area, like unemployment and violence and challenges depending on their personal socio-economic background, race, gender, religion and sexual orientation.

Classism, racism, sexism, homophobia and religious discrimination are mechanisms of oppression that are still present in 2020. All the while empowering Brazilian activist movements like the *Black feminist movement*, "*Vidas Negras Importam*" (the Brazilian slogan for "Black Lives Matter") and "*Marielle Presente*" (a movement that support people of color, LGBTQ+, people in poverty, and people from the favelas) have been around and are arising, the Brazilian electorate (who elected the far-right Jair Bolsonaro) and the many statistics delivered by different institutions like IBGE and IPEA, show us that Brazil is far from reaching equality between its inhabitants.

While no place in the world is free from inequality (it is a challenge that we need to face globally), we need to understand local realities so we can tackle inequality from different perspectives, listening to the voices of the people that are being silenced by the power structures that shape our highly unequal world (Capitalism, Patriarchy and White Supremacy).

I strongly believe that community building, coming together and working together on participatory projects (and especially creative ones), has the power to uplift and emancipate. When people come together under the right circumstances there is a chance for learning and growth. ICBIE is an organization where young people can speak up about their truths, discuss societal challenges, create art, discover intercultural ways of thinking, play, but also where they can fail and get back up. It is a safe space where people treat each other as family and lift each other up through friendship and collegiality and artistic and linguistic exploration.

The objective of this thesis is to map out the reasons why this place has positive effects on its volunteers, all youngsters from the Itapagipe Peninsula, so that the dynamics that create this environment can be reinforced and the dynamics that are working against these positive results can be analyzed and changed. In addition, the conclusions of this thesis could add valuable information to fundraising activities and applications for government support, as this describes why investing in ICBIE has a lot of value for youngsters in the Peninsula.

The decision to discuss these five forms of oppression is because they are the ones that were brought up to me the most by Brazilians as important issues. The decision to discuss the development of volunteers and not regular participants of ICBIE, is because the volunteers are more involved and have been for a longer time, and because as volunteers they are also participants.

It could have been interesting to dive deeper into the cultural field of Brazil, with its richness in arts and traditions. I could have researched about the web of complicated politics who make the life of artists and cultural organisers very difficult. I could have spoken about the lack of funding and governmental support, the lack of artistic stimulation in Brazilian education and the interesting ways in which artist and cultural organisations find creative solutions to continue doing their work anyway (which is absolutely the case for ICBIE).

However, I decided to focus on the fundamental problems of oppression that in my opinion, form the base of all the previously mentioned issues. Without a deep and global understanding of these concepts it is very difficult to analyse how local realities and local powers affect citizens on the organisational and personal level.

Because of the short amount of time I was able to share in the cultural centre of ICBIE I was limited in the way I could conduct participatory research. Conversation, dialogue, feedback, observation and spending time together was very limited. Hence my choice to focus more on the factors I do have control over. This explains why in this research, I have a deeper development of the literature study, and especially the systems of oppression. I believe understanding these concepts and the way they are represented by stories and numbers, are the most important starting point into understanding the foundational systems that create the plural realities of Brazilian individuals.

All of the above reflections and the many conversations with Brazilians, and especially with the volunteers of ICBIE, have led me to formulate the following research questions:

How does volunteering at ICBIE contribute to the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

With a division of two sub-questions :

A. What are the obstacles; related to structural mechanisms of oppression based on class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion; in the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

B. How does volunteering at ICBIE help to overcome these obstacles?

To formulate well grounded answers, I have studied literature and applied three different research methods: interviews, a survey and participatory observation.

In the first few chapters I will discuss how volunteering has positive effect on individuals. In a second part I will outline some aspects of Brazilian society through the lens of different marginalized or oppressed groups: lower-middle class people and people living in poverty, People of Color, women, LGBTQ+, and people that are discriminated against based on their religion. I will discuss some of the ways in which they are oppressed and reinforce these statements through national and local statistics. A third part will focus on the work of ICBIE and how it relates to anti-oppressive practises. These three parts represent the conceptual and contextual framework of this research.

The first sub question will be answered through findings of an online survey I conducted in 2020 with 27 young adults of the Itapagipe Peninsula. These findings will be represented question per question, they will be linked to concepts of the literature study and a conclusion will be made at the end of the chapter.

The second sub question will be answered through the means of interviews I conducted in 2019 with the six main volunteers of ICBIE, supplemented with observations made through participatory observation. Links to concepts and data from the literature will be made and a conclusion will be drawn at the end of the chapter.

The totality of the research will be concluded in the final conclusion chapter. I will finish with some recommendations for ICBIE and further research.

2. DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEERING

Dictionary.com describes a volunteer as 'a person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking, a person who performs a service willingly and without pay' (Dictionary, 2020).

In this paragraph I will dive deeper into the concepts of personal and professional development. I will define these terms and discuss the developmental tasks of going from adolescence to adulthood described by Havighurst. To finish, I will discuss the list of benefits on feelings of positivity, (mental) health and job-opportunities.

2.1. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal and professional development are concepts that are used in different contexts. In the next paragraphs I will clarify how they will be used in this research.

Personal development

All activities that result in the development of talents and potential, improves (self)-awareness and gives a positive self-image and identity can be called personal development. It enhances the quality of life, relationships and (mental) health and contributes to the development and realization of objectives, dreams and aspirations. It's an ongoing process that can be individual or group-related but reflects on the individual. It's a never ending life process with no end goal. It's a continuation of the socialization process everyone goes through, it's a process of learning new skills, behaviours and attitudes as well as unlearning negative behaviours, thought-patterns and beliefs. It's a constant process of deconstructing and reconstructing, discovery and practise (Skills You Need, 2018)

A concept closely related to personal development is empowerment. Czuba (1999) defines empowerment as a multi-dimensional social process that enables people to take control over their situation or that of their communities, by working on issues that are significant in their eyes. It occurs within the dimension of social interactions and positions, psychology and economic situation and on a personal-, group- and community-level. It can eventually even be as global as for example the empowerment of women.

While personal development always points to the individual, empowerment can also be used for the process of groups or communities. Personal development talks about the learning and unlearning processes but doesn't necessarily refer to present power dynamics involve, while 'empowerment' literally means to take power, to take control over one's situation. In this thesis it is this personal aspect in the lives of young-adults that will be discussed. How volunteering at ICBIE leads to more opportunities to develop the 'self'. However, this can't be detached from the impact this has on the family and community that person is part of. Therefore it is difficult to separate the processes of personal development and empowerment, they usually go together.

Professional development

Professional development is usually defined within a corporate or educational context. It is described as different learning processes of individuals so that they gets better at the profession they are exercising. These developments the individual go through also reflect positively on the profession itself and therefore 'professional development' sometimes also refers to the improvements made a certain profession.

When looked at it from a broader perspective, professional development doesn't necessarily have to take place in the workplace. It can stand for all learning processes an individual goes through that reflect positively on their work or future work, whether it be

in an official setting or not. It is important to use this modernized definition as to incorporate the reality that many people work in different settings, especially in artistic environments such as ICBIE. One can, for example be a dance teacher and a manufacturer of wooden decorations at the same time, both needing a different set of professional values, attitudes and skills. Professional development is therefore deeply intertwined with personal development and the empowerment of individuals, families and communities.

Because the personal and professional are so intertwined I will mostly discuss them together throughout this dissertation, knowing that both constantly reflect on each other and create a dynamic process.

2.2. DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS OF YOUNG ADULTS

As young adults are the main focus of my research, it is important to shine a spotlight on some specific ways they develop their personalities around that phase in life. Robert Havighurst, an expert on human development and aging from the United States, called these 'tasks' in the researches he conducted in 1972. Here are the 9 main developmental tasks of young adults according to Havighurst :

1. *Achieving autonomy: trying to establish oneself as an independent person with a life of one's own*
2. *Establishing identity: more firmly establishing likes, dislikes, preferences, and philosophies*
3. *Developing emotional stability: becoming more stable emotionally which is considered a sign of maturing*
4. *Establishing a career: deciding on and pursuing a career or at least an initial career direction and pursuing an education*
5. *Finding intimacy: forming first close, long-term relationships*
6. *Becoming part of a group or community: young adults may, for the first time, become involved with various groups in the community. They may begin voting or volunteering to be part of civic organizations (scouts, church groups, etc.). This is especially true for those who participate in organizations as parents.*
7. *Establishing a residence and learning how to manage a household: learning how to budget and keep a home maintained.*
8. *Becoming a parent and rearing children: learning how to manage a household with children.*
9. *Making marital or relationship adjustments and learning to parent. (Havighurst, 1972)*

I reviewed these tasks with some Brazilian friends and they agree that even though these ones were described in the United States of of 1972, they mostly correspond with Brazil 2020. It is important to note, however, that the marriage rate in Brazil is going down (UOL, 2019) and the average age of having a first child is going up (Globo, 2019). This generation has even been called the 'kangaroo-generation', with 24,3% of young adults between 25 and 34 living with their parents. This means that the 6 first points might be the most important in the light of this research.

2.3. BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

"One of the great ironies of life is this: He or she who serves almost always benefits more than he or she who is served." - Gordon Hinckle

Now that we know about development and the developmental tasks I will go on to describe how volunteering impacts our lives, how we benefit from it in our work, emotionally, and how these emotional benefits eventually affect our physical and mental health. Volunteering, of course, involves different ways of working according to the sector, with very different functions and in very different environments. Yet, almost every research that researches volunteering considers all these forms to be the same. It is almost impossible to find researches that talk specifically about volunteers in the artistic or cultural sector in Brazil. Even in Belgium, a country where 22% of its people volunteers, and 54% of these people volunteer in the cultural sector, I found only a few researches covering the experiences of this specific group of people. Even though I believe the specificities of volunteering in the artistic and cultural sector make a difference in the experience of volunteering, there are quite some universal benefits of offering services on a voluntary base.

Job-related benefits

Volunteering helps you work on new skills, it puts you in a new environment and gives you the possibility to try out new things. Some examples of these skills include: time-management, leadership, teamwork, confidence, problem solving and communication. These are called 'soft-skills' and they are universal to any work-environment. Depending on the environment where you volunteer you will probably also learn some hard skills, for example: categorizing books in a library, learning how to prepare camera material on a film set, etc. Sometimes people enter a volunteer job offering a set of skills and leave having learned about completely new things. All these new acquired skills are valuable in life, and often in the workplace too.

In a study from the U.S. about civic engagement (voting, volunteering and activism), Ballard describes how people that work as a volunteer in secondary school and college find an advantage in their first job, that is usually of higher status and better paid than young people who didn't volunteer during adolescence. This difference continues to be shown throughout the wages and salaries in adult life (Ballard et al., 2018). Even though society is very differently organized in the U.S.A. than in Brazil, it is safe to assume that learning new skills and building a network can only show positive effects on people's careers. However, another study from 2020, shows that these differences in income only apply to professional and managerial occupations and not to Blue and White collar workers (Wilson et al, 2020).

There are a few mechanisms that relate volunteering to income. Wilson speaks of three 'channels' (described by Bruno and Fiorello), three ways in which volunteering is related to income. These are: the acquisition of skills and work-related experiences, the extension of social networks and ability signaling.

The first channel contains all the hard and soft skills a person may acquire during volunteering, these might be so particularly specific that volunteering can sometimes be the only way to enter an organisation. It is as if a person is auditioning for a role (Wilson et al, 2020). This is for example common in environmental organisations like Greenpeace, where voluntary involvement might be a first step to later on get to a management position.

The second channel is linked to the social capital theory by Bourdieu, explaining that useful connections can lead to well-paid jobs. Different studies show that volunteers indeed have more heterogeneous social networks, meeting more people outside of their own field of work, and from different social classes (Wilson et al., 2020).

Ability signaling is the third channel. When employers know that someone is doing volunteer work, it is often a signal of motivation, loyalty, reliability, honesty and commitment, all qualities that are difficult to measure during a hiring process. Signaling is especially effective in the current days of social media where volunteer activities often gain more visibility, through posts and pictures for example. On LinkedIn, a professional

networking website, they even added the possibility to show voluntary work activities on your profile (Wilson et al., 2020).

Between 2008 and 2011, a period of high unemployment caused by the global financial crisis, a research was conducted by Jorgenson in the United States. Unemployed people were questioned, and from this group the trajectory of volunteers (that volunteered between 20 and 49 hours in a year) and non-volunteers was compared. The rate of employment within the first 12 months was 57,3 % higher for people who volunteered somewhere than that of non-volunteers. The most surprising thing that was that many of these volunteers didn't even volunteer in the same field of work as the job they found (Jorgensen, 2013).

Pleasure and positive feelings

In an article from the Harvard Business Review, Mogilner describes a series of experiments she conducted. Subjects were divided into two groups, the A-group had to do something to serve others, while the B-group could do something for themselves, in the second round the B-group had to do something meaningless like counting the letters 'E' in a Latin text, the third round the B-group was allowed to go home earlier. Each experiment resulted in the A-group feeling as if they had more time. The researchers explain that people who give away their time in service to others, feel more capable, confident and useful. Their feeling of accomplishment gives them confidence for the future and therefore give them a sense of more expansive time, as if they are less stressed and rushed (Mogilner et al., 2012). Even though volunteering is considered time-consuming, it may also contribute to a greater sense of work-life balance, which in turns might have a positive influence on health (Ramos et al, 2015).

Even though volunteering is often considered something of the middle-class, its effects are the same for people of lower classes, who, and especially the people in communities, already make use of systems of solidarity between one another. In an article about poor people volunteering Viswanathan writes about her Haitian friend who grew in poverty and now studies mechanisms of poverty abroad:

"Being a volunteer, serving selflessly, is a position of power. It moves you from being a victim to being an agent of change. It makes you unshakable. Because your actions are driven by inspiration, not external motivation, you do not wait for someone to guide you or reward you. The moment you stop waiting, stop complaining, stop blaming, and start taking responsibility for the life and people around you, you begin to grow. And the seed for innovation and creative problem-solving is planted in local leaders." (Viswanathan, 2011).

With this quote she reminds us of self-responsibility. The ability to autonomously take responsibility for one's situation and reaction to it. Self-responsibility is a concept that has been used for a long time (Maier, 2018) but is used frequently in the books and coaching-sessions of Paulo Vieira, a Brazilian enterprise coach, creator of the CIS-method, coaching thousands of people worldwide to find a more abundant and prosperous life by taking action and become self-responsible (Vieira, 2019).

Long term (mental) health benefits

Ballard associates volunteering during adolescence with fewer risky health behaviour in adulthood. This could come from favourable psychological and social resources that volunteers have, such as an optimistic future orientation (Robbins & Bryan, 2004), perceived social support (Hoyt et al., 2012), a stronger sense of community (Zeldin, 2004) and a stronger sense of control over one's own life outcomes (McDade et al., 2011). All associated with fewer health-risk behaviours. There is also the possibility that spending time volunteering diverts away from riskier activities (Pilivian & Seigl, 2014) (All in: Ballard, 2013) Konrath even adds to this that people who volunteer live longer than non-volunteers, which she researched for the university of Michigan in 2012. However, this is only the case if the volunteer work is oriented towards other people,

and not towards the personal benefits. (Konrath et al., 2012). This creates a paradox: helping others benefits us, but only if we do it not having these personal benefits in mind. Another research, published in BMC Public Health, supports this conclusion by adding that both forms of volunteering (other- and self-oriented) have beneficial outcomes, with the exception of people with depression, where self-oriented volunteering doesn't show the same positive effects as to other-oriented volunteering (Yeung et al., 2017).

On the long run volunteering does have good health outcomes because it creates different positive feelings, that reflect on our minds and bodies. This wide range of positive feelings makes volunteering therefore not only worth it for the people who are benefiting from the work, but also for ourselves, doing the work.

Particular of the case of ICBIE, is that the volunteer work they do is regularly directly linked to outcomes for themselves. When volunteers for example help building the stage for a theatre piece, it is likely that they will stay and watch, or be the ones performing. Less directly is for example when they make photocopies for the Italian class, that are not following now, but maybe followed a few years back.

3. CULTURE, SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION AND THE CULTURE OF VOLUNTEERING IN BRAZIL

In the previous chapter we zoomed in on the concepts of development, development in young adults and the benefits of volunteering. In this chapter we will dive deeper into the specific context of Brazil. This chapter can be divided into 5 larger sections: culture, systems of oppression, violence, volunteering in Brazil and some specific information about Salvador and the Itapagipe Peninsula.

First I will briefly describe the basic foundations of Brazilian society. Then, I will zoom in on 5 different systems of oppression: classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious discrimination, and how they operate in Brazilian society. After that I will discuss the culture of volunteering in Brazil, stating numbers, laws and policies. And finally I will discuss the city and the neighbourhood of ICBIE, which will lead us to the next chapter.

3.1. BRAZIL

In this brief introduction we will look at some basic information about Brazil, especially important for those who aren't familiar with the country.

Geography and climate

Brazil is the largest South-American country and occupies the fifth place on the list of largest countries in the world, with the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn both crossing the country. Brazil has been divided into five regions: the North, the Northeast, the Center-West, the South and the South-East. All of these regions have a very distinct culture and are divided into 27 states in total. (PNUD, 2019)

The most industrialized region of Brazil is the Southeast, which includes: Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The Center-West of Brazil, is home to Brasília, the capital of Brazil and the Pantanal, one of the largest biodiversity reserves to be found on this planet. The North region is the biggest region of the country, here you can find the Brazilian part of the Amazon forest - often called the lung of the earth -, home to a multitude of Indigenous reserves and some of the most impressive fauna of flora in the world. The fifth region, the one that is home to Salvador, the city I researched in, is the Brazilian North-East which is famous for its beaches and the driest area of Brazil: the sertão (PNUD, 2019).

Brazilian climate is predominantly tropical, although there are other types of climate to be found in the country as well: equatorial, semi-arid, humid coastal and humid sub-tropical. In the winter, snow can even be found in Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina. (PNUD, 2019)

Demography

The last demographic census in Brazil was organised in 2010. A new one was planned in 2020, but will be held only after the end of the installed measures that deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. According to these last results, the Brazilian population consists of more than 206 million inhabitants, predominantly living in cities (IBGE, 2010) with Sao Paulo (12,18 million), Rio de Janeiro (6,32 million) and Salvador (2,67 million) as the three biggest.

The Brazilian population was formed by the mixture of Indigenous peoples, Africans and Europeans (PNUD, 2019). After the colonisation of the territory, the country has known great migration streams mainly from: Portugal, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, Syria and Lebanon; peaking at the end of the 19th century (Levy, 1974). In 2010, 48 % of Brazilians identified as 'Branco', 43% as 'Pardo', 8% as 'Preto', 1% as 'Amarelo' and

0,4% as 'Indígena' (IBGE, 2010), making people of color the majority in Brazil. In the chapter 'Racism' (3.2.2.) I will discuss more in depth about race constructs in Brazil. However, I would like to clarify from this point on which terminology I will use to describe different people throughout this thesis, by starting with the translations of above racial categories:

'Branco' is the word that describes all people that identify most with having a European descentance, that typically have a White (or "pink") complexion. As an English translation I will use 'White'.

'Pardo' is a Brazilian Portuguese word that describes all people that identify most with having a mixed heritage, these people usually have a light brown complexion. There is no translation in the English language that defines the racial concept exactly how it is in Brazil, therefore I will keep using the Portuguese word 'Pardo'

'Preto' are all people that identify most with African descentance and typically have a Brown or darker Brown complexion. The most accurate translation for 'Preto' would be 'Black', however the term 'Black' in the English language can also refer to what is called 'Pardo' in Brazil. Therefore I will introduce the words 'POC' and 'BPOC'.

'POC' stands for 'People/Person of Color' and is a label that includes all non-White people. In the case of Brazil: Pardos, Pretos, Amarelos and Indígenas.
(It is not to be confused with the Brazilian slang 'poc' or 'pocpoc' that is used in the LGBT-scene to describe a homosexual person).

'BPOC' stands for 'Black People/Person of Color' and is a good translation of the Brazilian concept 'Preto', however because I will mainly use it side to side with 'Pardo', I will keep using the word 'Preto' throughout this thesis.

'Amarelo' are all people that identify most with Asian descendancy, their complexion can vary depending on their heritage. The category of 'Amarelos' will hardly have separate attention as a group in this thesis as the group of subjects from my research don't have people identifying as Amarelo. The same counts for the category 'Indígena'.

'Indígena' is the only word in the census that doesn't describe a color and is the label for people who identify with Indigenous descendancy.

To sum up: I will use the words 'White', 'Pardo', 'Preto' and 'POC' in this thesis.

History

Most sources will state that Brazil was "discovered by the Portuguese" in 1500, during an expedition led by Pedro Álvares Cabral (PNUD, 2019), and start reciting historical events from then on. Out of respect for all the direct and indirect victims of colonisation, I will not make that claim, but rather state that the history of colonial and post-colonial Brasil starts from the 1500's with colonial settlement from Portugal, Spain, Holland and France. Brazilian history prior to that, and the knowledge about it's inhabitants is often misconceived and based on stereotypical images of Indigenous people. Luckily more and more research is being done (Bruno, 2018), which will hopefully lead to a better understanding of this era, and the debunking of myths and prejudice.

The colonisation separates Brazilian history into two era's: Pre- and Post-Colombian, with the arrival of Columbus as a starting point for generations of trauma and oppression of native inhabitants and enslaved Africans. While slavery was officially abolished in 1888, Brazil is still racially unequal, just as every country in the world, with lots of examples of 'modern day slavery' that show the oppression of POC and the systematic

killing of Indigenous people and Afro-Brazilians. More about these inequalities will be discussed in the chapter 'Systems of Oppression'.

Current political system

Brazil is a Presidential Federative Republic. It is formed by the Union, states and municipalities, in which the exercise of power is attributed to distinct and independent bodies. A new president is elected every four years, with Jair Bolsonaro as the current Head of State and Head of Government. Every state in Brazil has political autonomy and the formation of multiple political parties is legal (PNUD, 2019).

Religion

The most practised religion in Brazil is the Roman Catholicism, it was the official state religion until 1891. After that, Brazil became secular. Throughout history other Christian religions also became popular (Pentecostal, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Kardecism), and got combined with local practices and African religions like Candomblé and Umbanda. There is also a smaller number of Jews, Buddhists and Muslims in Brazil (PNUD, 2019).

In the state of Bahia, Catholicism is the most practised religion with 65,2% of adepts. 17,4% declare to be of Evangelical or Protestant religion. 1,1% are Spiritists, a religion that has its origins in the books of French educator Allan Kardec. It has followers in 35 countries and Brazil is the country with the most. 0,3% of the population declares to have its beliefs in Afro-Brazilian Religions, 12% declare to be without religion, 0% are adepts of Asian religions and 4% claim to follow other religions (IBGE, 2010).

Even though I couldn't find specific numbers for the city of Salvador, an article written by Luana Almeida, based on numbers from the database of IBGE, states that the number of people that declared to be without religion in Salvador in 2010 is 17,64%, which is an increase of 6,4% compared to the year 2000, and 5,64% more compared to the whole state of Bahia. According to Ordep Serra, anthropologist at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), this number is important, as it hides a lot of people who actually are followers of Afro-Brazilian Religions, but are afraid or uncomfortable to speak out; as historically, the people following these religions have been oppressed and persecuted (Almeida, 2012).

Language

In Brazil, Portuguese is the official and most spoken language. In the world it's the eighth most widely spoken language with 7 other countries having it as the the official language. (PNUD, 2019)

The second official language of Brazil is Ligas, which is the official Portuguese sign-language, approved by a law from 2002 (Casa Civil, 2002).

Other spoken languages, that have been approved as official languages by some states or municipalities, are a multitude of over 150 Indigenous languages and dialects spoken by Indigenous people. In pre-colonial times, it is estimated that there were up to 1000 languages and dialects in Brazil (ISA, 2018).

A very small number of Brazilians have notions of Yoruba (or Iorubá), a language which has its origins in Nigeria and was imported during the slave trade. It plays an important role in Afro-Brazilian Religions. In 2018 it has been approved as Intangible Heritage in Rio de Janeiro because of it's important role in Candomblé. (O dia, 2018).

Economy

Brazil is the seventh largest economy in the world, and first economy in Latin America. It is part of BRICS, the group of five emerging economies, formed along with South-Africa, Russia, China and India. Brazil's most thriving sectors are agriculture, mining and manufacturing (PNUD, 2019).

Education

Brazil has both public and private schools using the system of primary, secondary and tertiary education. Secondary education also offers the option of technical education.

'Educação infantil' (pre-school) is for children under the age of 6 and is not obligatory in Brazil. 'Ensino fundamental' (elementary school) is the obligatory part of the Brazilian school system and is made up of 9 grades with children and adolescents from 6 to 14 years. 'Ensino Médio' (high school) is optional for everyone who has finished Ensino Fundamental. It takes three years.

After that it is also possible to enter 'Ensino Superior' (university), although all universities organise entrance exams called 'vestibular', which limits the number of young people that can enter the university. One of the most used systems of entrance exams is called the 'ENEM' (Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio), which is a national exam all students can do at the the end of high school, whereby the people with the highest grades get access to the universities. This exam puts a lot of pressure on young Brazilian students, and it's rigid way of asking the same questions nationwide create even more inequality, as not all high schools have the same quality and level of education. It also leaves Brazilian high school teachers with little space in the choice of topics or teaching style in their respective subjects, because everything they teach should be in preparation of the ENEM. Aside from inequalities in the school system, youngsters also have these kinds of obstacles, that prevent them from all accessing school.

In Brazil 11,3 million people over the age of 15 are analfabet, this is approximately 6,8% of the this age-group, according to the 'Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua' (PNAD Contínua in Educa IBGE, 2018). In 2017 this number was around 7%, which means that in one year time 121 thousand people less were analfabet. The North-East region, where Bahia is located has a rate of analfabetism (13,9%) four times as high as the Southeast (3,5%) and South region (3,6%). For POC the rate was 9,1% compared to Whites 3,9%; which is more than the double. 47,4% of people that are 25 years are more in Brazil have completed Ensino Médio (high school) in 2018. This is less than half of the population. 16,5% of them completed Ensino Superior (university) (Educa IBGE, 2018).

Now that we have discussed some basic information on Brazilian society, I will go on to explain some of the systems of oppression, to clarify how they operate in Brazil and are at the very root of all institutions.

3.2. SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION AND THEIR INTERSECTIONS

Some people have more power than others, easier access to social and physical resources, greater safety, and more freedom to envision and pursue the lives they choose. At the level of the individual, people's unique personalities and propensities play a role in who gets more or less of these desired resources. At the group level, members of different social classes differ systematically in the sources of support and sources of stress they encounter in their daily lives. These group level inequalities are established and maintained by systems of oppression, the interpersonal and institutionalized mistreatment of people on the basis of their group membership (Cudd, 2006; Freire, 1970; Engels & Marx 1848/1977; Memmi, 1965 in Bearman et. al. 2009).

To get a better understanding of Brazilian society and citizen's position in it, it is crucial to have a look at systems of oppression, and to understand what oppression actually means. First I will introduce the three root-systems (Capitalism, White Supremacy and the Patriarchy) that create systems of oppression. Then I will discuss each system of oppression individually: Classism, Racism, Sexism, LGBT-phobia and Religious Intolerance. To finish I clarify the term 'Intersectionality' to explain how these systems often intertwine and create oppression on multiple levels.

Capitalism, White Supremacy and Patriarchy

Jenny Justice is a US-American author, sociologist and teacher who writes for the online magazine 'Medium'. The magazine posted an online class she created about Sociology, Critical Race Theory and Critical Social Justice Theory. In this class she describes the three root systems she indicates as being "*the base of all power dynamics in the world*": Capitalism, White Supremacy and Patriarchy (Justice, 2019).

These three root systems change and transform over time, as they face different eras and different responses from the people living at that time. They infiltrate every aspect of our lives; like politics, work, education, parenting, relationships, sexual orientation, sexuality, and so on. Even though the way these systems manifest themselves changes over time, their power over our lives doesn't necessarily change (Justice, 2019).

Capitalism

The first structure, *Capitalism*, is the economic system of our planet. It puts private ownership of production and profit above shared resources and collective ownership. In this system; superiority, and along with it; dominance, is given to those that occupy the social classes that control this production and profit: the richest people of our planet. In our times of extreme inequality, this category is referred to as the '1%' (the 1% of the richest people of our planet). It is a system that values profit above all, and therefore exploits and disadvantages all classes below that 1% and especially the poorest ones. The type of oppression that corresponds to Capitalism is 'Classism' and 'Internalized Classism', which I will further discuss in the chapter 'Classism and Economic Inequality' (3.2.1.) (Justice, 2019).

White Supremacy

The second structure, *White Supremacy*, is a system that "*prioritizes and gives dominance and assumed superiority/natural-ness to the experiences, bodies, histories, cultures, ideologies, and other aspects of social living of people in the socially constructed category of Whiteness*". It oppresses all other categories of (socially constructed) race. The type of oppression that corresponds with White Supremacy is 'Racism' and 'Internalized Racism' (Justice, 2019). Two concepts I will discuss in the chapter 'Racism' (3.2.2.).

Patriarchy

Patriarchy is the third structure described by Justice. It is a system differentiating people based on their sex or gender, that "prioritizes and rewards and assumes as superior and normal/neutral the bodies, needs, wants, experiences, histories, desires, ideologies, stories, words, feelings, of those culturally constructed as male, masculine, men". It therefore oppresses all the people that were culturally constructed as "female, feminine, women" (Justice, 2019). The type of oppression stemming from Patriarchy is called Sexism or Internalized Sexism, which will be discussed in the chapter 'Sexism' (3.3.3).

Before I will discuss each of these root-systems and the oppression they create individually, I would like to clarify some basic concepts of Social Justice, still inspired by Justice's class in Medium Magazine. I will explain the difference between prejudice, discrimination and oppression, and describe the meaning of internalized oppression and it's most used tactic: dehumanization.

Prejudice, discrimination and oppression

Oppression is often used interchangeably with discrimination and prejudice, while these three words have distinct meanings and it is important to use them correctly for them not to lose their meaning and power.

Prejudice are all judgements we have over groups or members of groups we don't belong to or identify with. These judgements usually come from limited knowledge about, or contact with this group and are usually socially and historically constructed. These false, oversimplified and judgemental images are called 'stereotypes' (Justice, 2019). Believing women are bad drivers, or old people and children are annoying, or gay people know everything about hair and makeup are examples of stereotypes, when we perceive or if these stereotypes are experienced by the group as negative, it is called prejudice.

Discrimination is not a thought, it's an action that is directly linked to (conscious or unconscious) prejudice. It's all choices that create inequality between the people who make those choices and the ones affected by them (Justice, 2019). An example of discrimination is not willing to rent out a house to a person of Chinese origin, believing she will not pay rent in time (discrimination based on ethnicity), or not hiring an older man for a sales job, believing he won't be as good of a seller as a young person (discrimination based on age).

Oppression is the sum of prejudice, discrimination, institutional and historical power. It 'holds down' a whole group of people through structures of power (ideology, law, social interactions) (Justice, 2019). Redlining, the systematic denial of various services by federal government agencies, local governments as well as the private sector, to residents of specific neighborhoods or communities (drawing red lines over these neighbourhoods), is an example of racist oppression practise in the U.S.A. and Canada (Gross, 2017).

Prejudice can be held by anyone, discrimination can be perpetrated by anyone, but only those who benefit from historical and institutional power can be called oppressors. It is the dominant group in the dual power dynamic (Justice, 2019). There is a type of oppression that is however called internalized oppression, which does not stand on its own, but is rather a weapon used by the system of oppression itself, sinking through the deepest layers of the human psyche, making oppressed people participate in the practise of oppressing their own group and own self.

Internalized oppression and dehumanization

Bearman, who I cited to introduce this chapter, rephrases the words of different authors like Brazilian educator Paulo Freire on the subject of *internalized oppression*:

Internalized oppression (Allport, 1954; Cudd, 2006; Freire, 1970; Jackins, 1997; Lewin, 1941/1977; Roy & Steiner, 1994; Tatum, 1997 in Bearman et. al. 2009) consists of oppressive practices that continue to make the rounds even when members of the oppressor group are not present. For instance, a girl growing up poor might receive the message (in school, on television, from employers), "people like you never amount to anything." This is an example of external class oppression. If, after multiple repetitions of that message from the outside, she begins to say to herself, "I will never amount to anything," and if her behavior aligns with this belief, she will have internalized the oppression. She might then pass the message on to others in her socioeconomic stratum, perhaps to her children or her neighbors. Passing the message along is another sense in which she may enact internalized oppression, in this case internal to her group, a group that is a target of class oppression (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004 in Bearman et. al. 2009).

The most used tactic of oppression is called *dehumanization*, a way to more easily justify violence and oppression. This happens to poor people, to women, and to POC (Justice, 2019).

The tactic of dehumanization redefines people by making them seem or feel less human than others. Whenever someone reduces another human to a single trait, especially a negative one, it is dehumanizing. Examples include: "liar", "addict", "criminal", and so on. It takes away people's complexity and reduces them to what they have been called. An example in Brazilian language is 'bandido' (bandit), a word that is constantly used by media and politics to dehumanize people that have committed a crime, or worse, people that haven't, but fit the stereotypes related to the created image of the 'bandido' (a young black man). This is comparable to the word 'thug' in the United States. It is often used by right-wing politicians and supporters, in a context to justify police violence against POC, often referring to them as 'bandits' for the mere fact they are young black men, often residents of the favelas, and that because of that they deserve death: "bandido bom é bandido morto" (a good bandit, is a dead bandit).

Dehumanizing is used a lot in politics and in law-enforcement to make people engage in behaviours towards other people that they know are wrong, or passive against things that are going on in the world (Hamby, 2018). Which leads to inspire the famous quote 'silence is violence', often used in protests against dehumanizing practises that don't receive the attention they deserve. Dehumanization however doesn't only occur in the comparison of people against others, but also in the deprivation of people's fundamental rights as humans. Therefore dehumanization has two different meanings linked to the same practise, that of taking away one's dignity. The interaction of dehumanization can exist between individuals, groups and larger systems like nations or countries.

Now that we have defined these terms I will focus on specific forms of oppression and how they shape and take shape in Brazilian society. I will start with classism.

3.2.1. CLASSISM AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

"If you want to understand a problem, you need to understand who profits from that problem, and not who suffers from that problem." - Dr. Amos Wilson

In these next paragraphs I will explain the concepts of classism, internalized classism and class privilege. I will then clarify how this sort of oppression takes place in Brazil in the form of economic inequality and poverty.

Defining Classism: classism, internalized classism and class privilege

Classism is differential treatment based on social class or perceived social class. Classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the dominant class groups. It's the systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class (Class Action, n.d.).

It continues to exist through beliefs and behaviours that classify people based on factors like: income, social status, ancestry and heritage, the status of their job, type of education they have enjoyed, and so on (Class Action, n.d.)

It is perpetuated through: individual beliefs and behaviour, the dominant culture and socialization processes and all institutions of society (education, politics, police, the family, and so on).

The 1% (the ultrarich), the owning- and ruling class (the rich) and the upper middle class are the oppressing group members, they define what in culture is seen as 'good, intelligent, worthy, interesting and valuable', but also what is 'normal and acceptable'. The oppressed groups (the working class and poor) are pressured into fitting those norms (Class Action, n.d.), even though they live in totally different worlds and they, by definition, can't fit the expectations that weren't created for or by them.

Classism is not only a mechanism that works from the outside in, but it also *internalized*. On the one hand by the oppressed groups, who by internalization of the system accept and justify classism and adopt feelings of inferiority, examples include: *"feelings of inferiority to higher-class people; disdain or shame about traditional patterns of class in one's family and a denial of heritage; feelings of superiority to people lower on the class spectrum than oneself; hostility and blame towards other working-class or poor people; and beliefs that classist institutions are fair"*.

On the other hand it is also internalized by oppressing group members who by interiorizing the system create feelings of superiority. This is part of *class privilege* (Class Action, n.d.): all the benefits or privileges one can have solely based on one's partenance to a certain social class. When a person goes to the supermarket and doesn't have to sum up all the prices of the things he or she puts in the cart, or make considerations if certain items can be bought or not, this is class privilege. As the person is confident about having enough financial resources to not have to check every single expense. A different example of class privilege is when a person for example enters into a firm because her brother knows the manager from high school. In this case, it is not the amount of money the person owns that creates the privilege, but the social capital (Bourdieu), in this case: knowing people in managerial positions, that comes along with belonging to a certain class.

Classism, that is an inevitable product of Capitalism, takes form in economic inequality: a problem well-known to lower class Brazilians, who, from the favelas look up at the sky and don't see the sun and the clouds, but the skyscrapers from the wealthy looking down on them. The middle class, who enjoy the safety of their condo, continue to work their finger to the bone to maintain their position of 'almost-rich'.

Economic inequality in Brazil

Despite being one of the major global economies, the economic inequality in Brazil is ranked on the 10th place from 140 countries (Georges, 2017). According to the World Bank Criteria, almost 55 million Brazilians lived in poverty in 2017 (Douglas, 2018). There are 5 times more Brazilians living in poverty than that there are citizens in Belgium. In the last decades, due to political decisions, like the implementation of the social welfare programme 'Bolsa familia', inequality has been reduced (Simbunga, 2017). 28 million of people have been lifted from poverty in the last 15 years, but extreme poverty is still the fate of 10% (or 20,9 million) of Brazilians. Earning the minimum wage in Brazil, you would have to work 19 years to make the same amount of money that the richest 0.1% makes in just one month. The 6 richest men in the country have the same amount of wealth as half of the nation, 100 million people (Oxfam International, n.d.).

Gender wage-gap and employment-gap

According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, there is a wage-gap of 23% between women and men (IBGE, 2018). When looking at wage equality for similar work, Brazil stands on the 119th place in the world (World Economic Forum, 2017). If progress would continue at the same pace, the gender wage-gap would be closed only in 2047 according to Oxfam International and according to Human Rights Watch it would only be in 2083 (Canineu, Carvalho, 2018).

Not only do women earn less, they also have a more difficult time finding jobs. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), 78% of men, compared to 56% of women hold paid jobs in Brazil. A survey organized by ILO shows that the majority of women desire having a formal job, meaning that staying at home is often not their choice but a result of the difficulties of entering the workplace (Canineu, Carvalho, 2018).

The gender wage-gap functions in a way that keeps women more dependent of men that occupy better positions and obtain better salaries, and keeps independent women, especially single mothers in lower classes. This means Classism is gendered and is not only a product of Capitalism, but also operated under the structures of Patriarchism.

Racial wage-gap and employment-gap

Aside from a gender wage-gap, there is also a racial wage-gap in Brazil. This racial wage-gap lies within the continuum of the racial disparities in the schooling level of Whites and POC in Brazil (Gradin, 2014).

Tertiary or higher education isn't reached by equal proportions of both groups. Only 8,5% of POC workers obtained a bachelor's degree in 2010 (coming from 3,7% in 2000), while for White workers that number was 22,2%. (Reis, 2016)

More recent numbers don't discuss rates of graduation, but show the number of students enrolling. In 2019, POC, became 50,3% of the total of students studying in the Brazilian public system. This number can be misleading, because POC form the majority of Brazil's population (55,8%), which means they are still underrepresented by 5,5% in the public school system. The amount of 18 to 24 year-old POC studying is on the rise. In 2016 50,5% studied and in 2018 that number jumped up to 55,6%. For Whites in the same age group, that number is however 78,8% (IBGE, 2019).

In the 10 years that the educational level of Blacks improved, the participation of this group in the official labor force augmented by 10% (from 15% to 25%). However, not proportionally the number of POC enrolling. Hence, obtaining a bachelor's degree provides important and beneficial outcomes in the personal realm of POC, but doesn't guarantee an equal opportunity for work as White workers with the same level of education (Reis, 2016). While in 2018 the unemployment rate for Brazil was 12.33% (Macrotrends, 2020). Data from IBGE shows that of the unemployed population 64,2%

were POC and 35,8% White. Of all White workers 34,6% have an informal occupation. For POC this number is 47,3% (IBGE, 2019).

Average income per month for employed people was 2.796 reais for Whites and 1.608 reais for POC in 2018, this is a difference of 73,9%. Of people with a college degree, Whites earned 45% more per hour than POC with the same level of education (IBGE, 2019). According to Oxfam this wage-gap would only be closed by 2089 if progress keeps going at this pace. (Oxfam International, n.d.). My observation however in comparing numbers from Reis and IBGE is that this gap has only be increasing since 2000 when it was 39%, compared to 45% now.

In the occupation of managerial positions only 29,9% were held by POC (IBGE, 2019).

The racial wage-gap functions in a way that keeps POC in lower classes in Brazil. Which means Classism is not only gendered, but also racialised, making it a product of Capitalism, Patriarchy and White Supremacy.

Poverty

Poverty in Brazil is mainly constructed upon the long history of colonization and racism, where the White population holds power in the upper classes.

In the 10% lowest incomes of the country, POC represented 75,2% of the people. For the 10% highest incomes, this number was 27,7% (IBGE, 2019).

44,5% of POC in Brazil live in a household that doesn't provide the basic sanitation service (garbage collection, water supply by network and sewage system by network). For Whites this percentage is 27,9% (IBGE, 2019). Basic sanitation is one of the many elements of the multidimensionality of poverty.

Multidimensional poverty

Leonorde Athias, one of the people responsible for organizing the SIS 2017 (Síntese de Indicadores Sociais, a Brazilian analysis on quality of life), reminds us that when looking at poverty it is important to remember that poverty is not only a matter of income. Poverty is a multidimensional issue, with inevident solutions. Poverty is a vicious cycle of cause and consequence (Trisotto, 2018). To illustrate: a woman living just outside of the city centre applies for a job in a restaurant in the centre. She gets the job, but to arrive at her job she needs to pay for the bus every day. To pay for the bus she needs money, a paycheck that she will only get after her first month of working in the restaurant. The result is that she can't earn money, because she doesn't have the necessary money that will bring her to her job everyday.

Other factors of the multidimensionality of poverty are: poor (access to) health, a lack of (access to) education, bad living conditions, violence, intergenerational poverty, environmental precarity, the lack of a social network, and all the forms of oppression and exclusion that come with racism, sexism, classism and internalized oppression.

By understanding that classism is complex and interwoven with other forms of oppression, we can be more critical of the way it is constructed and the way it operates. In the next paragraph we will look at the next component of oppression that affects Brazilian society: racism.

3.2.2. RACISM

In this chapter I will define racism and different concepts related to it. It will explain the specificity of the racial construct in Brazil and how racism affects POC in Brazil.

When discussing inequality and oppression it is inevitable to look at racism. In Brazil it's common to hear 'Brazil is not a racist country', when even president Bolsonaro said it in an interview on television (AFP, 2019). This, while many anti-racist workers and organisations work day and night to make the problem of racism more visible, elaborating on all the facts that demonstrate racism and its (deadly) consequences. An app called 'Mapa do Racismo' was even launched in 2018 by the Public Ministry of Bahia to give citizens the possibility to denounce racism from their cell phones (MPBA, 2018).

Philosopher and activist Djamila Ribeiro, author of 'Pequeno Manual Antirracista' (Little Antiracist Manual) and other books about this subject was interviewed by CartaCapital. When asked if anti-racist practises start from the idea that society is racist she answers:

"Yes, but more than that, it is necessary to understand that racism is a structure. When we talk about structural racism, it is about understanding that racism is part of the structure of Brazilian society, as well as capitalism and sexism. This means understanding our construction as a nation, we are a country that has never abolished slavery; understand how the fact that racism is structural puts the Black population in situations of vulnerability. The first step is to understand how the racist system was constructed and how it reproduces, and then to understand what individuals reproduce. Racism needs to be understood as this structure that does not only speak of the individual field. In Brazil, it is common for people to associate racism with an attack suffered by a famous Black person, for example, but people do not understand that racism is also a company that has 90% of White employees, arriving in spaces and not have enough Black people, only in places of subordination. We still cannot understand why we reproduce racism, so it is essential to understand how this structure works." (Ribeiro in Basílio, 2020)

Defining racism

Although the subject of racism is vast and the different types of racism is a non-exhaustive list (scientific racism, eugenics, color blindness, aversive racism, othering, supremacism, segregation,...) we generally categorize racism into 4 different types: individual racism, internalized racism, interpersonal racism and systemic racism (which in turn can be divided into institutional racism and structural racism).

Individual racism

Individual racism is racism within one's own beliefs. This can exist without consciousness and verbal expression of those beliefs (Intergroup Resources, 2019). Prejudice, stereotyping and xenophobia (fear or hatred towards what is believed to be 'foreign' or 'strange') are examples of individual racism.

Some anti-racism workers claim that individual racism is inevitable, growing up in the society we grew up in. And once we become conscious of how racism works, white people go through processes of 'White fragility' and 'White guilt'. Both processes where Whites center their own experience of discomfort over the actual problem of Racism that inflicting suffering on people of color. In an interview for Teaching Tolerance, Robin DiAngelo, anti-racist worker and author of 'White Fragility: Why It's So Hard For White People To Talk About Racism' explains:

"When we understand racism as a system that we have been raised in and that its impact is inevitable, it's really not a question of good or bad. It's just, "I have it. I have been socialized into it." And so, "What am I going to do about it?" is really the question. And that's where, I think, maybe some guilt could come in, when you know that and you're still not going to do anything about it. I don't struggle with guilt because, to the best of my ability, I am trying to challenge my socialization. So, let me be really clear: As a result of being raised as a White person in this society, I have a racist worldview. I have racist biases. I have developed racist patterns as a result, and I have investments in the system of racism. It's incredibly comfortable. It's certainly helped me with the barriers that I do face. And I also have investments in not seeing anything I just said—because of what it would suggest to me about my identity as a good person, if I'm coming from the dominant definition, and what it would actually require of me in action. I don't feel guilty about that, but I do feel responsible for what I do with that socialization."(Robin Di Angelo in Van Der Valk & Malley, 2019)

Individual racism can only be opposed by intense personal work of understanding and deconstructing racist beliefs and colonial ideas (sometimes referred to as 'decolonizing the mind') and an active stand against racism. Many books have been written for White people to start this process.

Internalized racism

Internalized racism is a form of internalized racial oppression (Pyke, 2010). In the research: *The Psychology of Racism* Johnson emphasizes that internalized racism involves both "conscious and unconscious acceptance of a racial hierarchy in which Whites are consistently ranked above people of color" (Johnson, n.d). Examples of this could be when people of color adapt to White cultural standards, have a mindset that supports the status quo (i.e. believing that racism doesn't exist), and believing in racist stereotypes (i.e. that people of color are inherently more aggressive).

Wherever race exists as a social construct, the phenomenon of internalized racism appears (Pyke, 2010). Internalized racism has a direct and adverse effect on those experiencing it. A few examples are an increase in domestic violence in Native American communities (Poupart 2003), a higher propensity for violence among African American young males (Bryant, 2011) and skin-related diseases due to chemical skin-bleaching to appear more White amongst women from the Caribbean and African diaspora (Benn, 2019).

Internalized racism is directly being opposed with movements such as "Black is beautiful", or "Lindo e Preto" in the lusophone diaspora, or the "Noite da beleza negra" (day of Black beauty) the biggest beauty-pageant for Black women in Brazil, that has been organized 41 times in Salvador da Bahia. Other examples are people who write children's book revolving around POC, to offer children a more representative view of the world, and showing positive images of POC, in a world where there are too often depicted in (negative) stereotypes.

Interpersonal racism

Interpersonal racism is the racism that occurs between individuals, it usually follows the perpetrator/victim model (Intergroup Resources, 2019). It can be conscious or unconscious and intentional or unintentional. Social distancing and stigmatization, discrimination at work or school and threatening and harassing all fall under examples of interpersonal racism.

Opposing interpersonal racism can for example be done through sensibilization on how to intervene in situations of interpersonal racism in the public space.

Institutional racism

The term 'institutional racism' was first introduced by the activists Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. (Carmichael, Hamilton, 1967) and means that institutional and cultural practises and decisions continue to manifest the racist status quo and continue to perpetuate the already historically constructed racial inequality. Groups that already dominate the power structure (Whites) are being privileged at the expense of groups that are being marginalized, this can be observed in all institutions such as schools and universities, prison systems and governments.

An example of institutional racism is that in Bahia, a state where 63,4% of the population auto declares 'Pardo' and 15,7% 'Negro' (IBGE, 2015), African-American film director Spike Lee notes that it is only White and blond people we see on the television and in magazines (Leite, 2012). This touches upon the question of representation.

It allows us to reflect on what it means to only see (Whites) or never see (Blacks) people that look like ourselves in the media. A lack of representation leads to the internalization of racism, beautifully described by Lazaro Ramos and Djamila Ribeiro in their respective books '*Na minha pele*' (In my skin) and '*Quem tem medo do feminismo Negro?*' (Who is scared of Black feminism?). While the overrepresentation for White people enforces the invisibility of Black lives and stimulates the idea that we live in a White world where only White people and White values and White privileged lives exist. Mediatic under-representation or false representation of Black lives shows how the institute 'media' permantes systems of racism in our society.

Structural racism

Structural racism represents the way the totality of institutions and interpersonal racism produce racialized outcomes, this again, can be in the absence of bad intentions. Unequal access to opportunities and power inequality are examples of structural racism (Intergroup, 2019). Black poverty, disproportionate violence on Black lives, poor health and higher maternal mortality among Black women and so on are examples of structural racism.

It is this type of racism that the #blacklivesmatter or #vidasnegrasimportam is fighting so hard for to eradicate, as it represent the whole structure in which all forms of racism can freely operate.

In practice however, the terms 'institutional racism', 'structural racism' and 'systemic racism' are used interchangeably, representing all forms of racism that oppress POC systematically.

Colorism

Colorism was first described in 1982 by Alice Walker, an African-American novelist who won the Pulitzer Prize for 'The Color Purple'. She described the term as: "*prejudicial or preferential treatment of same-race people based solely on their color*" (Alice Walker in Norwood, 2015). It's not exactly the same as racism, but it is much related to it, as colorism is a system within the system of racism that disadvantages people based on the darkness of their complexion (Norwood, 2015). A beauty contest in the USA where only light-skinned African-American women are represented is not an example of racism, it is an example of colorism. Colorism can also be perpetuated between Blacks, creating a hierarchy of oppression. According to Yaba Blay, scholar-activist, public speaker and cultural consultant, colorism is often gendered. It affects women more than men (Blay in Norwood, 2015).

In Brazil, colorism has been receiving some attention (Camargo, 2019), but not the one it needs to make the discrimination of people with a dark skin visible. Reports of IGBE, for example, always take the data for 'Preto' and 'Pardo' together under the term

'Negro'. This erases the differences that exist between the two groups and makes it more difficult to analyse the realities of Brazilian society. Important is to remember that the term 'colorism' isn't here to divide POC in their efforts to combat racism, on the contrary, it is there to make dynamics of racism, coloniality and White supremacy more visible so there would be a better understanding of the subject.

Microaggressions

A microaggression is an action (verbal or behavioural) that is done intentionally or unintentionally and occurs in everyday common situations, that communicates a derogatory, hostile or negative prejudicial message or insult toward a person that belongs to a culturally marginalized or oppressed group (Sue, 2010). It's a term that is often used in a racialized context, but can also be used situations involving LGBT for example. An example of a racial microaggression is telling a Black woman: "You look very beautiful for a Black woman".

Racism complicity and complacency

Partaking in the mechanisms of racism is almost inevitable. The Responsible Consumer distincts two ways in which we partake: racism complicity and racism complacency. 'Complicity' is "*to consciously or unconsciously support, contribute or benefit from racism or racist systems*" and 'complacency' is "*to support racism and racist systems by not challenging it*" (the Responsible Consumer, n.d.).

Just as classism divides people into the ones who are oppressed and the ones who benefit class-privilege, racism divides the people into those who suffer racism, and those who have a racial privilege, often simply called: White privilege.

White privilege

In 1988 Peggy McIntosh described 'White privilege' in her essay 'unpacking the invisible knapsack', as such: "*The unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed upon people solely because they are White. Generally White people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it*".

It is a concept that is often up for debate, because of the choice of the words 'White' and 'privilege' and the many connotations around these two words. It is often met with different forms of resistance by White people. First of all we have the word 'White', a word that can create discomfort for Whites because historically they are not used to being named, described or defined by their race or color of their skin. The second word 'privilege' can create a great discomfort for those who have never identified with that word, especially Whites living in poverty, or Whites that have been through great amounts of suffering in their lives (Collins, 2018). However the word 'privilege' doesn't stand on it's own, and is used within the term 'White privilege'. White privilege doesn't say Whites know no suffer, it simply says that Whites are not being oppressed -because- of the color of their skin, and therefore have a privilege over POC who are being oppressed because of the color of their skin. White people can still suffer from oppression because of class for example, they can still be the victim of discrimination, violence, and so on, but they can't be oppressed as a whole group because of the color of their skin.

Now that we have a grip on certain concepts from Racial Theory, we can discuss race in Brazil more specifically with the necessary tools.

Race in Brazil

In these paragraphs I will explain the context and construct of race in Brazil. I will open a parenthesis on racial language, the phenomenon of 'racial color-blindness' and the specific context of racial auto-declaration in Brazil.

The context of race

It is important to understand that every country has a different racial reality. Brazil is a miscegenous country, meaning that the mixtures of races has been going on for 520 years, ever since the first European colonizers arrived and the Transatlantic Slave Trade began, forcing African and Indigenous women to carry children after being raped by White men. The mixture of people and the colonial mentality has left the country with a wide spectrum of 'colors' and nominations to identify with.

The construct of race

Race is not as simple as Black and White, reminding us that race is a social construct (Coates, 2013), meaning that race is never based on scientific facts, but on social meanings ascribed to people we categorize based on biological traits society sees as socially important. This goes from people's genetics to phenotypic traits. Biological differences do exist within the human race, but it's the culturally-shaped understanding of these differences that make race a social construct. Who is seen as 'Black' or 'White' is different in for example Belgium, Brazil, South-Africa or Australia. It is a social construct because it is supported by an ideology that privileges Whites and lighter-skinned people and creates a social stratification system (Zevallos, 2017).

Language

In Chapter (3.1.) 'Brazil' under 'demography' I explained about the different nominatives for race in Brazil I use in this thesis, however it is important to note that the Portuguese Brazilian language has many different ways of referring to people's skin color or race. Examples include: 'Moreno', 'Mulato', 'Caboclo', 'Cafuzo', 'Afro-Brasileiro', 'Europeo-Brasileiro', 'Nativo', 'Indio', etc.

The use of language sparks different interesting conversations in Brazil including that of the word 'Negro' for example, that is usually used to describe 'Pardos' + 'Pretos'. The use and possible offensiveness is an ongoing debate that gained national attention on social media after Babu, a candidate of the Brazilian show 'Big Brother 2020', explained he didn't want to use the word 'Negro' anymore due to its negative etymology (Valentim, 2020). On the contrary, during the Carnival of Bahia, tiaras with the slogan 'negrx, nao pretx' were very popular, reclaiming the word as a term of Black pride (with the 'x' substituting 'o' and 'a' to make the word gender-neutral).

This process is called 'reclaiming' or 'linguistic reappropriation, reclamation'. It is a process where a group reclaims a word that has historically been used to oppress them, by using it in a way they take pride in. Examples in the English language are 'bitch' and the 'n-word', where respectively groups of women, and groups of African American, have started using the word in a way they have ownership of the word and it can't be used to oppress them anymore. There is no consensus whether the practise of reclaiming is useful and has positive impacts on oppressed people or not.

How we use racial language is submitted to time and context. It is a sensitive subject that deserves attention and specificity. Using racial words to identify ourselves with is widely practised in Brazil, and often obligatory in certain context. This leads us to the subject of racial auto-declaration.

Racial auto-declaration and racial passing

Brazil uses the system of racial auto-declaration in many of it's official documents and research. Universities use the system of quota to guarantee that 50% of its vacancies goes to students with low incomes, in this percentage the universities also consider vacancies for Black and Indigenous students (Ministério da Educação, 2012). This system

demands people to auto-categorize themselves based on their phenotype: physical traits like skin color, hair type and facial features.

This doesn't necessarily correspond with the person's ancestry (TVIFCE, 2019). Some people will for example say: "I'm Pardo because of my ancestry, but society considers me as White because of the way I look". This is called 'racial passing', as a person from one group 'passes' for another group (Santiago, 2019). 'Passing' can sometimes mean the difference between life and death, for example Jews that passed for 'Arians' during the second World War and escaped the concentration camps. This is an example of a person from an oppressed or marginalized group that passes for a member of the dominant group.

The term 'passing' can also be used in the context of gender and sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is not visible from the outside (unless a person uses certain symbols to express their orientation), therefore a homosexual person can sometimes 'pass' as a heterosexual person. For gender, this principle also counts. A famous example of a transgender person who passes as a cisgender person is Janet Mock.

'Passing' is always used to describe a person from a historically discriminated group that passes for a member of the dominant group. It is important to note that passing can, but is not necessarily voluntarily. Telling a transgender woman how much she looks like a "cis woman" is not necessarily a compliment, as this person may not have this intention.

The opposite is also possible, for example in Brazil where some White people say they are actually Pardo, in the objective of trying to enter a university and take advantage of the system of quota's. As this is fraud, many schools have organized a special commission to check if the auto-declared race corresponds with the person's phenotype. The whole process of going through a commission can sometimes be difficult and even traumatising for POC, as they are being physically analyzed for their phenotypic traits; just as was done during slave trade (Sperb, 2017).

Colorblindness

Just like Bolsonaro did in his television interview, the denial of racism, also called racial color-blindness, is widely spread in Brazil. People who are racially colorblind claim, often with good intentions, that they don't see color; don't see the difference between Black and White people. Often not realizing that racism is real and measurable, and denying these facts is standing in the way of all of those that suffer from it and are trying to bring social justice. Claiming to not treat people differently according to their skin color, doesn't solve the problem that they are treated differently by society all the time. In the words of American activist Angela Davis "*In a racist society it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist*" and for us to be anti-racist, we must first acknowledge the existence of racism.

Racism in Brazil

In the previous chapter on Classism, I already discussed a few elements that show how deeply racist Brazilian society is, like the racial wage- and employment-gap and poverty among POC, a multidimensional concept that involves all aspects of life. I also discussed typical elements of a racist culture, like the lack of representation of POC in the media and literature. In the previous paragraphs about race I also gave examples of so-called 'daily racism', interactions of racism like for example microaggressions, that occur on a daily basis, and that are hard to bundle into statistical information.

POC are also much more affected by violence. 2019 statistics from IBGE show how homicide rates among POC of any age group exceed that of whites. For young people aged 15 to 29, that number in 2017 was 98.5 for POC against 34.0 for whites. For young POC males, the number was 185.0. (IBGE, 2019).

Police violence in Brazil, which is a problem on its own, dismantles racist structures and racist behaviours towards Brazilian citizens. In the state of Sao Paulo the mortality of POC at the hands of police was approximately three times higher than that of Whites in 2017. This mortality particularly reaches young Black boys between the ages of 15 and 24 years old (Luna, 2014). Statistics from Rio de Janeiro show that in the first semester of 2019, of all 885 lethal victims of police violence, 80% were POC (Grandin F., Coelho H., 2020). Being vocal about (racialized) police violence is necessary, but dangerous, as proves the murder on human rights activist Marielle Franco on March 14, 2018.

The Brazilian Ministry of Health also shows that from all Brazilians hospitalized (and Whites are being more hospitalized than POC) it is the POC that die in much higher numbers from Covid-19. This is a result of racial social inequality, and health-outcomes related to that (Valor Online, 2020).

Understanding that POC in Brazil die disproportionately compared to Whites, shows us the tip of the iceberg, that hides a whole racist structure underneath.

I discussed now some of the relations between class-oppression and racial oppression. In the next chapter I will introduce some concepts of sexism and sexism in Brazil.

3.2.3. SEXISM

In this chapter on sexism I will give an overview of how sexism can be defined. Describing terms like: hostile and benevolent sexism, internalized sexism, machismo and mysonoginy, male privilege and toxic masculinity. In the second part I will describe how the concepts of gender and sexism operate in Brazil.

Defining sexism

In 2019, the Council of Europe adopted a new recommendation on preventing and combating sexism. In this document they provide a definition of sexism that is now widely used among NGOs and activists, and however many definitions exists, I will use this idea for the purpose of this dissertation.

Sexism is:

Any act, gesture, visual representation, spoken or written words, practice or behaviour based upon the idea that a person or a group of persons is inferior because of their sex, which occurs in the public or private sphere, whether online or offline, with the purpose or effect of:

- i. violating the inherent dignity or rights of a person or a group of persons; or*
- ii. resulting in physical, sexual, psychological or socio-economic harm or suffering to a person or a group of persons; or*
- iii. creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; oriv. constituting a barrier to the autonomy and full realisation of human rights by a person or a group of persons; orv. maintaining and reinforcing gender stereotypes. (Council of Europe, 2019)*

Sexism affects all genders and all different sexual orientations. Every group is affected differently and belonging to multiply oppressed groups (for example being a bisexual and a woman) can change the way a person is affected by sexism.

Just as with racism, sexism operates in different forms and on different levels, from structural to interpersonal. These different forms can make sexism less or more visible and difficult to identify. The different types of sexism and mechanisms related to sexism is an non-exhaustive list, examples include: patriarchy, feminism, male gaze,... For the purpose of this research I will explain a few systems that are most relevant to this research in this chapter: hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, internalized sexism, machismo, misogyny and toxic masculinity.

Hostile and benevolent sexism

Hostile sexism is the type of sexism that is usually discussed when people talk about sexism. It's any form of expression or behaviour that degrades or objectifies women. Calling a woman a 'whore', telling her to cook 'because that is her role' are examples of hostile sexism (Hubby, 2020).

Benevolent sexism on the other hand is more hidden behind words and actions that seem positive, but are eventually equally harmful. Examples are asking a woman to iron a pile of clothes because 'she does it so well'. Another example is when men try to convince other men not to harass women, because they could be 'their mothers, daughters, wives or sisters'. The goal here is to evoke empathy from men. Yet, this is done by giving value to women because of their relationship to men as sisters, daughter, wives or mothers, but not as human beings (Hubby, 2020). Chivalry, which is sometimes appreciated, is sometimes categorized as a mild form of benevolent sexism, where women are treated as something delicate with needs of special gestures of care and protection.

Other examples include the erotization of women, as they are culturally seen as the more beautiful of the two genders (thinking in binary genders), which leads to many

problematic behaviour towards women like catcalling and harassment. Erotization of women can of course also be a form of hostile sexism, if the woman is degraded to (solely) being an object of sexual desire. In the workplace it is possible to observe benevolent sexism when looking at positions women occupy. Positions that involve a lot of organisation and scheduling are typically given to women as many believe they are 'naturally' better at it. This is not only a belief men share about women, it is also something many women believe, which leads us to the next paragraph (Hubby, 2020).

Internalized sexism

Internalized sexism is a form of internalized oppression (Chesler, 2001; Cowan, 2000; Cowan, Neighbors, DeLaMoreaux, & Behnke, 1998; Wiseman, 2002 in Bearman et. al., 2009) where, just as with any type of oppression, there is an inequality of power between the group that is oppressing and the group that is oppressed, that is perpetuated through institutions (Bearman et. al., 2009) and personal interactions. In the case of sexism it is the group of men oppressing the group of women.

Oppression in its most simple form is often described as the sum of prejudice, discrimination and (institutional and historical) power. The element of 'power' in this calculation stresses that prejudice on it's own can't lead to oppression, which sometimes leads to the false belief that there exist things like 'reverse sexism' or 'reverse racism', while in reality this can't exist (Bearman et. al., 2009).

'Sexism' and 'racism' are both systems that oppress groups of people, and this oppression can't simply be reversed according to the situation, it is systemic and repetitive. What people usually try to say is that in the case of sexism, there exists prejudice against men, and in the case of racism there exists prejudice against Whites. Yet this prejudice doesn't oppress men and Whites collectively. The use of the term 'reverse sexism' and 'reverse racism' often function as a way to discredit the reality of systemic racism and sexism, by implementing that individual experiences of discrimination of men and Whites hold the same weight as the historical and extensive oppression of women and POC.

Internalized sexism describes dynamics within women themselves and amongst each other, without the need of having a person of the oppressor group (men) around. The internalization of the beliefs that women are inferior or other harmful thoughts that exist about women help maintain the status quo of a sexist society. This happens through different strategies like social expectations and pressure between women perpetuating feelings of powerlessness, incompetence, invalidation and derogation; competition between women and the objectification of their own self (Bearman et al., 2009).

Machismo and misogyny

Machismo is the expression of macho-culture. The word 'macho' is used a lot in Brazil, it comes from the Latin word 'male' and is mainly used to describe behaviours, mostly expressed by men, that try to showcase male dominance over women (Malvina Muszkat & Ana Maria Fonseca Zampieri in Noronha, 2018).

It is rooted in the traditional binary male-female gender roles, where the man is considered the head of the family and the one who provides, while the woman's role is to take care of the desires and physical needs of the family (food, sex, rest, entertainment and the home environment). Machismo can in some cases contain elements of romanticism and chivalry, where it is the role of the macho-man to show the woman a good time by taking her out. This often, serves the man in a social way, as the man can showcase 'his lady' and use this demonstration as a way to upgrade his social status.

Machismo puts women in a certain role, but also men, as the archetype of the macho-man also demands a specific behaviour and appearance of men, like: virility, physical strength, material wealth, dominance over the female partner, romantic or

sexual attention to women outside of the monogamous relationship, a high sex-drive, and so on.

Misogyny stems from Greek, meaning 'hatred of women'. While machismo is more related to the display of traditional role patterns, where both men and women follow certain (unwritten) guidelines, misogyny is rooted in feelings of aversion and disgust towards women. Noronha describes: "*It is usually due to the construction phase of male identity and is usually a remnant of the difficulty in elaborating ambiguous feelings of love and hate in relation to parental figures. It can also indicate insecurity in relation to masculinity itself, which promotes the desire to be cruel to women*" (Noronha, 2018). Repulsion that is aimed at men is called misandry. Both machismo, misogyny and misandry are forms of sexism.

Male privilege

Male privilege is the system of advantages, rights, benefits and support that are available to men, solely because they are men. A man's access to these is privileged over that of women, however their level of privilege can be influenced by how well they fit into society's idea of masculinity. Homosexual and transgender men, for example, enjoy less male privilege than heterosexual men.

Toxic masculinity

While we generally speak of the oppression of women when we talk about sexism, and we can't speak of reverse sexism which implies that men suffer from sexism in the same way women do; men also suffer from the system of sexism. Even if they are the ones benefiting from the privileges of the oppression of women, non-binary people and all other people that identify with other genders of the spectrum, or no gender, as sexism harshly divides people based on the sex they were assigned at birth (male or female) and socializes them into a specific role, with unattainable (and sometimes contradicting) expectations they should fulfill in society. An example is: a firm where male employees obtain better positions than their female colleagues because of sexist beliefs and biases, gives them a privilege, as the women are oppressed into jobs with for example lower status and salary and where they are less challenged professionally. The privilege these men have over women, doesn't mean they don't suffer from having to fit in the roles they are assigned.

This leads me to briefly discuss the problem of toxic masculinity, as I believe it is an important source of suffering for young men in Brazil, who are just as much as the women, the protagonists in my research.

Toxic masculinity does not mean, in contrary to what is often understood, that masculinity or manhood is something toxic. According to the Good Men Project toxic masculinity describes a certain way (that is very narrow) we look at what it means to be a man, that works in an oppressive way for boys and men. It puts manliness on a continuum that is measurable through status, sex, aggression and violence ('Good Men Project' in Clemens, 2017) but also physical traits like muscles, the growth of facial and body hair, the shape of shoulders, height, the width of the jawline and the size of the genitals. Clemens continues :

It's the cultural ideal of manliness, where strength is everything while emotions are a weakness; where sex and brutality are yardsticks by which men are measured, while supposedly "feminine" traits—which can range from emotional vulnerability to simply not being hypersexual—are the means by which your status as "man" can be taken away ('Good Men Project' in Clemens, 2017).

Toxic masculinity are the societal expectations and the competition between men, that pushes them far away from their nature and results in them discriminating and stepping on women.

By rejecting anything stereotypically feminine, men and boys are taught to reject an essential part of themselves, something that is to be valued. What's more, these allegedly female traits are often ones that help us all get along in society, things like compassion, empathy, even politeness. Most displays of emotion, other than anger, are deemed suspect. The result of this is men who do not know how to express themselves, who lack emotional intelligence (Carley, 2018).

Toxic masculinity is what leads men to take more risky behaviour than women, of the elements that leads to men dying younger than women. Women are supported (and expected) to make healthier choices in life. Carly gives a simple example of 'the salad', a healthy food that has strangely become something gendered, something for women, while eating greasy foods and big chunks of meat is seen as manly.

The effects of toxic masculinity are not innocent, but lead to a variety of issues like: drug- and alcohol abuse, depression, suicide, and social isolation, all problems commonly more found in men (Carley, 2018).

James Hollis wrote in *Under Saturn's Shadow*, the wounding and healing of men: "*Men's lives are violent because their souls have been violated*".

Sexism in Brazil

Sexism in Brazil has known a long history of revolution. From the 19th century on Brazilian women obtained a series of rights they didn't have in the centuries prior to that, like the right to vote in 1932, or the legal equality of rights in the 1988 Constitution. Their struggle for basic human rights has made important steps in guaranteeing some of them, which makes the feminist movement of the 20th century very different than the one from now (Instituto Humanitas Unisos, 2018). However, women are still not at the place of equality, and still suffer from the oppression of their gender in society.

While I already discussed the gender wage- and employment-gap in Brazil in the previous chapter 'Classism and Economic Inequality', there are many other ways in which sexism takes place in Brazil. As examples I will explain a bit about gender roles, femicide and rape in Brazil.

Gender roles

Starting from a very young age, Brazilian children deal with expectations based on their gender. Chores, preferences and specific tasks are often constructed as being 'girl things' or 'boy things'. Cars for boys and dolls for girls, blue clothes for boys and pink clothes for girls are good examples of this. Desired behaviours like 'toughness' for boys, means they are often not allowed to cry or express emotions of sadness, fear or distress (something I already explained in 'Toxic Masculinity'), while 'playing quietly and being good girls' means girls can not express their full enthusiasm and adventurousness during playtime. These differences have been constructed historically and are perpetuated through socialization. Viviane Santiago, technical manager of Plan International Brasil explains: "*Our society differentiated women and men in a social practice and then placed greater value on male characteristics. And when you attribute greater and lesser value within a difference, inequality is generated*" (Basilio, 2016).

Even before birth the social role is already constructed and expected from the newborn child: the decoration of the room, the presents and clothes bought, are already in function of the baby's gender. When the child is born we start to inflict these expectations onto them by our language: "what a cute little girl", "what a strong little

boy”, and we reward and punish the children for how well they assimilate to these roles (Basilio, 2016).

In this system girls are damaged because the society that values “male” characteristics will give them less opportunities and less value for whatever they bring into this world. This leads to a systematic control of their choices, body and sexuality, as their level of attractiveness -according to rigid beauty standards- is the thing they are most applauded for and judged by (Basilio, 2016).

Boys, on the other hand, are socialized into characteristics of strength, bravery and aggressive leadership. Things like dancing, cooking and making art are considered ‘effeminate’, a feminine way of behaving, which is a concept that is a product of the Patriarchy, and is in no way regarded as something positive (Basilio, 2016).

Thus, the children are socialized into these roles and with age these expectations only grow and new tasks are being added to the list. A characteristic typically attributed to women is that they are expected to be the caregiver of the family. They are not only expected to take care of the children, but also of their partner, elders, and sick people in the family. An example of how these roles are fixed into society are the laws on maternity and paternity leave in Brazil.

Maternity and paternity leave are disproportionate in Brazil. When a baby is born, men get 5 days off work and women four to six months (this, if the working conditions are respected). Jorge Lyra, one of the coordinators of the Núcleo de Estudos de Gênero e Masculinidades (Gema) of the UFPE, explains that at a first glance this might look like a privilege for women. Unfortunately this operates in a way that men are not held responsible for giving care to their family, and leaves the mother with a lack of help. It reinforces the stereotypes of gender roles and leaves women with an enormous responsibility and load. This is also a great example of how giving men a disadvantage over women doesn’t necessarily benefit women. In this case both the mother and the father are disadvantaged by the situation (Diário de Pernambuco, 2015). Baby changing stations are for example also always placed in women’s bathrooms, leaving men without the option of changing their baby’s diaper without entering a female space they are not allowed in. This is only a small example of how this will often leave the woman with the responsibilities of childcare, and discourages and disempowers men in their roles as fathers.

According to the research ‘Continuous PNAD 2017’, Brazilian women over the age of 14 devote, on average, almost twice as much time to chores related to the household. These chores include, among other things:

preparing or serving food, setting the table or washing dishes; cleaning or maintaining clothes and shoes; make minor repairs or maintenance to your home, car, appliances or other equipment; cleaning or tidying up the home, garage, yard or garden; taking care of the home organization (paying bills, hiring services, guiding employees, etc.); shopping or researching prices for household goods; taking care of domestic animals; and other household chores.

A striking observation from this research is that women who have a job outside the household still work more in the household, and not only compared to men who also work outside the household, but also compared to men who don’t work outside the household. Unemployed women work in the household for 23,2 hours on average, for employed women that number is 18,1 hours a week, unemployed men work 12 hours in the week on household chores, and employed men only 10,3 hours (UOL, 2018). This creates high inequalities in the responsibilities women have to carry and the free time they have for themselves.

Femicide and rape

Brandalise describes in the journal UOL: "*Femicide is the term used to describe murders of women committed on the basis of gender. That is, when the victim is killed for being a woman*" (Brandalise, 2018).

'The Law on femicide' is instituted under Brazilian Law No. 13.104. It was installed in 2015 by President Dilma Rousseff and qualifies femicide as a type of homicide with a higher penalty (a penalty of 12 to 30 years instead of 6 to 20 years). For a homicide to be considered a femicide it has to meet one of the two criteria: it has to be committed in a domestic or family environment, or there has to be contempt or discrimination involved. This means that the victim has been humiliated or dominated by a known or unknown perpetrator (Brandalise, 2018).

Of all countries, Brazil is considered the 5th in the world when it comes to numbers of femicide, according to the 2015 Map of Violence. In 2017 there were 4600 cases, according to the United Nations, this equals the killing of 12 to 13 women per day (Brandalise, 2018). In Bahia, the state where Salvador is located, 101 cases were registered in 2019, which means an increase of 32% compared to 2018 where there were 76 cases. This increase in numbers can possibly be explained by new ways of looking at homicide and new ways of investigating femicide, a legal term that has only been introduced since 2015, focussing on the fact that women are being killed because of their womanhood (Wendel, 2020).

While domestic violence hits alarming rates of incidents in Brazil (one every two minutes in 2018, according to the 2019 Annual Brazilian Public Security report (released yearly by the BPSF, many still go unreported. The more women live in constant fear the less likely they will report. In all cases of violent death of women only 4% of victims had reported previous situations of violence to the police. The study also shows that the main victims of femicide are women who identify as 'Preta' or 'Parda', are between 25 and 35 years of age, and have an elementary school education. 88,8% of all feminicides in Brazil are committed by the partner or ex-partner of the victim (The Brazilian Report, 2019).

In 2014, it was estimated that there were 527.000 attempts or cases of rape per year in Brazil. This number comes from a research called 'Sistema de Informacao de Agravos de Notificacao (Sinan)' and is ordered by the Health Ministry (Ministerio da Saude, MS). This equals 0.26% of the population. Of all these cases, approximately 10% are reported to the police (Cerqueira, Coelho, 2014). The Public Security Annual Report informs us that the majority of Brazil's rape victims are very young. Every hour 4 girls under the age of 13 are raped in the country. Girls between the age of 11 and 15 are the main victims. 81,8% of victims are female. For boys the age range is even younger, with most victims being between the ages of 3 and 8 years old (The Brazilian Report, 2019).

To conclude the section about Sexism, it is important to remember that Sexism is a system that imposes strict and binary gender-roles (male, female) onto people, where everything linked to the concept of masculinity is valued more worthy. This system makes everyone suffer but affects women more. How Sexism intertwines with Racism and Classism will be discussed in the chapter 'Intersectionality' (3.2.6.). In the coming chapter I will summarize the most important element of the fourth system of oppression I'm discussing in this thesis: LGBT-phobia.

3.2.4. LGBT-phobia

In the coming paragraphs I will start by defining the term 'LGBT-phobia' and 'hetero(cis)normativity'. To then explain a bit about

Defining LGBT-phobia and hetero(cis)normativity

Homophobia means irrepressible aversion, disgust, fear, hatred or prejudice that some people or groups harbor against homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals (Politize, n.d.), some people rather call it LGBT- or LGBTQ+ phobia, as this is a more inclusive way to talk about the problem, including the different ways people might want to refer to their sexuality (queer, pansexual, asexual, ..). In the context of this research I will not give too much attention to the discussion of correct labeling, but I would like to add that when I use 'LGBT' this includes everyone that doesn't exclusively identify with being heterosexual and/or cisgender (a person whose gender identity matches with the gender assigned at birth). LGBT-phobia is commonly referred as homophobia.

Heteronormativity is a perspective that considers heterosexuality and relationships between people of different sex as fundamental and natural within society, sometimes leading to the marginalization of sexual orientations other than heterosexual (Dicionario Infopedia, n.d.).

In this definition I would personally leave out the 'sometimes', because the marginalization of non-heterosexuals is systemic and not occasional. Some people add to this term the word 'cis' making it : heterocisnormativity, this includes to the definition that not only being hetero is seen as the norm, but also being cisgender. The ideology of heterocisnormativity is deeply imprinted in our collective consciousness through religion (and mainly monotheistic religions like Christianity, Judaism and Islam) and colonisation. Homosexuality was normalized for example in the Roman Empire, before the arrival of Christianity, and being a '*niizh manidoowag*' or 'two-spirit' (two-gender; intergender or transgender) has always been normal in North-America's Native communities (University of Toronto, 2020). In conclusion, the gender binary 'male-female', and heterosexuality is not something that has always been seen as the norm, and it shouldn't because it is oppressing people.

To fight LGBT-phobia and create acceptance towards all expressions of gender and sexuality it is necessary to deconstruct heterocisnormativity.

LGBT-phobia in Brazil

Without diving into the complete history and complexity of the LGBT-community and LGBT-people in Brazil, I will highlight the oppression of LGBT's through some important aspects of Brazilian law, and some statistics on crime.

A research conducted by Rede Nossa São Paulo shows that 51% of Paulistas have experienced or witnessed scenes of prejudice in public spaces of the city. That same research indicates that 50% of the cities citizens express to be tolerant towards this community, 23% claims to be indifferent and another 23% says to be intolerant. When asked about showing affection in public, a natural act between lovers, only 23% accepted LGBT's doing this (Santiago, 2018).

These few statistics show that Brazil, still has a long way to go when it comes to the rights and acceptance of LGBT.

Crime: law and regulation

In 1990, on May 17, the World Health Organization (WHO) excluded homosexuality from the classification of diseases, or health-related problems. The date of 17 May has, since then, remained a day that symbolizes the fight against prejudice and violence and pro sexual diversity and expression (Sanches et. al., 2017).

In June 2019 the STF, or Supreme Court introduced a thesis that consider acts of homophobia and transphobia a crime in Brazil. The penal treatment will be the same as with cases of racism with prison-sentences of up to 5 years (Oliveira, 2019). At the moment cases of homophobia and transphobia still fall under the law of racism (Lei de Racismo (7716/89)), that today treat crimes of discrimination and prejudice based on "race, color, ethnicity, religion or nationality" (Barifouse, 2018). These new laws are in juxtaposition with conservative ideologies that are gaining space in Brazilian politics, with an Evangelical president in the lead, Jair Bolsonaro, who has already declared to be a "proud homophobic" (Oliveira, 2019).

The decision passed by the STF, came only three weeks after all responsibilities related to the LGBT-community of the Ministry of Human Rights were eliminated by Bolsonaro, quoting: "We can't let Brazil become a paradise for gay tourism". The STF's regulation allows practitioners of all religions to continue expressing their opposition to homosexual relationships, if this is "in accordance to their sacred books and codes" and "does not incur discrimination". Something that to me sounds quite contradicting. An important statement for a country that has a strong Christian tradition with Catholicism as the traditional state religion (64,6% of the population in 2010), and a fast growth of Protestantism (22% of the population in 2010) throughout the country (IBGE, 2010). Both institutes (the Catholic Church and the Evangelical movement) are very critical of LGBT-rights and expression of gender and sexuality that fall outside the heterocis-norm (Oliveira, 2019).

During the trial in the Supreme Court, Judge Gilmar Mendes said:

"Sexual orientation and gender identity are essential for human beings, for the self-determination to decide their own life and seek happiness",

magistrate Carmen Lucia Antunes added to that:

All human beings are born free and equal and should be treated with the same spirit of brotherhood", "What is sought is to provide immediate protection to those who are discriminated against and marginalized, even by law. All prejudice is violence. All discrimination is violence. All discrimination is a form of suffering. But some of these prejudices cause more suffering, because they punish from home and for the simple circumstance of trying to be what you are.
(Oliveira, 2019).

The trial was a request from the Partido Socialista Brasileiro (PSB) (who were also the initiators of the 2013 law liberating same-sex marriage), denouncing the 30 years of failing to legislate a human rights issue in the country; as bills have continuously been blocked by conservationists (Oliveira, 2019).

This new law permits Brazilians to call or go to the police for LGBT-phobic crimes. They can also call '100', a service provided by the government to denounce all types of violations of human rights. Of LGBT-phobic character they identify 10 different types of violations, which are the following (ordered by number of calls they receive per infraction): psychological violence, discrimination, physical violence, institutional violence, negligence, financial and economic abuse, heritage violence, sexual violence, trafficking of persons and other violations (Sanches et. al., 2017).

Crime on LGBT's

According the research done by the Gay Group of Bahia (GGB), the oldest association of LGBT-right in Brazil, at the minimum 320 LGBT-people in the country have died in 2018. In the first half of 2019 a 126 murders have been recorded. In the timeframe of 2011-2018, a report from the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights confirms one lethal victim of homophobia every 16 hours (Oliveira, 2019).

For transgenders, Brazil is the most dangerous country to live in according to the Trans Murder Monitoring project. 167 trans people, at least, have been murdered between

september of 2017 and september 2018. The life expectancy of a trans person is only 35 years in Brazil. Between January and June 2019, the GGB states that people killed because of transphobia has reached 123 victims, with 65 murders of transvestites (the practice of dressing in a style or manner traditionally associated with the opposite sex of the binary) and 53 of transsexual women (a woman who was assigned male at birth). (Oliveira, 2019).

As laws and regulation are making progress, Brazil still has a long way to go in guaranteeing equal rights and treatment of all of its citizens as they are being oppressed in the many different ways I have described in this and previous chapters. In the next chapter I will bring up the last type of oppression, this thesis focuses on in the light of personal and professional development of young adults: religious intolerance.

3.2.5. RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

In this chapter I will define religious intolerance and frame it within the context of Brazil through law and data from cases of religious intolerance.

Defining religious intolerance

"Religious intolerance is the act of discriminating, offending and rejecting religions, liturgies and cults, or offending, discriminating, assaulting people on account of their religious practices and beliefs" (Porfirio, n.d.).

Religion throughout history has been functioning in a way of establishing political power and controlling the population. Even though Brazil is a secular state by law, Christian dogma and Christian leaders remain in power (Porfirio, n.d.)

Religious intolerance is present throughout the world, and communities of every religion can fall victim to it, depending of the dominant religion per area. In Brazil, religious intolerance is mostly related to the problem of racism as the intolerance and discrimination is mostly aimed at followers of Afro-Brazilian Religions and traditions (Porfirio, n.d.). In the case of Brazil, religious intolerance thus acts as a mechanism of oppression of POC: it is deeply rooted in racism, just as racism is deeply rooted in religious intolerance, as White Supremacy walked hand in hand with Christian colonization.

Religious intolerance in Brazil

Law

Brazil as a Secular State, guarantees religious equality, according to Article 5 of the 1988 Federal Constitution. The country also signed the UN-pact of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which enforces the concepts of religious equality and the right of religious expression. Another, more specific law (Law 9,459 of May 1997), makes the Brazilian state accountable for punishing crimes motivated by race, color, ethnicity, religion or national origin. The punishment in case of religious intolerance is not specified in a separate law. The punishments can be one to three years of prison or a fine (Porfirio, n.d.).

Data

The former Ministry of Human Rights collected data between 2015 and 2017, showing that in Brazil, a complaint of intolerance based on religion was made every 15 hours through the phone number 'Dial 100' (previously discussed under LGBT-phobia) (Porfirio, n.d.). Ofcourse, this only represents the tip of the iceberg, as not everyone reports every case of religious intolerance. While only 1,6% of Brazilians are adherents of Afro-Brazilian Religions (mostly Candomblé and Umbanda), 39% of complaints came for intolerance practised against them. Catholics, who represent 64,4% of the population, only represented 1,8% of the registered victims. For Protestants, who represent 22,2% of the population, this number was 3,8% (Veja, 2017).

3.2.6. INTERSECTIONALITY

Black women have had to develop a larger vision of our society than perhaps any other group. They have had to understand White men, White women, and Black men. And they have had to understand themselves. When Black women win victories, it is a boost for virtually every segment of society. - Angela Davis

Defining intersectionality

This chapter mends together concepts we have described in previous chapters. It tries to sketch the complexity of how diverse Brazil is and how we need to have this basic understanding of the different types of oppression to be able to grasp the way these intersect and form complex realities.

The concept (of intersectionality) refers to the way in which racism, relations between patriarchy, class oppression and other possible axes of power and discrimination create inequalities. It emphasizes how the intersectionality of race, class and gender produces oppression and disempowerment (Bernardino-Costa, 2014).

The concept has its origins in the 70's, when African-American feminists from the U.S.A. started questioning if the category 'women' holds the universality that it claims. It was in the early 2000's that Crenshaw elaborated on the subject and created a more defined concept. (Bernardino-Costa, 2014)

To explain how intersectionality works Crenshaw often takes the case of DeGraffenreid versus General Motors as an example. In this case Emma Degraffenreid and four other African-American women filed a complaint for being discriminated by General Motors in the search for a job. They didn't deny women were eligible for jobs in the company, but claimed only White women were hired, leaving them with no opportunity to work. They filed a complaint for sexism and racial discrimination. However two allegations were weighed separately, which made them both powerless in front of the jury. General Motors employed African-American workers; but only males, and they employed women; but only Whites (Crenshaw, 1989).

The women didn't win the case, but they opened up an important conversation about how African-American women are not only discriminated for being women, and not only for being Black, but also, and probably even more for being Black+women. This triples their belonging to oppressed groups. We can take the complexity of intersectionality even further by imagining a gay Black women being part of 7 different types of oppression: gay people, Black people, women, gay+Black people, gay+women, Black+women and gay+Black+women. Each of these 7 types deal with different types of prejudice, stereotypes and oppression.

Every characteristic a person has that is used by society to oppress that person can be added to analyze a person's complex identity. Other characteristics than race, class and gender can for example be: sexual orientation, religion, body-size, disability, fitting into beauty-standards, ethnicity, level of education, age, etc.

This concept gives us the possibility to reflect on the importance of seeing individuals in all of their complexity and diversity, and understand that their identity is influenced by social constructs and systems of oppression. Intersectionality can also be used to discuss pride and how belonging to different groups makes people unique. While this word is usually used to discuss, denounce and combat systems of oppression, it is also a word of liberation and emancipation.

Multi-level oppression in Brazil

A good example of intersectionality and the oppression of Black women is illustrated in an online comic strip by Leandro Assis where a White upper middle class women refuses to offer good working conditions for the POC women she employs in her household during the Covid-19 pandemic (appendix 3). The condition of household workers in Brazil was also researched by Joaze Bernardino-Costa, professor of the Department of Sociology of the University of Brasilia, who I cited a few times before. He researched the political organisation of Brazilian domestic workers and feminist and Black movements that support their cause towards better working-conditions.

Another example comes from a research from Felipe Fernandes about the assassinations of transvestites and 'pais de santo' or 'babalorixas', spiritual leaders in the Candomblé and Umbanda religions. This study unravels the specific vulnerability of transvestites and homosexual men who are related to these religions (Fernandes, 2013).

Now that we have an overview of how some of the most prominent forms of oppression operate in Brazil, we can use these specific terms and ideas to research these concepts on the Itapagipe Peninsula, which I will do in second part of this thesis.

In the next chapter I will bring up the topic of violence, which is related to oppression and is of constant presence in Salvador, touching some lives more profoundly than others.

3.3. VIOLENCE AND A CULTURE OF FEAR THROUGH MEDIA AND POLITICS

When, as a stranger, you arrive in Salvador, a few of the first things you will hear are: "be careful", "don't go by yourself", "take an Uber". You will hear it in every neighbourhood, and from almost every person you speak with. And while my friends often worry because I'm a young woman, because I'm White, and because I'm blond: three aspects that scream: "*gringa*" (*stranger*), I have started to worry for them, because they often are young men and Black, and therefore statistically more probable to encounter violence than me.

In the previous chapters on oppression different aspects of violence already came to light, like: femicide, police violence, the murder on LGBT's and how young Black men are more affected by crime than any other group. Hence, I explained how violence is a practise that oppresses people, and often just for being who they are.

Violence, is however a vicious cycle, because it oppresses people, but it is that same oppression that is the source of new violence, and that's how it goes around. As inequality goes up, violence also goes up (Wilkinson, 2010), because social inequality means that enormous groups of people are being robbed of their human rights. This causes revolt, despair, and a fight for the few resources that are made available for those at the bottom of the pyramid. To minimize violence, it is necessary to work on equality. According to Sakamoto, this is the exact opposite strategy of what Bolsonaro is doing in the country right now (Sakamoto, 2019).

Political decisions have a major influence on the levels of crime, as decisions made from higher up highly influence social realities. The availability of firearms, weakening of the social and cultural middle field by not providing funds, and economical decisions that create more inequality are only a few examples of how policies impact people's lives and the level into which they are pushed into criminality and violence (Imbusch, Misse, Carrión, 2011). These decisions don't even need to be big. Decisions as small as raising bus fares by 40 cents, which happened in 2019 in Salvador, can mean a child in poverty might lose its possibility to go to school and ends up with fewer chances of finding health, positive friendships and later on in life: a job.

When ranking all the nations of the world into how fearful of violence its people are, Brazil occupies the second place. Which is only second to Afghanistan (Alves, 2018), a country that has known recent wars and the presence of terror groups. Aside from the trauma of personally experienced violence, which hits many Brazilians and for various motives, there is the additional notion of being conscious of the high numbers of violence in the country and the constant perceived danger. Government violence (police violence, mass incarceration and genocide) and politics that stimulate violence through the maintaining and exacerbation of inequality have created this dense feeling of fear and anxiety among Brazilian citizens.

Among natives and Afro-Brazilians because they either had their land taken away from them, or they were taken away from their land; because they are the legacy of 500 years of genocide and slavery; because they know their lives are disproportionately being taken away; and because until today, they still haven't reached equal rights and every sound they make to protest for the matter of their lives and human rights, is repressed with brutality, or with the violent force of minimization. This means the police are not their friends, the military are not their friends, the politicians in charge are not their friends, and sadly enough, their communities have been so broken and divided, that even there, they often can't feel safe. Among whites fear is also present, because the media repeatedly shows crime and violence, and disproportionately points to young Black men as the perpetrators of murder and rape. This in news reports, but also in

fiction like telenovela's and films, which over the course of history has equated the image of the Black man to the image of danger.

So, while the reasons for being fearful might differ from person to person, almost all Brazilians are subject to the constant presence of fear in their everyday lives. A fear that has important impacts on their mental health as well as the habits they have created to optimize their security. This can go from simple actions as always having to lock doors and windows, not walking in empty streets, and not walking around with expensive jewelry on (Damasceno,2016) to more psychologically complex actions like women feeling the need to change the way they dress as to try to avoid harassment and rape, or Black parents having to explain to their children about racism, and how to deal with possible police-encounters throughout their lives, as to try to avoid to get intimidated, injured, assaulted, falsely imprisoned, or even killed.

With this paragraph I close the subchapters on the most important types of oppression and how they impact Brazilians lives. In the next subchapters I will focus more on engagement and volunteering in Brazil and zoom in on the specificities of Salvador and the Itapagipe Peninsula (or Cidade Baixa), the region of the city where ICBIE is located.

3.4. SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN BRAZIL

PNAD Continua (a household research conducted by IBGE) describes volunteer work in Brazil as: *"work that is non-compulsory, carried out for at least one hour a week, without receiving remuneration or benefits in return, and carried out in support of people who do not live in the same household and are not family"* (de Oliveira, 2018).

According to this definition, 7.4 million Brazilians (4,4% of the population of 14 years and older) worked as volunteers in 2018. This shows an increase of 12.9% compared to the results of the same research in 2016 (de Oliveira, 2018).

The dedication to volunteer work is equal between women and men. It is, however, greater amongst those who have an officialized occupation (4,7%) than those who are unemployed or employed in the unofficial sector (3,9%). Older people participate more in voluntary work than younger people: 5,1% for those aged 50 or over, 4,6% for those aged between 25 and 49 and 2,9% for youngsters between the ages of 14 and 24. With the exception of the North and North-East of Brazil where the participation was highest amongst the group of 25 to 49 year olds (6,9% and 3,6%, respectively). For those who completed higher education the participation is higher than those who have no or incomplete higher education (8,1% compared to 2,9%). This gap, according to Brito (analyst at IBGE), may be due to a greater access to information and more free time among people with a higher degree of education (de Oliveira, 2018).

While looking at these numbers it is important to remember that social engagement doesn't only apply to volunteer work in institutions. In IBGE's research, Brito comments that taking the neighbor to the doctor, helping a friend with a task or staying with the neighbor's granddaughter to go to work are also examples of individual volunteer work, referring to the 9% who volunteer without being linked to an institution (de Oliveira, 2018). This type of community volunteering deserves a special kind of attention in Brazil, since the country has a culture based on collectivity and less on individualism.

Hofstede's 6-dimensions model gives Brazil a score of 38/100 on the 'individualism dimension', describing this dimension as *"the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members"*. This is linked to whether people look at themselves in terms of 'me' or 'us'. Collectivist societies see themselves as parts of groups where there is an exchange of care and loyalty. In individualist countries people are only expected to look after themselves and their direct family. A score of 38 for Brazil shows us that Brazilians are culturally integrated into groups with strong and cohesive bonds (Hofstede, 2019), usually extended family and in poor communities usually also the neighbours. This means that aside from volunteer work, Brazilian society is naturally disposed to have bonds of solidarity between its members, which is of high importance for those trying to survive poverty and marginalization.

3.5. VOLUNTEERING POLICIES IN BRAZIL

In Brazil anyone over the age of 14 who wants to make their *"time, knowledge and emotion"* available to their community can participate in volunteer work (Parceiros Voluntarios, 2019).

The law of June 16, 2016 describes voluntary work as:

"a service that is considered an unpaid activity provided by an individual to a public entity of any nature or a private, non-profit institution that is assistant or has a civic, cultural, educational, scientific or recreational objective".
(Lei nº 13.297, de 16 de junho de 2016).

'Assistance to a person' was added to this 1998-law in 2016. This law also describes how volunteers may be reimbursed for expenses that have been proven to incur in the performance of those voluntary activities. A practise that for many cultural organisation is a luxury they can't afford.

3.6. SALVADOR DA BAHIA AND THE ITAPAGIPE PENINSULA

The city and the peninsula

São Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos (the Holy Savior of the Bay of All Saints), or in short 'Salvador', is Bahia's capital and first city of Brazil. It's the 4th largest city in the country after São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia, and largest of the Northeast Region. It has 2.9 million inhabitants (2010), was founded by Portuguese settlers in 1549 and named the first capital of Brazil. It was also one of the first colonial cities in the Americas.

Salvador is geographically divided into a higher and lower part: 'Cidade Alta' and 'Cidade Baixa', the Itapagipe Peninsula makes up a big part of the Cidade Baixa, except for two neighbourhoods that are not on the peninsula itself, but bordering it. In this thesis I will use both words interchangeably as the inhabitants often refer to both. Appendix 2 shows a map of Salvador, and the different neighborhoods divided into prefectures. The Cidade Baixa is one of them.

The city has 167 neighbourhoods that highly differ from one another because of social inequality. The neighbourhood 'Pelourinho' was named UNESCO World Heritage in 1985, being a district with important historical value regarding the history of enslaved Africans. From all cities of the African diaspora, Salvador is the one with the highest population of Afro-descendants in the world. It is one of the most important centers of knowledge and culture of Afro-descendants. The city is famous for its cuisine, music, dance and architecture. It's also the birthplace of samba and capoeira and has a long history of African/Afro-Brazilian pride and resistance.

Since Salvador already is a peninsula, with it's bay known as the largest bay in Brazil, Itapagipe is a peninsula of a peninsula. It's located at the north-west of Salvador and is made up of 10 neighbourhoods: Alagados, Bonfim, Caminho de Areia, Mares, Massaranduba, Monte Serrat, Ribeira, Roma, Uruguai and Vila Ruy Barbosa. "Itapagipe" comes from the Tupi vocabulary ('ita' = stone, 'paba' = place and 'y' = river, 'pe' = in) it means "place of the stone in the river"(Navarro, 2003).

It has a few famous landmarks, such as the Igreja Nosso Senhor do Bonfim, an important church in the Catholic faith and the local Candomblé-religion. Every year approximately 2,5 million people join the festivity of the 'Lavagem do Bonfim' in January, a ritual where Bahian women wash the church with scented water as a spiritual ritual. The day is started by a long walk throughout the city towards the Bonfim church on the hill, the washing of the church, different Catholic masses, and a 'profane' street party where everyone dances and drinks, dressed in White.

The peninsula is known for its calm beaches with no waves; because they are located inside the bay, the seafront with a lot of restaurants and bars, it's colorful graffiti-walls, and old (colonial) houses. There are no apartment-blocks here, and there is an overall more calm and laid back atmosphere than in the rest of the city. It is often said that people on the Peninsula still greet each other on the street, it almost feels as a small town within a city.

Between the neighbourhoods of Alagados and Massaranduba, the water was once home to 3500 'palafitas', wooden houses constructed above water, also called 'the water-favela'. As portrayed in the documentary 'Da Maré' from Annie Eastman (Eastman,

2017), all habitants from the palafitas were evicted from their homes between 2004 and 2011, some were relocated in community houses with help of the government, others had to find their own solutions. This impacted the poor and mainly Black community of the palafitas, who now still mainly live in the Cidade Baixa.

Healthcare, environment and housing in the city

Healthcare on the Peninsula is geographically accessible, with two UBS (basic health unities), one CAPS (Centre for psychosocial help), one CTA (Center for testing of sexual transmittable diseases), one CSM (Mental health centre) and one SRT (therapeutic residence) (Mapa da Saúde, 2020).

Healthcare is a constitutional right in Brazil (Constituição Federal, n.d.), and although the SUS (Sistema Unica de Saude or Unified Health System) is accessible and free for everyone and is one of the biggest healthcare systems in the world (Ministerio da Saude, n.d), there is a big difference in quality between private and public healthcare (Medilab, 2019) that significantly disadvantages Black and Indigenous people (Kalckmann et al, 2007) and especially women amongst these groups (Werneck, 2016) (Neto, 2013). Proximity of medical centres and free access to healthcare don't guarantee access to good health. Considering that basic life conditions like work, nutrition, housing and stress impact health in considerable ways, it is necessary to invest in more equality amongst all areas of life, than merely in better healthcare for all.

Environment also affects health. The quality of air and water and the way the city is organized affects the physical health and emotional well-being of its inhabitants. Salvador is, unfortunately, quite infamous for being a city with a lot of waste. In the first semester of 2018, 6,5 thousand tonnes of trash was collected from the beaches by Limpurb, Salvador's Urban Cleaning Company (TV Bahia, 2018), with a significant part of waste going into the ocean. Together with pollution coming from the city's sewers and industry, this leaves families that live off fishing in a problematic situation. Even though Salvador has invested 70 million reais in sanitary sewage and has become the capital of the Northeast with the best sewage system (A Tarde, 2018), 510 thousand people in the city don't have their house connected to the sewage system. 81% percent of Salvador's rivers are polluted with 17% of them in bad condition and 64% in really bad condition. From it's 26 beaches, only two have been qualified to be clean all year long. From the 6 beaches of the Itapipe Peninsula, Boa Viagem was the one considered the cleanest, with 40 weeks of clean water in 2016, praia da Penha in Ribeira counted 0 weeks of clean water in that same year and is together with Boca do Rio the beach considered less clean of the whole city (Rezende, 2017). Quality of housing in the city is highly unequal with approximately 835.008 or 31,19% of the cities' population living in favelas (Chamas, 2011). In the Cidade Baixa quality of housing is considered good, except for the neighbourhoods of Massaranduba, Uruguai and Lobato, where housing quality was considered 'precarious' or 'insufficient' in a 2008 research conducted by EDUFBA (do Espirito Santo, 2008).

This sums up the most important things to know about the region of ICBIE, the region where the volunteers live and spend a lot of time doing activities. In the next chapter I will explain the most important things there are to know about ICBIE, and open a small parenthesis on anti-oppression work, an important concept to know before getting to the research-part of this thesis.

4. ICBIE AND ANTI-OPPRESSION PRACTISES

In this chapter I will discuss the activities of ICBIE, its history, vision and mission, organisational structure, physical structure, partners and fundings and how ICBIE is challenged by a lack of funding and personnel, and some important information about its volunteers. The last sub-chapter will discuss anti-oppression practises.

ICBIE stands for 'Instituto Cultural Brasil Itália Europa'. It's an institute, a cultural centre located at the shore of Ribeira on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador da Bahia. It houses a library, a small museum and other spaces for a number of activities.

4.1. ACTIVITIES

The **language courses** are the primary activity of ICBIE. All year round there are two main courses; Italian and English (ICBIE, 2018), taught by Marlene and occasionally by volunteers from abroad. Sporadically, there is a French course taught by volunteers from abroad. The language course differentiates itself from other language courses in Salvador for two reasons: it is accessible at a low price and even for free if the student doesn't have the possibility to pay (Marlene, personal interview) and the students get the opportunity to practise the language with native speakers coming from abroad.

Another fixed activity that is organized on a regular basis is **capoeira and Afro-Brazilian dance**. However it is a challenge to find a professor that wants or can afford to work as a volunteer, which makes it difficult to keep this on the agenda. The classes are free for all the students. Capoeira and Afro-Brazilian dance are both native to Salvador da Bahia and come from local Afro-Brazilian communities, both being art-forms at the core of these communities. Aside from being excellent sports for physical condition, they are also celebrations of Afro-Brazilian traditions and Black pride. Self-esteem, historical knowledge and spiritual connection are important tools these artforms offer, which makes them become arts of healing and resistance.

Every Friday night a **Cineclub** is organized. In the main room, chairs are organized and a film is projected. Everyone is welcome and the entrance is free. The film nights play an important role in the local community. It can be a first cinematic experience for some, as commercial cinemas can be quite expensive and usually located outside of living areas in places like shopping centers. After the film a conversation or debate is organised, which gives the opportunity to reflect on certain themes and exchange ideas around the subject. Generally, the films are selected by Pietro, who owns a very big DVD-library. Every month a new topic is chosen, for every topic there are four films to watch and to discuss.

Theatre workshops are organised on a more irregular base, as this depends much on finding the right coach for a project. Most of the projects are led by volunteer Meg Boaventura with the artistic supervision of Pietro Gallina.

Other activities that are organised are: expositions of visual arts (graffitti, painting, film, video and photography), flea markets, music concerts, seminars, workshops, lectures, conferences, book releases, exchange projects between professors, students and artists from abroad and from Salvador.

The library

A people that doesn't read and doesn't study and remain ignorant will always be dominated, humiliated, submissive to the owners of politics and economics.
-Pietro Gallina

ICBIE has its own library, called the 'Leonardo da Vinci International Library'. The library is filled with books, CD's, LP's and DVD's. It's collection contains works in Portuguese,

Italian, English, French, German and Spanish. The library covers a variety of works going from sheet music to encyclopedias, history, politics, philosophy, etc. The library is open to public, but with restricted opening hours, or by appointment. The main objective is to create a cultural knowledge centre in the Cidade Baixa - an area with a lack of sponsoring and stimulation in reading (ICBIE, 2018). Currently (2019), there are three volunteers working in the library, organising and cataloging the space. As a small side project the library has put an open cupboard of books at the front of ICBIE, interested readers can take out a book to read and everyone is welcome to put old books in the cupboard.

MEmories of the PEinsinsula (ME.PE) is a small museum, an exposition room, located inside the ICBIE center with the aim to expose historical photographs, stories and objects from the Itapagipe Peninsula. Its history brings together religious zeal, fishing, craftsmanship, buildings from colonial times, popular festivities, soccer and rowing clubs. It was born out of the personal research of Pietro Gallina, but later on it opened up to community participation; making it part of a strategy to strengthen the cohesion in the neighbourhood using the communities' tradition - to sit on the doorsteps of the house in the late afternoon and evening, and share memories with the neighbours - materializing and visualizing stories from the oral tradition (ICBIE, 2018). In Pietro's words:

I think that it is very important for our community to pay attention to this patrimony, seeing as its versatility permits it to be used by a broad public, whether for serious research or for casual tourists who wish to see a deeper, quality view of our culture. The inhabitants, the principal protagonists of this realization, have the opportunity to discuss their stories, starting with their own memories, and so, beyond the permanent exposition, we wish to promote a series of cultural activities, to reinforce this interaction. - Pietro Gallina (ICBIE, 2018)

4.2. HISTORY

To know where we're going, we need to know where we come from. ICBIE's history determines its foundations and its building blocks and with all the changes that occurred throughout the years, it's still the founders who lead the organisation and their vision is strongly imprinted in the daily operation of ICBIE.

ICBIE was founded by Pietro Gallina when he inherited the paintings of his late Italian friend Ele D'Artagnan and exposed them in New York, as the painter's last wish was that they'd be exhibited anywhere but in Italy. The exposition was a great success and Pietro decided to use the earned capital to realize a common dream they had: buying a property in Salvador da Bahia (ICBIE, 2018).

Together with his wife Marlene Rosa de Souza, Roy Zimmerman and a group of professors and artists from different continents, Pietro created the cultural centre and community school in the building he purchased. Their choice for Ribeira came out of a strong love for this unjustly forgotten neighbourhood, located in the margins of the city far away from the city centre where poverty and crime is hidden behind the facade of investment in modern apartment-buildings for the more privileged (ICBIE, 2018).

4.3. VISION AND MISSION

A strong vision and mission are crucial to any organisation. In the context of my dissertation, my research question challenges the vision of ICBIE by asking how

volunteering is contributing to the personal and professional development of the volunteers. ICBIE's vision and mission as described on their website:

Vision

To empower disadvantaged youth in the Cidade Baixa by providing education and an artistic environment with the aim to obtain meaningful employment to escape the vicious circle of violence, ignorance and poverty (ICBIE, 2018).

The vision of ICBIE talks about the living circumstances of youth in the Cidade Baixa, which are confronted with the possibility of entering the vicious cycle of violence, ignorance and poverty, that is present in their surrounding. The research question in this study has the intent to question this cycle and give the youth the opportunity to describe how they see their own realities and challenges. The research question also tries to find an answer to how ICBIE exactly helps them overcome these realities, if they succeed, and if so, how.

Mission

ICBIE describes on their website, their mission as the following:

To provide educational and cultural resources for the local community of Salvador, the Institute of Culture Brazil Italy Europe focuses upon the following initiatives: (ICBIE, 2018).

It then goes on to list a long list of activities organized by ICBIE.

In the terminology I have learned about non-profit organisations, I would describe the above as ICBIE's strategy, as they describe how they want to reach their goals. I would use a text they wrote on their 'history'-page as their 'mission'. It's the following text:

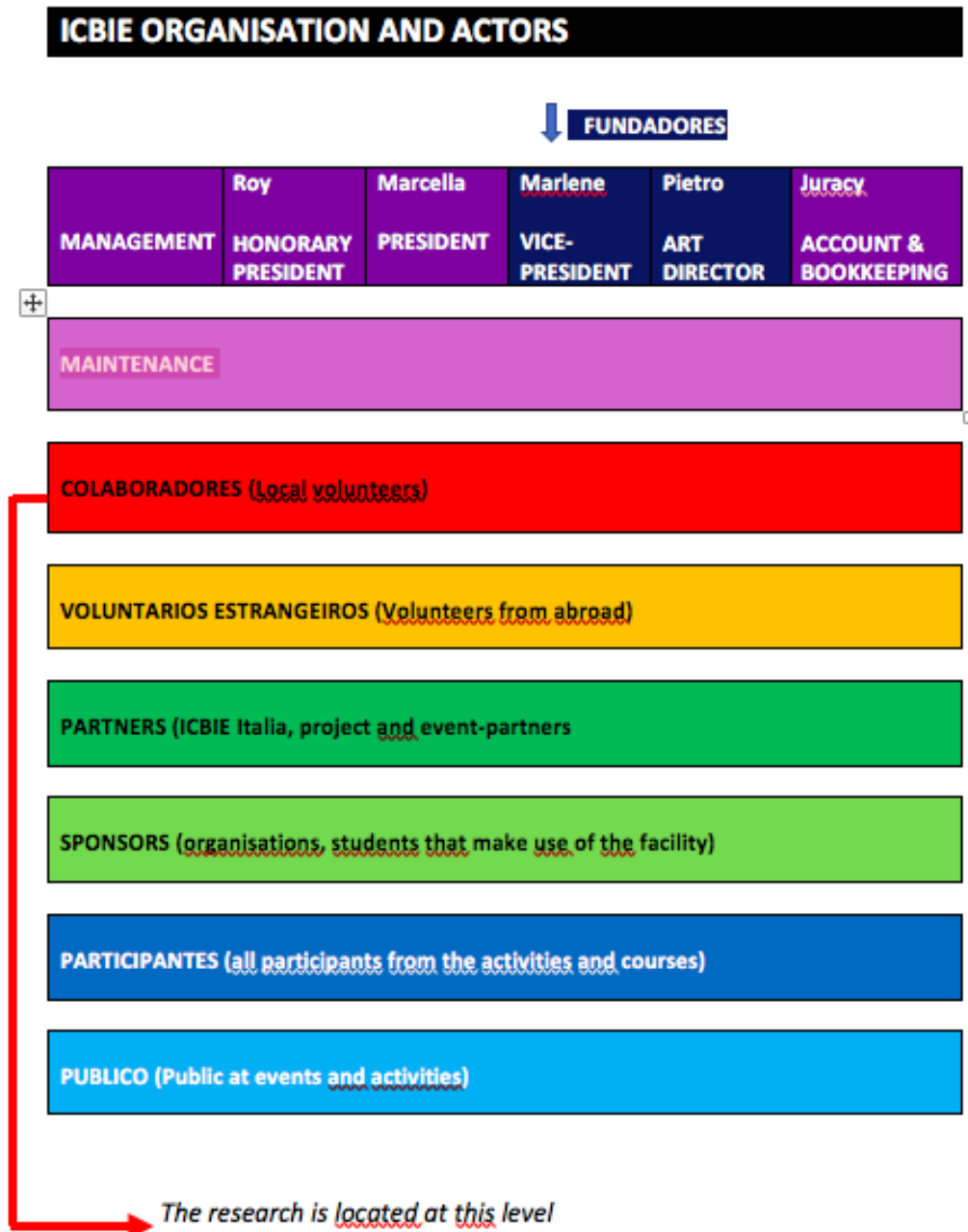
The Institute was planned as not only a seat of formal instruction, but as a place of intercultural exchange, to become point of reference in the community (and primarily for its young people). This exchange is to be understood as a cultural dialog between Europe, North America and South America. As a meeting place for people coming from divergent social backgrounds, working together within the ICBIE community, sharing their talents and contributing to cultural development, the Institute aims to form professional skills, providing hope and work prospects that can help its students attain a respectable place in modern society at a time when Brazil is experiencing rapid economic growth (ICBIE, 2018).

Seven elements of the mission

In the above text I recognize seven different elements, namely:

- A place of intercultural exchange
- A meeting place
- A place of cooperation
- A place of developing and exposing talents
- A place of cultural development
- A place to form professional skills
- A place of hope

4.4. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



4.5. PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

To give an idea of all the possibilities at ICBIE, I will briefly describe the physical structure in this paragraph.

ICBIE has a multi-purpose room; which is an open space with possibilities to organize projections, a language classroom with a Blackboard, a computer, chairs, tables and

didactic material. On the other side of the building you can find the Leonardo da Vinci Library, a reading room, an exposition hall with a piano and a wooden floor that is also suitable for dance classes and other physical arts (ICBIE, 2019). On the backside of the building there is a court, a sleeping area with different rooms, a big kitchen and a storage place for canoes (fieldnotes, 2019)

4.6. PARTNERS AND FUNDINGS

ICBIE uses a mix of fundings to sustain the organisation, the different sources of income change throughout the years and depend a lot on the different projects organized. The main sources of funding are: 100 paintings donated by Ele D'Artagnan for sale at the KS ART Gallery in New York, contributions by Brazilian and foreign businesses, private donations, dues from members, project financing by International public entities, banks and foundations and project financing by Brazilian banks and public entities. Another small source of income are the fees paid for library services and from students following classes. (ICBIE, 2019).

ICBIE has a partner organisation in Italy, called 'ICBIE Italia'.

4.7. THE PROBLEM OF FUNDINGS AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Even though they wish to remain as independent as possible by looking for mixed sources of funding, ICBIE applies for government funding for their projects. The unfortunate reality is that it is really difficult to get government support for cultural projects in Salvador; it's a complicated bureaucratic system that demands a high level of file knowledge and a lot of patience waiting for replies (fieldnotes, 2019). The extreme-right political discourse that has gained amplitude during the last years is not in favor of supporting the arts or any type of project that emancipates the people. This makes it all the more challenging to access a form of funding that is sustainable and predictable.

ICBIE's funding depends a lot on donations and thus the charity of the people and organisations that want to support them. The lack of financial stability therefore makes it very difficult for them to hire personnel on a steady basis. To create a steady flow of income using a mix of different funds, a lot of efforts need to be made with preferably one person to take this work into account. Because there is no steady flow of income to pay a person for this job, it becomes a vicious cycle of - not having the money to pay someone - and - not having someone to generate the money -. This vicious cycle is visible throughout the organization: to organise events, money is needed, but to gain money, events need to be organized (fieldnotes, 2019).

4.8. VOLUNTEERS AT ICBIE

ICBIE could never be what it is without its volunteers. They are the heartbeat of the organisation and take up a range of responsibilities that are primordial to its functioning. We can distinct two types of volunteers at ICBIE: the local volunteers and volunteers from abroad.

The local volunteers are the subject of my research, they are young people between the age of 18 and 25 and all live on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador. They take up a vast amount of responsibilities and are present in the daily operation of ICBIE. Together with Marlene and Pietro they form the pillars of ICBIE. They are a group of approximately nine fixed people, with some changes throughout the years because of people coming

and going depending on their studies, work, travel or family situation. They cooperate with ICBIE on a voluntary basis, without the use of signed contracts. The communication and organisation happens spontaneously. Marlene and Pietro like to call this group of volunteers 'colaboradores', which can be translated to 'cooperators', whereas 'voluntarios' is the word they use for the volunteers from abroad. For the practicality of my thesis I will keep using the word volunteers, but I will specify when talking about volunteers from abroad.

Volunteers from abroad come in on an irregular basis. Many of them come from Italy, as ICBIE has a partner organisation there, but there are people coming in from different countries as well. Most of them come to teach a language course, usually Italian or English, but there are other functions volunteers can apply for like artistic and sportive activities. Usually, just as with the local volunteers, this is all organized in a spontaneous and organic way. In my interviews with the staff and the volunteers, all said that ICBIE doesn't actually screen or selects their volunteers from abroad, they welcome everyone that wants to join their team, leading to positive and negative experiences. On the contrary, their website has an elaborate statement of what is expected from the volunteer and states that ICBIE does screen them. This statement gives an interesting insight into what it is to be coming into ICBIE to volunteer. The tone in which the statement is written gives an insight into the importance ICBIE attaches to its mission.

The Institute of Culture Brazil Italy Europe relies upon its volunteers, and they help in every aspect of our work. Many volunteers, through their commitment and hard work, have succeeded in developing deep personal bonds that have sustained us through thick and thin. Others have been less effective, shirking their duties and behaving in a way that is not compatible with the spirit and the mission of the ICBIE. With all the important work that we have to do, it is clear that we need the right people. If you are looking for an exotic place to relax, or are planning an egotistical search to find yourself, or are trying to escape the boredom of the modern world, please look somewhere else. We need volunteers who are highly motivated and generous with their time and effort: people who have something important to share with our community, not people who think that a bit of volunteer work will permit them to enjoy a longer holiday at a lower price. All volunteers are screened prior to engagement and monitored during their term in residence.

Each volunteer will be expected to take on an allotted project that will be agreed upon in advance, based upon your objectives, on your planned activities, on your work schedule and on the amount of time you plan to stay. Your intellectual or administrative work does not exempt you from more humble tasks, such as cleaning your room, the kitchen and your workplace. Volunteers are expected to take full responsibility for their project and will be expected to periodically report on their progress to their supervisor. It is essential that our volunteers help us in our work, not create more problems. We expect you to make some kind of material contribution: if you are short of money, bring us your old laptop, or teaching materials, or something else that would be useful. We can offer you very inexpensive accommodation, paying only a nominal fee for maintenance, utilities, services and taxes: even if you are a poor student, we can't afford to pay for your presence. Our limited funds are entirely dedicated to helping the local community and supporting the Institute's growth.

We prefer volunteers with experience and skills specific to our mission: education, languages, fine arts, computer technology and community-based social work. We look for dynamic people who will inspire our students, providing an example that will show them a path to a better life. In return for your efforts, our vibrant community will overwhelm you with warmth, enthusiasm, and friendship (ICBIE, 2019).

This statement is meant to function as a filter, because potential volunteers will read it and decide for themselves if they fit the profile. After that, everyone is welcome.

I consider ICBIÉ's work a form of anti-oppression work, that has direct effects on the lives of people that are being oppressed in different ways, and even has positive effects among the more privileged students. In the next chapter I will analyze a definition of anti-oppression work.

4.9. ANTI-OPPRESSION WORK

The Anti-Violence projects describes the concept as:

Anti-Oppression work seeks to recognize the oppression that exists in our society and attempts to mitigate its effects and eventually equalize the power imbalance in our communities (Anti-Violence Project, n.d.).

This definition is built upon 3 factors:

1. Recognizing oppression

Before fighting oppression it is of great importance to understand and recognize it. Those who suffer oppression usually know. They might not always have the words to explain in what ways they are being oppressed, but oppression is felt. It is the sense of injustice that a person carries around based on their life-experiences.

Those who don't suffer oppression, usually don't know, and have to learn about oppression through activities they undertake, conversations they have and all other ways a person can learn about social injustice.

Understanding oppression means that we can recognize it when we see it, it means that we can distinguish it from discrimination, and that we can name it. Another note is that the word 'recognizing', has a double sense in this context; meaning we can see oppression when it is presented to us (we see it) and, that we give a value, a recognition to that suffering, we don't shuffle it away as an unimportant matter.

This process is sometimes called *conscientização (Paulo Freire), conscientization or critical consciousness:*

It focuses on achieving an in-depth understanding of the world, allowing for the perception and exposure of social and political contradictions. Critical consciousness also includes taking action against the oppressive elements in one's life that are illuminated by that understanding (Mustakova-Possardt, 2003)

which leads us to the second element of the definition:

2. Mitigating the effects of oppression

Oppression is made visible through the effects it has on the people it targets. Women are oppressed and it is visible through how their disproportionately fall a victim to domestic violence. A woman's shelter that helps women escape their situation and gives them the tools to start a new life without their abusive partner, is an example of how the effects of oppression are mitigated. However this doesn't necessarily have to be done in a way that directly impacts the way a person or community is oppressed.

Trough indirect work positive effects can be obtained on the long term. An example: If ICBIÉ engages in language-learning and creates an Italian course, and this language course has given a young Black man more confidence to speak Italian - a confidence that might have been broken down by not ever seeing another Black man on television

speaking another language than his native tongue Portuguese, by not ever having had a Black teacher, and so on - and thanks to that new built up confidence he gathers the courage to go and study Roman languages at the university, than we also speak about mitigating the effects of oppression. The activity of ICBIE was not specifically targeted at discussing racism, but the activity helped alleviate the oppression experienced by a young Black man.

3. Equalizing the power imbalance in communities

Equalizing the power imbalance in communities is in most cases a long-term goal, that can only be achieved through a collective, and not merely an individual, process of conscientization, through concrete and effective action on mitigating the effects of oppression and on working towards a form of collective consciousness.

When an organisation works on one or multiple aspects of this definition, we can say that it is engaging in a form of anti-oppression work. It is with this knowledge that I will look at ICBIE, an organisation that is not targeting singular forms of oppression, but it organizing activities, welcoming everyone, with the knowledge and consciousness that bringing together all these different people from different background creates an uplifting environment. In that way ICBIE is a sort of mini-society, where differences are welcomed, and people are seen as who they are, embracing all of the elements that make them into that person.

With this paragraph I conclude my literature study. In the next chapter I will explain the methodology I used to conduct this research.

5. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I will discuss how my research came about, what are my research questions and the methods I used: interviews, a survey and participatory observation. I will describe some of the challenges I have encountered and how my personality and background have influenced this research. Then, there is a chapter about ethics, and some of the questions and challenges I came across regarding the ethical framework. To finish I will describe how I analyzed the data I have collected.

5.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the context of my bachelor's thesis the objective was to fulfil a 5-month internship in Salvador, Brazil. This would give enough time to get to know the daily functioning of an organisation and conduct a decent research in a context that would become a little bit more familiar day by day. Due to different circumstances I wasn't able to fulfil this internship in one organisation. I did eventually have the chance to visit ICBIE in the last month of my stay and spend some time there. Since the project interested me a lot, I decided to conduct my research there, knowing that this would be at a lot smaller scale, in an extremely short time-frame and with less opportunity to have an in-depth experience and understanding of the place.

I based my initial research topic on a need that was expressed by Marlene during a long conversation I had with her. She pointed me out in the direction of understanding the dynamics between volunteers and their dynamic with the organisation and how those can be improved. In March 2019 I conducted semi-structured interviews based on the research question "*How can ICBIE improve the involvement of volunteers in their organisation?*". Knowing there would be a possibility that my research question would change, I included a lot of open question about their experience in ICBIE in general.

After conducting an interview with Pietro, Marlene and a few volunteers at ICBIE I soon found out that there was actually no problem with the involvement of volunteers, and that it would be a waste of their time to research this topic. I continued my interviews with the same list of questions but focused more on what my interviewees would bring to the table about ICBIE. I slowly began to understand that they all felt a great need to express how ICBIE had a very important impact on their life and that they all believe in the power and importance of such organisations. The following research question grew out of that need:

How does volunteering at ICBIE contribute to the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

With a division of two sub-questions :

A. What are the obstacles; related to structural mechanisms of oppression based on class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion; in the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

B. How does volunteering at ICBIE help to overcome these obstacles?

I believe answering these questions could lead to a greater understanding on the importance of places like ICBIE, especially in the light of an extreme right government that doesn't value and support similar initiatives. The answers to this research could be the base of discussion and re-evaluation within ICBIE, preparation lecture for new volunteers, and could be a support-material for fundraising.

I reflected on some other reasons how this research could have a positive impact. While responding to interviews and surveys, respondents could gain insight into their own reality if for example they encounter a question they haven't given much thought before. It is also a new opportunity to train the capacity of verbalizing one's own feelings, opinions and thoughts. Discussing certain themes as a group can also strengthen the feeling of community and collective consciousness.

The initial objective was to finish the dissertation in June of 2019, but due to certain events in my life I decided to report my thesis deadline to 2020. I went back to Salvador and planned another visit at ICBIE but unfortunately this didn't go through due to the global Covid-19 pandemic that obliged me to go back to Belgium.

5.2 . METHODS

As stated before, I started my research based on a different research question. Because I was still hesitant of this research question and I needed to know more about ICBIE, I decided to conduct my research through interviews, this way I could have open questions and let myself be guided by what the interviewees expressed as important for them. Based on the first few interviews I decided to change my research questions and noticed that my interviews were still valuable for my new research question. To have a better support to answer the first subquestion I decided in a second phase to conduct a survey with respondents from the Cidade Baixa. The answers from the interviews were complemented by personal observations.

5.2.1. INTERVIEWS

Between the 20th and 29th of March 2019 I interviewed 6 volunteers and 3 members of staff: Marlene, Pietro and Marcella. The interviews were between 20 minutes and 1,5 hours long and were all conducted at ICBIE. I decided to go with this qualitative method of research through semi-structured interviews. I conducted two different interviews: one set of questions was created for the three staff-members, and another set of questions for the six main volunteers of ICBIE. These are the nine people that are most involved with ICBIE, and therefore represent the core of the organisation.

I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews, allowing space for dialogue, questions and to elaborate on the topics that the interviewees deemed necessary to talk about. My objective was not only to find answers to my interview questions, but also to discover what kind of topics they find important to talk about, listen to their experiences; and last but not least, use these moments to create a bond.

During the interviews there were a few moments where I needed to ask the translation of a word. Although I believe this wasn't often enough to really speak of a language-barrier or disturbance. I believe the interviewees had the opportunity to speak in the way they felt comfortable to, and didn't have to make a particular effort to adapt their language. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed in Portuguese.

The first set of 14 interview questions was created for the volunteers of ICBIE and is primarily focused on their relationship and experiences with, and future prospects of ICBIE. The interview questions cover a wide range of subjects, but all closely linked to their own personal experiences and views. This allows the volunteers to reflect on their own functioning within ICBIE and their past, present and future involvement within the organisation.

The second set of interview questions was created for the ICBIE-staff and consist of 15 questions. The focus of this interview was on their own experiences with ICBIE, their

views on and experiences with the current volunteers and some questions that are relevant for the context description of ICBIE.

After changing my research questions, a few questions weren't that relevant anymore, for example: "If more people would be involved in ICBIE, what kind of people would you want them to be?". However, they've helped me gain insight into the organisation culture, dynamics and personal opinions of its members.

In the end I didn't discuss the results of the interviews with the three members of staff, primarily due to a lack of time. However many of the things they discussed were or in the same line as the other interviewees, or not relevant to my current research question.

In conclusion, I used the interviews of my original research question to answer the second subquestion of my new research questions.

Both lists of questions can be found in appendix 2.

5.2.2. SURVEY

When I continued the research in 2020 I decided to conduct a survey to have a broader view on obstacles experienced by young adults in the Cidade Baixa. The survey-questions were based on different themes that were brought up during my interviews in 2019, as well as on news and social media, and during many conversations with Soteropolitanos (citizens of Salvador) and other Brazilians during my two stays. It's a series of mainly multiple choice questions and a few open questions. They will be discussed one by one in the chapter 'The obstacles related to structural mechanisms of oppression' (6.1.). The aim of the survey is thus to answer the first sub question of my research questions.

5.2.3. PARTICIPATORY OBSERVATION

The last and most organic way of gaining information was through observations and informal conversations with members and visitors of ICBIE. To compensate for the lack of time I could spend with them in the physical space of ICBIE I also joined the a whatsapp group where I could keep up to date with activities and communicate with them.

As I stated a few times before, I only had one month to conduct a research at ICBIE. The moments of contact with the group were therefore quite limited. This pushed me to be extremely alert at every encounter with the group and really spend time to listen. Because creating a connection with the members of the group is also a very important part of a participatory research it was necessary to find a balance between observing from the outside and be actively involved and create a bond with the members of the group.

Speaking Portuguese and having lived in Salvador were primordial aspects of my research. Especially the time I lived in Ribeira (the neighbourhood of ICBIE), where I moved to during the time I started my research. But also the time I spent in other neighbourhoods like Vila Brandão, Imbuí, Plataforma, Tancredo Neves and Rio Vermelho, economically rich and poor neighbourhoods, that gave me the chance to meet Brazilians from different socio-economic situations and from different walks of life, and eventually helped me to understand how Brazilians society is organized.

I would also like to stress (and I can't stress it enough) the importance of social media platforms during my research, especially when it comes to context-description and understanding of Brazilian social realities. I've learned a tremendous amount of things

through activists and channels (Djamila Ribeiro, Spartakus Santhiago, Lazaro Ramos, Midia Ninja, Quebrando o tabu, Alma Preta Jornalismo,..) who use social media as an approachable mean to communicate important truths and opinions about Brazil's social questions.

5.3. CHALLENGES IN RESEARCH

While conducting my research I had to face a few challenges. Due to the circumstances of my internship I was only able to spend one month with the volunteers at ICBIE. During this month I only saw them a few times, because it was the time of the year that only a few activities are being organized. It is important to note that a lot of organisations close their doors during the summer months in Salvador, due to Christmas, summer holidays and Carnaval that follow each other rapidly and are celebrated vividly. This brought some insecurities along the way. How will I be able to conduct a participatory research at a distance? Is it okay for me to write about the reality and daily life of people I barely know, knowing that my insight is limited, and my perspective Eurocentric?

I tried to make up for the lack of time by communicating online with the volunteers and try to follow a bit of their daily lives and occupations through the blog on their website and social media. I read everything there is to read about ICBIE, and managed to convince my university in Belgium (UCLL) to organise new internships in the cultural centre. This way, maybe my passage at ICBIE would be more valuable for them as well, as they would have the opportunity to potentially meet an interesting new volunteer. This school year a new student of my school did a 5-month internship at ICBIE.

Conducting a research with a changing research question was also a big challenge, as many times I had to restart and completely re-organise everything. Basically, I had to retrieve information about overcoming obstacles of oppression, from interviews that were created with the intention to answer how volunteers can be more involved in ICBIE. This was very difficult. Results and literature also had to be written simultaneously, which for me was not an ideal process.

An additional challenge, and this one was more in the personal realm, was the global pandemic, and global uprising against racial oppression. Both events that had a strong impact on my mental health.

5.4. PERSONAL INFLUENCE ON RESEARCH

Conducting a participatory research at a distance is challenging because it doesn't allow the variety of emotions and body language used in face-to-face contact. It complicates the process of feedback, and doesn't allow much observation. I tried my best to resolve this problem by asking feedback and opinions of the volunteers through e-mail and WhatsApp.

A second challenge presented itself when I went back to Brazil in 2020. I organized to visit ICBIE in March, when daily activities would slowly start again, this would've been a great opportunity to make new observations and have conversations about everything that happened in the last year. Unfortunately I was obliged to end my stay sooner than expected due to the outbreak of Covid-19, which made my visit impossible.

In conducting this research it is safe to say that I was influenced by my background as a social worker. How our environment shapes us and how social inequality operates in ways that determines which opportunities and privileges we have is something that interests me. A determination to take this work seriously has been growing inside of me

over the past few years. To understand mechanisms of oppression and bring awareness to them is a personal goal of mine, even if this just means having short conversations about it, passing on a little piece of knowledge that was passed on to me, and so on. I've been studying a bit of anti-racist and feminist work and how well-hidden and strongly embedded it is in our society, institutions and personal relationships. In my conversations with many Brazilians, it is clear to see that there is a need for discussion on these subjects, and I'm wholeheartedly grabbing the opportunity to use this opportunity to do so.

I strongly believe in the deconstruction of power-mechanism by art-education and volunteering, since these two things have been a catalizator in my personal trajectory. I don't know a single soul that has been immersed in art and wasn't profoundly changed by it. Creative energy is transformative, just as teamwork and working on a common goal brings trust, confidence and cohesion in a group. Throughout my life as a dancer, actress and social worker it's been my experience that working in a group facilitates the breaking of taboos, opens up paths to learning and brings awareness. I personally believe in the potential of ICBIE, and therefore encourage the participants to tell the story of their experiences and the personal transformations they went through.

This research isn't only build on the personal interest I have in the topics that are discussed, it is also immersed with observations and reflections I made throughout the time I lived in Salvador, and with insights from all the people I have met and had the privilege to listen to.

This research question could've been approached by a more psychological standpoint, focussing on personal barriers, but this would lead me to too specific case-studies that lack overview and are impossible to achieve in such a short time-frame. It would also bring me too far out of my own field of knowledge, hence why I focused on mechanisms of oppression discussed in Sociology.

5.5. ETHICAL FRAMEWORK, QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

From an ethical point of view, there are definitely some questions I ask myself regarding this thesis. I've experienced quite some discomforts at a few stages of the process and would like to discuss them briefly as to clarify how these could have influenced my research-process.

First of all I entered in contact with ICBIE, a month prior to leaving the country. At this stage I still didn't find a place to continue my internship, after leaving my original internship organization, where I felt like it wasn't a great match with my competences and interests. ICBIE accepted my presence, but explained to me that I wouldn't be able to do a one-month internship. This would cost them too much time and energy to explain everything to me, knowing that I would be leaving soon. It was also a very quiet month, with just a very few activities planned. I was, however, welcome to conduct my research. I conducted my interviews in the best way I possibly could, trying to ask the right questions, with the right posture and attitude. My background in social work helped me with this. However, I felt that it was strange in a way to ask personal questions to people that I didn't have the chance to get to know well, in an organization that was still very new to me.

Until the very end of my research process I felt an amount of discomfort asking them for opinions, insights and feedback, not knowing whether this was bothering them or not. When you have the opportunity to get to know people better, this is easier to read. Quite some times, I felt like in their eyes I might be yet another intrusive person from Europe trying to question their reality from a eurocentric view, without having spent time in the organization, helping to build it up. Although their feedbacks were almost always

positive, and in my survey I received a lot of feedback like 'great research', Marlene's words kept ringing in my mind, that volunteers always come, take what they need for their research and school assignments and then leave (interview, Marlene). Therefore it was immensely important for me to clarify what my intent is with this research, and why I'm doing it for. Not being able to answer this question properly was one of the main reasons I decided to report my work to 2020. I feel more confident now, knowing that my research isn't harmful, and that in fact, it could be of interest for ICBIE. In an ideal situation, I would've loved to had the opportunity to use research methods that involve face-to-face participation in group like: brainstorming, group-reflexion and creative research methods.

Another challenge for me was to know that this dissertation would be read by different people, and that therefore it was important to give a clear context, as to not lose anyone on the way. It is written in an a way that is acceptable for academics, using jargon, and validating sources of knowledge that are accepted in the academic field. A field that was built from a eurocentric tradition, often not validating sources of knowledge used by marginalized and oppressed groups.

Even though I don't doubt the advantages this academic method has, it is also limiting other ways of conducting and communicating experiences, and therefore might miss the opportunity to share this knowledge with people that might benefit from hearing it. Especially since this thesis is written in English and is therefore accessible only to those who speak the language with great fluency. It is written with and about people of Salvador, but their access to it, is limited because of these barriers. Instead it is directed to the people with access to this research (UCLL, family, friends,..), and the people that will read this research and evaluate my competences based on this (jury, teachers). I believe that, whether it be consciously or not, this can have influence on the way I write it. During the process I constantly remind myself why I'm writing this, and who I'm writing this for.

5.6. DATA ANALYSIS

The **results of the survey** will be discussed in the next chapter in the objective to answer the first sub question of my research:

What are the obstacles; related to structural mechanisms of oppression based on class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion; in the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

Every question of the survey will be discussed one by one, as they were already arranged thematically. The list of themes practically follows the same order of themes I discussed in my literature study.

I will always state the question and the possible responses the respondents had. In diagrams and percentages I will show how the respondents replied to the questions, and link those responses to certain concepts and data from my literature study.

The **results of the interviews** will be discussed in the chapter after that and will try to answer the second sub question of my research:

How does volunteering at ICBIE help to overcome these obstacles?

The questions of the interviews will not be discussed separately but will follow a list of themes I grouped together based on the answers of the questions, and the following concepts from my literature study: the 7 functions of ICBIE's mission, the 9

developmental tasks of young adults described by Havighurst and the 3 different types of benefits of volunteering.

6. THE CONTRIBUTION OF ICBIE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG ADULTS IN THE LIGHT OF OPPRESSION

In this chapter I will discuss the obstacles related to the structural mechanism of oppression experienced by young adults from the Cidade Baixa, following the survey I conducted in 2020. I will then discuss the contribution of ICBIE in the personal and professional development of young adults, following the interviews I conducted in 2019.

6.1. THE OBSTACLES RELATED TO STRUCTURAL MECHANISMS OF OPPRESSION

Survey questions

The objective of this survey is to map out the obstacles in the personal and professional development of young adults. The focus is on obstacles that are there because of the mechanisms of oppression mentioned in my literature study (classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious discrimination) and that are specific to the context of the Itapagipe Peninsula/Cidade Baixa in Salvador, Brazil.

The questions were based on the literature study I conducted that was inspired by conversations I had with Soteropolitanos and members of ICBIE.

Survey results

This survey had a low-response rate with only 27 people participating. This means that the results aren't representative for the whole Cidade Baixa (with an estimate of 35.309 young people, a good sample size would have been around 380 respondents). However this sample is significant for examining the reality of youngsters at ICBIE because it mainly represents the volunteers and the young people surrounding the volunteers of ICBIE. Especially the answers to the open questions at the end of the survey are valuable as these opinions reflect the personal experiences of 27 different young adults of the Cidade Baixa, who are after all the experts of their own realities.

Because of the small number of respondents, the survey also lacks of diversity. None of the respondents were Indigenous, no White males participated as well as no one that identifies as transgender. These groups are therefore not represented at all in this survey.

Basic information

I will first describe some basic information like the region where the respondents live, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender conformity, racial identity, religion and level of education.

Region

All respondents of the survey were habitants of the Cidade Baixa, as this was a condition for participation. I however didn't ask from which specific neighbourhood they were, which could've given me some relevant insights; as some living conditions differ from neighbourhood to neighbourhood within the Cidade Baixa.

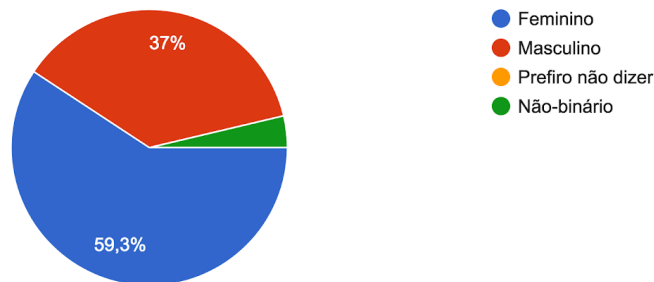
Age

All respondents of the survey were between 18 and 30 years old, as this was a condition for participating in the survey.

Gender

Qual é seu genero?

27 antwoorden



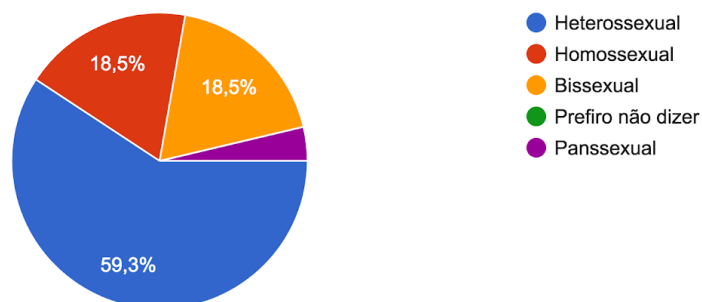
For this question I gave the respondents the possibility to respond 'male', 'female' or 'prefer not to answer'. I also left one blank spot, if someone wanted to self-label their own gender.

37% of respondents (10) identified as male, 59,3% as female (16) and 3,7% (1) as non-binary (non-binary is a spectrum of gender identities that don't necessarily conform to the binary 'male-female'). This means that women are overrepresented in this study. For most questions I will discuss the results separated into gender.

Sexual orientation

Como você descreveria sua orientação sexual?

27 antwoorden



For this question the possibilities to respond were 'heterosexual', 'homosexual', 'bisexual' or 'prefer not to say', again I left a blank space for people who'd rather self-label their sexual identity.

59,3% of respondents (16) identified as heterosexual, whereas 18,5% (5) identified as bisexual, another 18,5% (5) as homosexual and 1 person self-labeled as pansexual. Wikipedia cites Marshall Cavendish's book 'Sex and society':

Pansexuality is sexual, romantic or emotional attraction towards people regardless of their sex or gender identity. Pansexual people may refer to themselves as gender-blind, asserting that gender and sex are not determining factors in their romantic or sexual attraction to others.

This means that people of different sexual orientations are represented in this study, however the majority is heterosexual.

Gender conformity

Every person except one considers itself cisgender. Out of the first question I retrieve that one person identifies as non-binary. However this person doesn't considers itself transgender. Transgender people are therefore not represented in this study.

Racial identity

Você se considera

27 antwoorden



For this question I used the categorization of racial identification used by most Brazilian organisations (like IBGE for example): "*Indígena, Amarelo, Pardo, Preto and Branco*". Here again I left a blank space, as I wanted to give people the chance to self-label, since sometimes people prefer to use different vocabulary or like to specify how they identify themselves.

48,1% of respondents identify as 'Preto' (13) and 29,6% as 'Pardo' (8), both categories that Brazilian organisations usually label under 'Negro' (77,7% or 21 in total) and that I have described as 'POC' throughout this thesis. Because no one in this survey identifies as 'Indígena' or 'Amarelo', the word 'POC' stands solely for 'Pardos' and 'Pretos' in this context.

18,5% identifies as White (5) and 1 person rather didn't identify with any racial identity, using the blank space to comment that "*distinctions shouldn't be made*". This is an example of *colorblindness* which I described in the chapter 'Racism'. This makes it impossible for me to process this person's data in relation to his or hers racial identity.

The same person also commented that 'Indígena' shouldn't be an option, because it refers to a culture and not a racial identity, that is here represented by colors. While, I completely understand this person's reflection I noticed that the Brazilian system of racial identification doesn't have a color-word for native people, and leaving this option out, would once again exclude them.

Beside the fact that Indigenous people are not represented at all, this distribution comes close to represent to the reality of Salvador where 80% of its people identifies as a POC. Racially, this survey is quite representative for Salvador.

Religion

"*What is your religion?*", was an open question I asked, as Salvador knows a great diversity of religions and I felt it would be better to give people the possibility to use their own words to describe their beliefs.

26% of respondents (7) identify as a followers of Christian beliefs (1 or 3,7% Christian, 1 or 3,7% as Evangelical, 5 or 18,5% as Catholic) and 22,2% (6) as non-religious.

Another 18,5% (5) are Spiritualists, 11,1% (3) are Buddhist and 7,4% (2) follow the Candomblé religion.

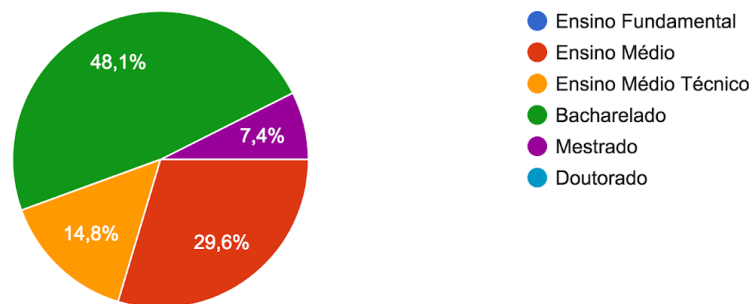
Compared to results from Bahia of the 2010 Censo of IBGE, the group of non-religious people is quite similar (22,2% in this survey compared to 17,64% in the Censo). However this survey shows a smaller representation of Christians (26% in this survey compared to 78,6% in the Censo), and a larger representation of Spiritists (18,5% in this survey compared to 1,1% in the Censo) and Asian religions (7,4% in this survey compared to 0% in the Censo). Adepts of Afro-Brazilian Religions (Candomblé) are also more represented in this survey (7,4%) compared to the Censo (0,3%).

This could mean that the low number of respondents, or the way I recruited people to respond has affected the way religion is represented in this survey compared to the reality of Bahia. Another consideration to be made is that the last Census was held in 2010 and was representative for the whole state of Bahia and not just the city of Salvador, where religious statistics might differ from rural areas of the state. In 10 years time, the people's relationship to religions can also change a lot.

Level of education

Qual é o seu grau de educação formal?

27 antwoorden



When asked for the level of education 48,1% (13) of respondents responded having finished a Bachelor's degree and 7,4% (2 respondents) have a Master's degree. 12 respondents (44,4%) finished high school (Ensino Medio) with 29,6% in general high school and 14,8% in technical high school.

Compared to the Brazilian average (21%), people with a Bachelor's or Master's degree (55,5% or 15 respondents) are overrepresented in this survey. This could be due to the small number of respondents, the possibility that people with a degree of higher education have more tendencies to participate in research, or because of the social network of the volunteers of ICBIE, whom I asked to share this survey.

When looking back on the answers of this question I realize I should've included the possibility to answer that the respondent is currently studying. From the group claiming to have finished high school, some might be in the process of getting a Bachelor's degree. Just as some claiming to have a Bachelor's degree might be in the process of getting a Master's and so on.

6.1.1. EDUCATION

The following data gives us insight into if and how the respondents were able to finance their education, if they had the privilege to be able to focus on their education and if the educational system provided them with teaching material that sparked their interest.

Financing of education

Para financiar a minha educação formal:

27 antwoorden



To question to how people were able to finance their studies had 3 different options to respond:

- my family financed my studies
- I had access to a scholarship
- my family didn't have the financial means, and I didn't have access to a scholarship

To that I also added a blank space for other possible situations.

33% of respondents (9) had their education financed by their own family, 14,8% (4) had access to a scholarship, 11,1% (3 respondents) worked while studying and 40,7% (11) claimed having no financial means and no scholarship to pay for school. This last group is the same group of people that answered in the previous question to finished high school, but didn't continue into higher education. If this financial reason was the (only) reason they didn't pursue a higher education, this would be an example of how *classism* withholds people of basic rights like education. This also means that the systems of racial quota and financial support that are in place in Brazil, are not sufficient to provide education for everyone. It would have been interesting to have included the option 'I don't/didn't want to pursue a higher education' to know for sure if these people have missed out on an opportunity they wanted to have.

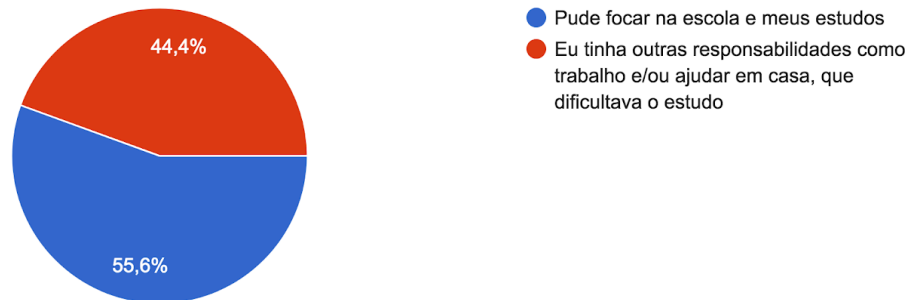
79% (11) of the respondents who claimed not having the financial means to start higher education were POC, which supports the idea that *racism* is intertwined with *classism* and that the need for bolsa's and quotas is real.

For the 11,1% of respondents that claimed to be working while studying it is important to note that working while studying is not an ideal situation, as it charges the student with double responsibilities and a very strict management of time (taking into account that for example, going to school or work in Salvador demands a lot of time in public transport, as the bus system isn't optimal and weather conditions like rain highly affect the possibility of leaving the house).

Focus on school work

Durante a escola

27 antwoorden



The questions whether students had the possibility to focus on school during their studies had two possible responses: 'I was able to focus on my studies' or 'I had other responsibilities like work or helping in the household that made studying more difficult'.

55,6% of respondents (15) claimed that focusing on school work was a possibility during the years of study, while 44,4% (12) claimed to have other responsibilities.

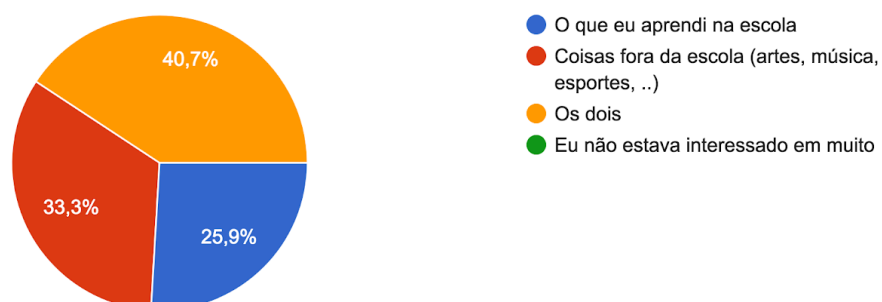
There was no significant difference between women and men, or between the different racial identities. It is however important to note that this question is subjective to how a person evaluates the amount of work that is too much for it to stand in the way of focussing on school. A person that has responded to be able to focus and school might have had the same amount of work in the household for example, but had a really good time-management which didn't make it a problem to do both successfully. This question, therefore does not necessarily dismantle inequalities between men and women, or people with different racial identities, but gives us a general idea of the workload of students and their study-life balance.

Important is that with almost half of respondents claiming not to be able to focus on schoolwork, it is clear that even though the school demands the same of all student, factors like the amount of work outside of school can highly impact the success rate of students.

Field of interest during school

Durante a escola, meu campo de interesse era

27 antwoorden



For the question of what were the fields of interest during school, respondents had five possible answers: 'what I learned in school', 'subjects outside of school (arts, music, sports)', 'both' or 'I wasn't interested in much'.

25,9% of respondents (7) claimed to be mainly interested in what they learned in school. While 33,3% was mainly interested in what was learned outside of school. 40,7% (or 11) which is the largest group claimed to be interested both in subjects from school and outside of school.

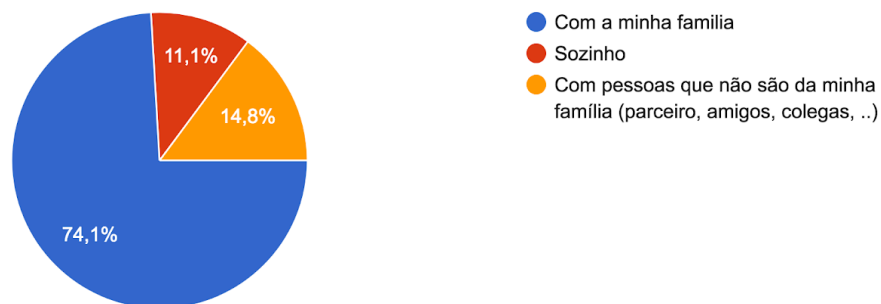
This means that 1 in 3 respondents was more interested in subject outside of school. Having those interests stimulated is very important in the development of a person, as a person's field of interest is not always met in the school-environment. This is a clear sign that recreative, sportive or artistic projects (like ICBIE) need more recognition and attention and deserve a more central place in people's lives.

6.1.2. LIVING SITUATION

The next few graphs will give us more insight on the living situation of the respondents.

Shared housing

Eu moro
27 antwoorden



To describe their current housing situation, respondents had three options: I live:

- with my family
- alone
- with other people that are not part of my family

74,1% of respondents (20) lives with family, 11,1 % (3 respondents) alone and 14,8% (4) with other people outside of the family like a partner, friends,... (4 respondents). Although this question doesn't specify who that family is (it could be parents but it could also be children or other members of the family), it does fall in line with the general *kangaroo-generation* tendency, that more young people stay in their familial household for a longer period of time.

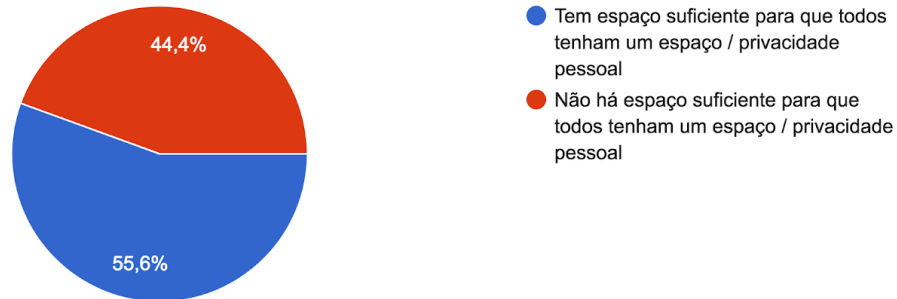
Living together with family can be interesting for solidarity reasons like sharing expenses and household responsibilities, social interaction and mutual care. Yet, when it isn't a choice and a young adult is obliged to stay because of its financial condition, it could be obstructive in the development of their autonomy and in their desired privacy. *Achieving autonomy, establishing a residence and managing a household* are all tasks described by Havighurst in his theory of the developmental tasks towards adulthood. Staying at home with family without looking for/having the opportunity to create an own household, could be impeding this process.

Interesting questions to follow up on this subject would be to ask more about how the current situation came about and how they would rate their satisfaction.

Privacy

A casa em que moro

27 antwoorden



When the possibility of having privacy in the household was questioned the respondents could respond: 'There is enough space in our home for everyone to have enough personal space/privacy', or 'There is not enough space in our home for everyone to have enough personal space/privacy'.

55,6% (15) of respondents claimed to have enough space in the house for everyone living in it to have privacy or personal space. 44,4 % of respondents (12) claimed not having this possibility.

This doesn't explain if this lack of privacy is considered a problem, but in case of needed privacy, 44,4% of respondents don't have this possibility. This could lead to a lack of space to develop something for one's own, described by Havighurst as *establishing identity*.

In the worse case scenario this could even lead to violence, as a person has no private space to express/recover from emotions, which can turn into frustration and aggression, described by Havighurst in his developmental tasks as *emotional stability*.

A lack of privacy is also not an ideal situation for studying, important in the achievement of academic success or a *establishing a career (Havighurst)*, for those of whom this is a purpose.

Rest and sleep, two important factors of physical and mental health, can be interrupted or disturbed when there is a lack of privacy or space.

Finding intimacy (Havighurst) or the development of intimate relationships and exploring sexuality can become a complicated process, especially for those who wish to explore or pursue romantic or sexual feelings outside of the *heterocisgender norms*. This can lead to feelings of frustration, repression and loneliness.

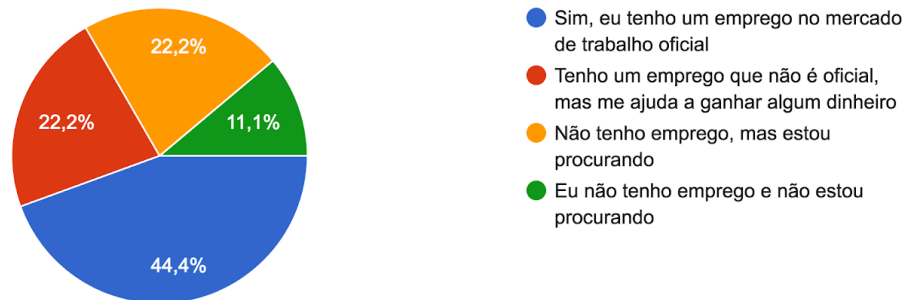
6.1.3. FINANCIAL SITUATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The next graphs show us the respondents current work situation, their evaluation on the difficulty of finding a job and how their household deals with the cost of living.

Work situation

Você trabalha?

27 antwoorden



When asked about the current work situation, four responses were possible:

- I have a job on the official labour market
- I have an unofficial job that helps me to earn some money
- I don't have a job, but I'm looking for one
- I don't have a job, and I'm not looking for one

66,6% of respondents (18) currently has a job, 44,4% (12) has a job on the official labour market and 22,2% (6) has a job that is unofficial, but provides for some type of income.

22,2% is looking for a job and 11,1% is unemployed and not looking for a job, this makes a number of 33,3% of respondents with no employment, almost 3 times as much as the national average of 12,33% (in 2018). It is possible that the people who are not looking for a job are still studying and have the financial support they need. It would've been interesting to have put this possibility of response in the survey.

All White respondents have a job, which could confirm the national numbers of lower unemployment for Whites which are a result of a *Capitalist* and *White supremacist* system.

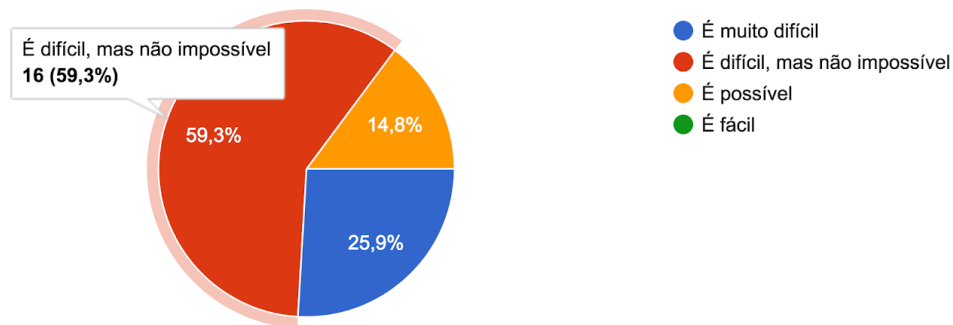
Of all 9 respondents without a job, 8 were female, and even though women are overrepresented in this survey, the balance remains unequal. This confirms the numbers of the country where only 56% of women have paid jobs compared to 78% of men, which is a result of a *Patriarchal system*. However, for both cases we can't be sure, as my survey didn't include the possibility that someone was not looking for a job because of educational reasons (finishing high school or higher education).

Not having a job reinforces the dependance on family members, which is not necessarily a bad thing, but stands (according to Havighurst) in the way of fulfilling the developmental tasks (*establishing a career* and *achieving autonomy*).

Finding a job

Encontrar um emprego

27 antwoorden



When asked about the process of finding a job there were 4 possible answers:

- It is very hard
- It is hard, but not impossible
- It is possible
- It is easy

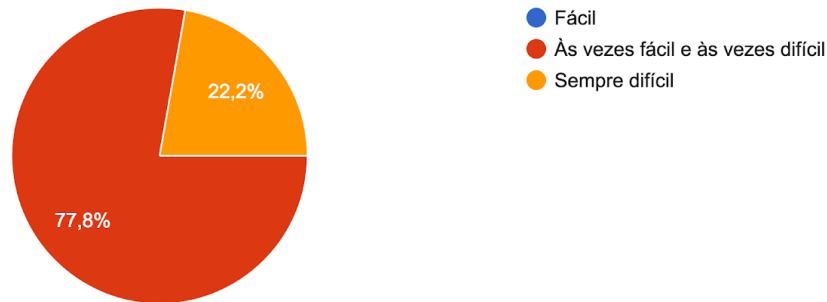
85,2% of respondents (23) expressed the feeling that finding a job is difficult, with 25,9% (7) saying it is very difficult. 14,8% of the respondents (4) were a bit more optimistic claiming 'it is possible'. 0% of respondents say it's easy.

This is a clear sign that finding work is perceived as something difficult in the Cidade Baixa, or at least not easy, as this is perceived by all respondents. It is a reality they all share. This difficult reality or negative outlook is a direct obstacle for *establishing a career (Havighurst)*. Finding employment is one of the elements in life that is strongly affected by systems of oppression such as *classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia* and *religious discrimination*. Living in an area where employment is difficult to find for everyone means it's even harder for people who are discriminated against. Not only individuals, but the Cidade Baixa as a whole is affected by classism and racism, as it is an area with in majority poor and lower-middle class citizens, who are in majorly POC.

Cost of living

Na minha casa, pagar as contas todos meses é:

27 antwoorden



When asked the question if paying monthly bills is difficult in their respective household, three answers were possible: 'easy', 'sometimes easy and sometimes hard', 'always hard'.

None of the respondents claimed it is easy. The majority, 77,8% (or 21 respondents) says it is sometimes easy, and sometimes difficult, which indicates financial obstacles. 22,2% (6 respondents) says it is always difficult.

All of the 6 respondents claiming it is always difficult are POC, which accentuates the racial disparities between POC and Whites, and possibly highlights the concept of *colorism* since 5 out of 6 of these respondents identify as 'Preto'.

6.1.4. RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The next few questions tackle the subject of racism in the Cidade Baixa.

Suffering racial discrimination

When asked to the respondents if they experience racial discrimination 5 answers were possible:

- Yes, I suffer a lot of racial discrimination
- Yes, I suffer racial discrimination regularly
- I sometimes suffer racial discrimination
- I rarely suffer racial discrimination
- I never suffer racial discrimination

This question touches mostly upon the concepts of *interpersonal* and *institutional racism*, as it refers to their personal experiences with being discriminated against.

59% (11 respondents) of POC express to suffer racial discrimination, with 18,2% (4) expressing to suffer a lot of racial discrimination, 22,8% (5) regularly, 4,6% (1) sometimes and 13,7% (3) rarely. 9 respondents, or 41%, expresses to never suffer racial discrimination.

From the people who identify as 'Preto' only 1 respondent answered with 'never' feeling discriminated against, all others 8 respondent who answered 'never' identify as 'Pardo'. People responding with 'a lot' and 'regularly' were all people who identify as 'Preto'. This stresses the notions of *racism* and especially *colorism* in Brazil.

Representation in the media

When asked to POC if people with the same skin color were represented well in the media 4 answers were possible:

- Almost always well represented
- Usually well, but not always well represented
- Usually not well represented, but sometimes well represented
- Almost never well represented

Only 1 respondent said 'almost always' (4,6%). 5 (22,8%) responded with usually well, but not always. The majority, which is in this case 41% (9), responded with 'usually not well, but sometimes well'; and 6 (27,4%) responded with 'almost never'.

From the people who identify as 'Preto' only 1 responded with 'usually well represented', while all others responded with 'usually no' or 'never'. *Not feeling represented* is a major concern for POC in Brazil as it means that their access is being denied to many spaces (television, film, journalism, and so on) and they are not provided with role models. Aside from not being represented at all, they can feel wrongly represented, for example by (negative) stereotypes, not finding any figures in the public eye they can relate to.

Racism has an impact on how I feel in my daily life

When asked if racism had an impact on the daily life of the respondents, possible answers were:

- A strong impact
- An impact
- It sometimes has an impact
- It usually has no impact, but once in a while it does
- It has no impact

Of 21 respondents of POC, 4 (18,2%) responded that racism had no impact on how they feel in their daily lives. 3 (13,7%) responded by saying that it usually has no impact, but once in a while it does. Another 3 (13,7%) responded that it sometimes has an impact. 4 (18,2%) affirmed that it has an impact, and 7 said it has a strong impact (31,9%).

All people responding it has a 'strong impact', except one, were people identifying as 'Preto'. All people responding it has 'no impact', except one, were people who identify as 'Pardo'. This again stressed the concept of *colorism* that disadvantages people with a darker skin, even though all POC suffer from racism.

This question again puts more emphasis on the concepts of *interpersonal racism* and *institutional racism*. As *systemic racism* can not statistically be measured by personal stories, but only by the representation of groups of POC. As racism is a system that is *internalized* it is often hard to recognize. Racism is often felt by people, but not consciously recognized, as it is a concept that is not easy to grasp, and by default difficult to perceive. Subtle *microaggressions* for example, might feel uncomfortable, but might not be perceived as racism, as *racial literacy* (the understanding of the complexity of racism and racial awareness that comes along with it) is something that has only been evolving in the mainstream in the last decade.

Personal interviews or a focus-group with the participants would be a great way to dive deeper into the subject and discuss experiences inspired by examples of racism, as to get more reliable information and at the same time involve them in a participative process of *conscientization*.

6.1.5. SEXISM

The next questions cover the subject of sexism and toxic masculinity.

Suffering gender discrimination

When asked about experiencing gender discrimination, respondents had 5 possible answers:

- never
- rarely
- sometimes
- regularly
- a lot

From all 16 women questioned, 25% (4) answered never to have experienced gender discrimination. Another 25% (4) answered a lot, 6,25% (1) regularly, 31,25% (5) sometimes and 12,50% (2) rarely.

This means that 75% of women says to experience some form of gender discrimination.

The person identifying as non-binary answered experiencing it sometimes.

Impact of sexism/ toxic masculinity on daily life

When asked if sexism/toxic masculinity has an impact on daily life 5 different answers were given as an option:

- a strong impact
- an impact
- It sometimes has an impact
- It usually has no impact but once in a while it does
- It has no impact

Because toxic masculinity is not a common word, I provided a brief explanation of the term right below the question.

Women

81,25%, or 13 out of 16 women answered it has a 'strong impact', 12,5% (2) said it has an impact and 6,25% (1) said usually no, but sometimes yes. None of them said it had no impact.

This means all women in this survey experience the impact of sexism in a negative way, which strangely, shows a contradiction with the previous question where 4 women answered to never have experienced gender discrimination. A possibility is that they never consciously experienced it, but suffer from the impact of the perceived gender discrimination around them. Another possibility lies within the fact that in the first question I talked about 'gender discrimination', while in the second one I spoke about 'sexism' and 'toxic masculinity'.

Homosexual and bisexual women all said it has a 'strong impact', which means they suffer more, perceive more or are more aware of sexism or toxic masculinity than the heterosexual women, which reminds us that *sexism* is not only the oppression of women, but also the oppression of people who fall outside the *heterosexual norm* (*heteronormativity*), and especially the people who are at the *intersection* of being female and not heterosexual.

Men

When asked about the daily impact of sexism and toxic masculinity 27,27% or 3 out of 11 men said it had 'no impact at all'. 9,09 % (1) said 'usually no, but in some cases yes', another 9,09% (1) said 'sometimes'. 54,54% (6) of men said it had an impact, with 36,36% (4) stressing that the impact is big.

All men saying it has 'no impact', or 'usually no impact' are heterosexual, which means they suffer less, perceive less or are less aware of sexism and toxic masculinity. Ofcourse the whole idea of toxic masculinity is that it is deeply rooted, and therefore usually invisible for the ones suffering from it.

The person who identifies as non-binary and pansexual (this is the same person) expresses to be highly impacted by sexism and/or toxic masculinity, which again stressed that the *intersection of gender and sexual orientation* can create different outcomes into how people are discriminated against.

In total 88,9% of all respondents (24 out of 27) said to feel impacted by sexism and/or toxic masculinity in one way or another.

The understanding of what sexism means and how it functions as a system, has only recently been gaining more spotlights. Many concepts are still unknown or misunderstood by the mainstream, but young people, who are often active on social media are confronted with more educational material about the subject than previous generations. There is also a wide misconception, just as with racisms, that sexism is something from the past, and that Brazilian women now, have equal rights and opportunities to men. Amongst the respondents of this survey I feel a strong awareness about sexism and toxic masculinity.

6.1.6. LGBT-PHOBIA

The next questions discuss the discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Discrimination based on sexual orientation

With the question *if people experience discrimination based on their sexual orientation* I provided 5 possible responses:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Regularly
- A lot
-

From the 11 people that identify as bisexual, homosexual or pansexual 9,09% (1) expresses to never suffer discrimination based on sexual orientation, another 9,09% (1) says 'rarely'. 18,18% (2) claim to suffer discrimination sometimes, 27,27% (3) regularly and another 27,27% (3) a lot.

The two people claiming to never or rarely experience it are both bisexual women. A theory to why they might experience less discrimination is because there is a possibility they could be *passing* as heterosexual women, although this survey doesn't provide enough information to make conclusions about that.

Impact of homophobia / heteronormativity on daily life

When asked if homophobia or heteronormativity has an impact of daily life, options of answering were provided:

- a strong impact
- an impact
- sometimes an impact
- usually no impact
- no impact

Since heteronormativity is not a common word, I provided an definition in the survey, just below the question.

From the 11 people that identify as homosexual, bisexual and pansexual, 36,36% (4) answered it has a strong impact, 18,18% (2) an impact, 27,27% (3) 'sometimes' and 1 responded 'usually no'. No one said it has no impact.

This means that the majority is feeling impacted by homofobia or heteronormativity.

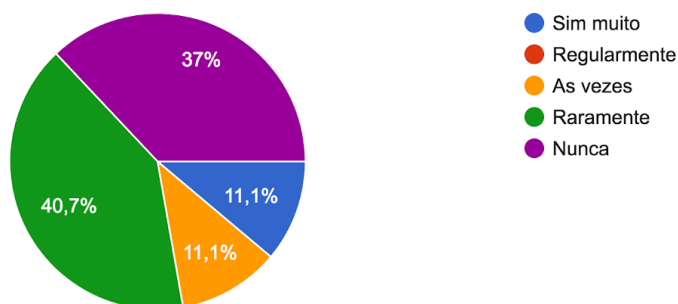
Remarkable here is that 3 heterosexual people answered feeling impacted, with two stressing it has a strong impact. This could possibly mean they don't feel comfortable expressing themselves in ways that are seen as different from the *hetero-norms*. Another possibility is that they wish to explore their sexuality outside of heterosexuality or cisgenderism but feel like they can't because of heteronormativity.

6.1.7. RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

The next questions discuss the discrimination based on religious belief.

Discrimination based on religion

Eu sofro discriminação com base na minha religião
27 antwoorden



With the question if people suffer discrimination based on their religion, 5 different answers were possible:

- Yes, a lot
- Regularly
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Of 27 respondents, 11,1% (3) responded with 'yes a lot', no one responded 'regularly', another 11,1% responded 'sometimes', 40,7% (11) 'rarely' and 37% (10) 'never'.

Especially people from the Candomblé religion express to suffer discrimination, with both respondents responding 'a lot'. Another person who answered 'a lot' is from the Buddhist religion, yet both other Buddhists responded with 'rarely' and 'never'.

All of the respondents that identify as 'Agnostic', 'Catholic', 'Christian', 'Evangelical' or 'no specific religion' responded with 'rarely' or 'never'. The fact that three Christian religions appear in this category is not big of a surprise as Christianity has historically been the dominant religion, oppressing other expressions of spirituality.

The person who identified as 'Atheist' responded sometimes feeling discriminated.

The 5 people that follow 'Spiritism' reacted with 'never' (1), 'rarely' (2) and 'sometimes' (2).

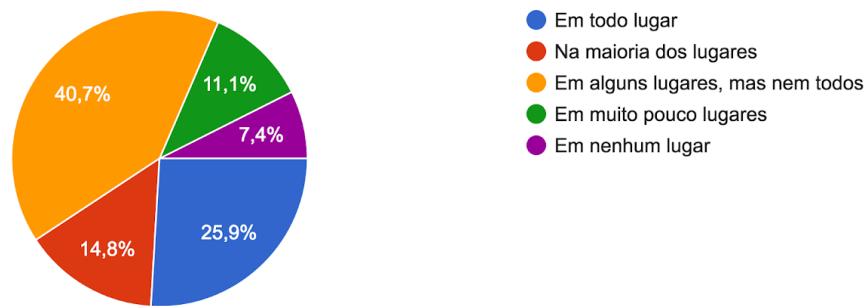
All people expressing to suffer a lot from religious discrimination were 'Preto', and all people expressing to suffer sometimes were POC (2 Pardo, 1 Preto). This indicates a correlation between *POC* and the suffering of *religious discrimination*.

In total, 17 out of 27 people (63%) express to suffer a certain degree of religious discrimination.

Comfort of expressing religious beliefs/spirituality

Sinto-me à vontade para expressar minhas crenças religiosas/espirituais

27 antwoorden



To answer the question if one feels comfortable expressing it's religious or spiritual beliefs 5 answers were possible:

- Everywhere
- In most places
- In some places, but not all
- In a very few places only
- Nowhere

From all respondents only 25,9% (7) feels comfortable everywhere. These people are from various groups: 1 is a Buddhist, 1 a Catholic, 1 a Spiritist, 2 don't have a specific religion and both Evangelists feel comfortable everywhere.

From the people responding feeling comfortable 'nowhere' 1 is from the Candomblé religion and one has no specific religion. The people answering in a few or a very few places 1 is a Buddhist, 2 Agnost, 1 a Atheist, 1 a Candomblécista, 1 a Catholic, 2 Spiritists, and 2 from no specific religion.

The people answering feeling comfortable in most places are 1 Buddhist, 1 Catholic, 1 Christian and 1 Esperitist.

For this question, the results are much more dispersed, which makes it more difficult to draw conclusions. This could signify that feeling comfortable to express one's religion could be related to various factors, and not only to feeling discriminated against or not.

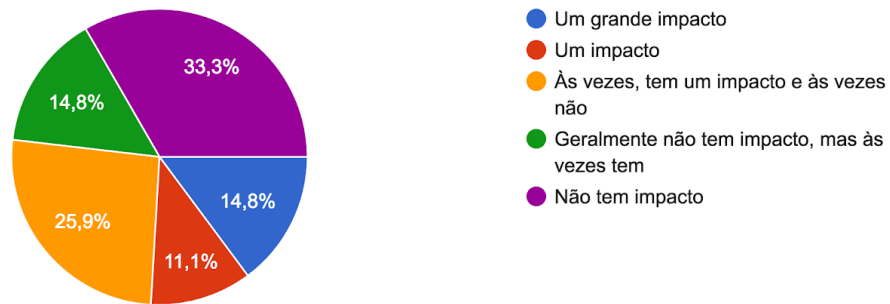
One Buddhist, for example, might have a strong spiritual community offering support and places to practise, while another one might feel lonely in it's spiritual journey, not having access to religious spaces. It could also be related to the person's character or

situation. A person who has Catholic beliefs, which is the dominant religion in the country can still feel discomfort if for example the rest of the family is Atheist. Being insecure about sharing one's belief can be a structural problem related to discrimination, just as it can be something personal.

Impact of religious discrimination on everyday life

A discriminação religiosa tem um impacto em como me sinto no dia dia

27 antwoorden



When asked if religious discrimination has an impact on everyday life 5 answers were possible:

- A strong impact
- An impact
- Sometimes it has an impact and sometimes it doesn't
- Usually it doesn't have an impact, but once in a while it does
- It doesn't have an impact

66,6% (18) responded that it has an impact on some degree. 33,3% (9) answered it had no impact at all.

People saying it had a strong impact were from the Candomblé religion (1), Buddhism (1), Agnost (1) and Esperitist (1).

People saying it had an impact were from the Candomblé religion (1) and the Evangelical religion (2).

The ones saying it sometimes had an impact were Agnost (1), Atheist (1), Catholic (1), Spiritist (1) or from no specific religion (3).

'Usually no impact' was expressed by 1 Buddhist, 1 Catholic and 2 Esperitist. While 'no impact' was expressed by 1 Buddhist, 4 Catholics, 1 Christian, 1 Esperitist and 2 people with no specific religion.

It is unclear why the two Evangelical people responded with feeling highly impacted, as they both expressed feeling comfortable expressing their religion everywhere.

The question of religious discrimination seems to be quite complex, and having such a variety of religious practises in Brazil, I believe my sample was too small to look for meaningful correlations. What stood out in the three questions is that Catholics are the only group who don't express having to deal with discomfort or discrimination related to their religion, except in the second question where one Catholic expressed sometimes not feeling comfortable expressing his or her beliefs. It is interesting, observing that a variety of people from the same region practises so many different religions and only 25% feels comfortable expressing them everywhere. With a country that has a strong

history of Catholicism related to colonisation and White Supremacy and an Evangelical president, using this religion to deploy a fascist, right-wing program, it is clear that all people practising other religions automatically feel alienated, unaccepted or in a constant struggle to obtain a place in society that is validated and respected.

With Bahia being in a state that is not in favor of Jair Bolsonaro (mind that Bahians voted for Haddad in the 2018 election) it is possible that people with Evangelical beliefs, a religion strongly associated with the current president, feel less comfortable in Bahia since the victory of Bolsonaro, which has left Bahians with a lot of anger, sadness, fear and despair, and a strong disdain towards other Brazilians that have voted in favor of Bolsonaro.

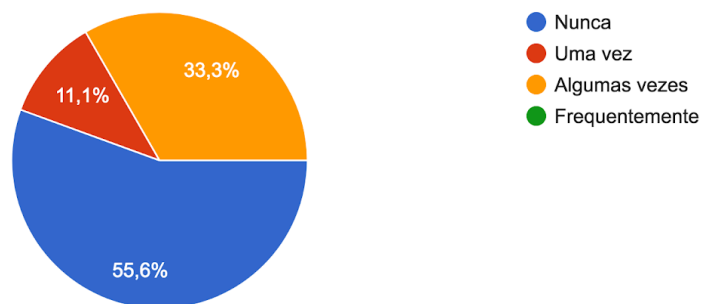
6.1.8. VIOLENCE

The next graphs show us the responses of questions on the topic of violence in the neighbourhood and in the city.

Victim of violence

Sofri violência no meu bairro

27 antwoorden



When asked if one has already suffered violence in its neighbourhood 4 answers were given as an option:

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Frequently

33,3% of respondents have suffered violence in the neighbourhood a few times. 11,1% once and 55,6%, the majority, never.

All White respondents claimed to never have personally experienced violence in the neighbourhood, which is a difference with POC where 45,4% (10) have never experienced violence, 13,6% (3) once, and 40,9% (9) a few times. This is in line with the statistics in my literature review, stating that POC suffer more violence in Brazil.

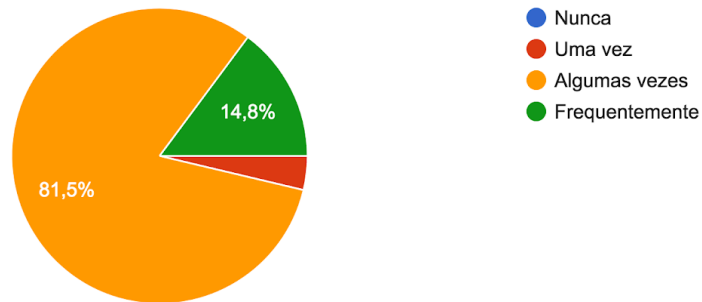
A difference is also noticeable between heterosexuals (11 'never', 5 'a few times' or 'once') and people who identify as homosexual, bisexual or pansexual (4 'never', versus 7 'a few times' or 'once'). This is also in line with the statistics that LGBT suffer more violence in Brazil.

Between men and women there was no significant difference measured.

Witness of violence

Eu testemunhei violência no meu bairro

27 antwoorden



When asked if one has ever witnessed violence in the neighbourhood 4 answers were possible:

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Frequently

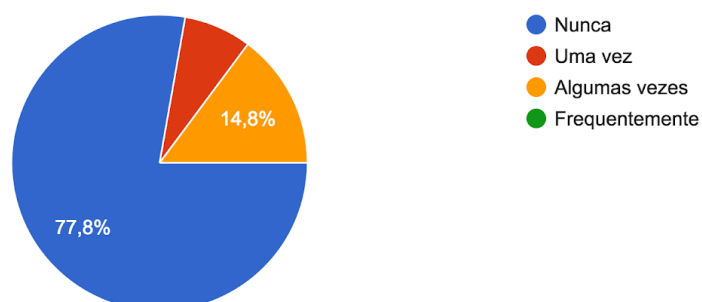
An alarming rate, namely: all respondents, have witnessed violence in their neighbourhood. 14,8% (4) regularly, 81,5% (22) a few times and 3,7% (1) once. This confirms the reality that Salvador is a city with high numbers of crimes and violence. Every single one of the respondents has witnessed violence, with 14,8% expressing seeing it regularly. It is not only something they see on TV, but it is a reality they face in their daily life.

Witnessing violence has a psychological impact, it creates resentment and especially fear, both not ideal factors in the exploration of *independence, liberty and adulthood*. Fear does many things to human beings, but it especially keeps them inside their household, not giving them the opportunity to discover the world and go out and meet people.

Violence against others

Eu fui violento com outras pessoas no meu bairro

27 antwoorden



With the question is the respondents have ever, themselves, been violent towards people in their neighbourhood, again four answers were provided:

- Never
- Once
- A few times
- Frequently

77,8% of respondents (21), the majority, answered to never have been violent against others in the neighbourhood, while 14,8% (4) admits having been violent a few times, and 7,4% once.

The number of people admitting having been violent was higher among men (2 'once' and 3 'a few times', versus 5 'never') than women (only 1 'a few times' versus 15 'never'), which confirms that violence is mostly perpetrated by men.

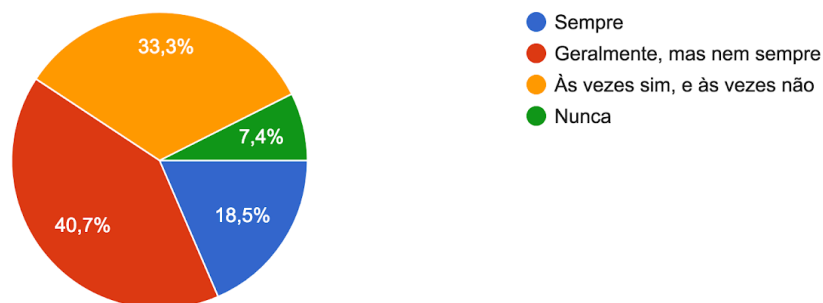
The difficulty with this question is that it is very possible that respondents give a more desired response, as generally people don't like to admit or even recognize to have had been violent. Another difficulty is that in the question I didn't clarify what exactly was meant by violence, therefore people could have had different interpretations like physical violence, verbal violence or sexual violence.

Feeling safe

During the day

Eu me sinto seguro andando no meu bairro durante o dia

27 antwoorden



When asked about feeling safe walking in the neighbourhood during the day, there were 4 possible answers:

- Always
- Usually, but not always
- Sometimes yes and sometimes no
- Never

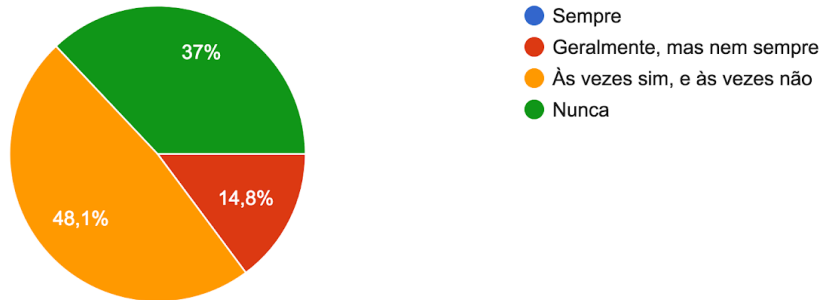
40,7% (11), which is the majority, usually feels safe walking around in the neighbourhood in the day, but not always. 33,3% (9) Feels safe on some days and on others not. 18,5% (5) always feels safe, and 7,4% (2) never.

The people claiming to never feel safe were both 'Preto'.

At night

Eu me sinto seguro andando pelo meu bairro à noite

27 antwoorden



When asked about feelings of safety in the neighbourhood at night, the same 4 possibilities were given.

Compared to feeling safe in the day, a lot less feel safe at night. With 37% (10) saying never to feel safe. 48,1% (13) says feeling safe sometimes. 14,8% (4) usually feels safe, but not always. None of the respondents feels safe all the time.

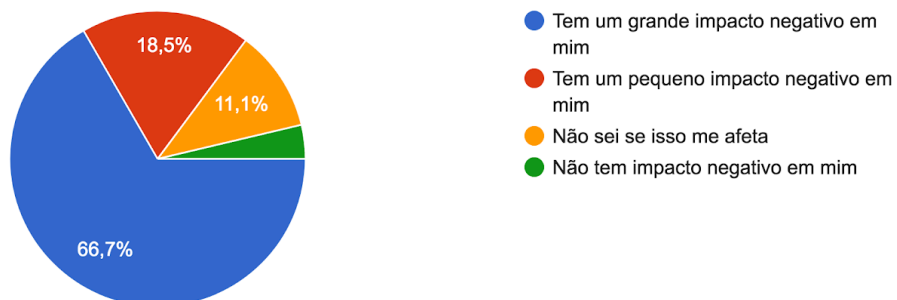
This confirms that violence and fear is very present in everyday lives of people from the Cidade Baixa.

50% of women never feels safe at night, while for men that number is lower (20%). A hypothesis why women feel less safe at night might be that there are less other women on the street, which makes women feel more seen, more alone and more vulnerable. Catcalling and harassment is quite common. The fact that it is dark after 6 every day in Brazil, and that many bars offer alcohol, makes it a different atmosphere than during day-time.

The impact of violence

A violência no meu bairro / na minha cidade

27 antwoorden



When asked if violence in the neighbourhood and in Salvador has an impact on the respondents 4 possible answers were given:

- It has a strong negative impact on me
- It has a small negative impact on me
- I'm not sure if this affects me
- It doesn't have a negative impact on me

A vast majority (66,7%) says that violence in the neighbourhood/city has a strong negative impact on them. 18,5% says it has a small negative impact. Only 3,7% (1 person) claims it doesn't have a negative impact at all and 11,1% is not sure.

Between men and women and different racial identities the results were pretty similar. Only a difference was measurable between heterosexuals, where $\frac{2}{3}$ claimed it had a big negative impact, whereas that number was $\frac{4}{5}$ for homosexuals, bisexuals and pansexuals.

It is striking that only one person claimed not being negatively impacted by violence in the city. This means that all other feel impacted in a way or are not sure.

The fact that some people are not sure means this topic can definitely be more discussed, as violence and the fear of violence has a large psychological impact on humans, and awareness is a first step towards solutions and self-care.

6.1.9. OPEN QUESTIONS: OBSTACLES

Obstacles personally faced by respondents

In an open question I asked the respondents what obstacles they personally face on their way to success in life, the responses were a wide range of different obstacles, that I organized into different categories.

The most mentioned obstacle is financial resources. Six people wrote that the lack of money was an obstacle in their life. One person specified by saying 'money to invest in myself' (that doesn't go away to bills etc.). Two people mentioned the lack of financial resources to get psychological help. Having a need for psychological help that can't be met can cause supplementary suffering. Not being able to get psychological help and experiencing the lack of money as an obstacle in life are results of *poverty* and *classism*.

Various other forms of discrimination have been mentioned as obstacles: '*racism*', '*machismo*', 'social inequality' and an 'excess of superiority' were all answers given. Two people wrote about *prejudice*, one mentioned specifically 'the prejudice of being from the periphery', a form of *classism* and often as well *racism*. One person wrote about the specific intersection of being a Black woman from the periphery who is also a Candomblecista which leads to being oppressed by three systems: *racism*, *classism* and *religious intolerance*. One person mentions the dysfunction of the capitalist system and how it is "*solidified in a way that prevents people from the lower classes from ascending financially by not having a job or qualifications and psychological support*". This person also mentions the importance of understanding one's role and history in society. The lack of knowledge about history and society are thus seen as obstacles in everyday life.

Access is a third type of obstacle mentioned: 'access to (new) work-opportunities', 'access to scientific studies' (for a person that works in the field of research) and the infamous vicious cycle of 'the lack of work experience - the lack of work to gain this experience'. Four people mentioned 'the lack of opportunities' in general. Not having opportunities is not related to a specific cause, but rather to a *multitude of different causes and systems of oppression*.

Environmental and urban issues such as bad transportation and sound-pollution were touched upon. Another person who also talked about the bad transportation, wrote about the difficulty of going to work events at night because of this bad infrastructure and the dangers of taking public transport at night. Which leads us to *violence*: that was once given as a main answer alongside two other people that brought up 'the fear of violence' and 'femicide'.

In the personal realm I received answers like 'a lack of direction', 'lack of support' and "*people around me that constantly put me down*", all elements that impede the development of confidence, *achieving autonomy, establishing identity and emotional stability (Havighurst)*. A bad study-environment and 'laziness' were also brought up. Finally, one person said: "*psychological questions like: low self-image*".

One person mentioned having no obstacles except for difficult courses in school, another person stated that 'everything' is an obstacle.

Obstacles young adults from the Cidade Baixa might encounter

When asked if it was possible to describe obstacles observed in the lives of other young adults in the Cidade Baixa, I received similar answers.

Five people spoke about financial obstacles like 'financial issues', 'low income', 'financial instability', a "*lack of material to invest in dreams*" or just 'money'. All examples of *poverty* and the oppression of *Capitalism* on the people of *lower class*.

Many people discussed different forms of discrimination and oppression. One person just mentioned 'oppression' and three 'discrimination'. Four people brought up 'racism', three *homofobia* and two *machismo*. 'Social inequality', 'extreme poverty' and "*generational poverty repeating throughout history*" were mentioned alongside 'class-oppression'. Someone described how racism against Blacks also affected other POC and Whites living in the same neighbourhoods, as these neighbourhoods altogether suffer from how *structural racism* is creating *social and economic poverty*. Four people talked about the lack of opportunities in general.

One person described the *prejudice* towards 'favelados' (residents of the favelas) and how they are being *marginalized*. Alongside the marginalization that is real, the concept of a marginalized person reinforces the systems of marginalization. This is a very interesting reflection made by one of the respondents that dismantles how structural racism, perpetuated by Whites oppressing POC, can eventually also affect Whites if they live in close proximity with the POC that live in conditions of oppression. Whites living in difficult conditions is often used as an excuse to discredit the problem of racism and White privilege, while it is often the case that these White people (who still privilege from being White) sometimes suffer consequences of that system that was installed to privilege them. For example: a White person living in a Black favela community, will still enjoy privileges from being White, but will possibly suffer poverty for living in a Black community that is inherently, as a structure, oppressed by the mechanics of structural racism.

Again the word 'access' was mentioned: 'a lack of access' (in general), 'access to technology' and 'access to basic hygiene products'.

Other structural problems summed up by the respondents include: poor transportation, a long distance to the commercial centre, drugs and drug trafficking, teenage pregnancy, a lack of and poor housing, a lack of alimentation, violence, domestic violence and police brutality.

'Familial issues', 'a lack of familial guidance' and 'a lack of parental support in studies' sum up issues related to family.

On a personal level respondents stated 'insecurity', 'fear', 'fear of not being able to fulfill aspirations' and 'a lack of interest' as obstacles.

Two people also discussed the *educational system* and *leisure* by bringing up 'a lack of information', 'a lack of education' and 'a lack of investment in culture and education'.

6.1.10. OPENS QUESTIONS: STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES

To overcome these obstacles people use different strategies. This question marks the end of the survey and functions as bridge to our next chapter where I will discuss how volunteering at ICBIE helps young people to overcome these obstacles. Before narrowing down my group of respondents to the people I personally interviewed, 6 volunteers from ICBIE, I thought it was important to have a wider perspective of how young people from the Cidade Baixa cope with difficulties, and what are their strategies to overcoming them. Personal qualities were mentioned most, but other valid and interesting tools were also introduced.

Personal qualities seemed very important for most respondents. 'My strength to not give up', 'personal motivation', 'my will to overcome this reality', 'perseverance', 'determination to always want more' and 'my search for a better life and that of my close ones' describe examples of motivation and endurance. Other qualities like 'respect', 'empathy' and 'sharing' describe attitudes of kindness towards others. Two people wrote 'belief in my potential', and one wrote 'courage and knowing that I can help and be the difference the world needs'. 'Passion for what I do' and 'my quality and talents' show elements of self love and joy, with someone also writing just: 'myself'.

Support from others also seemed an important aspect of overcoming obstacles. Six people mentioned 'family', three 'friends', one person wrote 'my husband' and another one expressed the importance of 'help from others'. This stressed the notion Havighurst described as *becoming part of a group or community*.

Another important aspect is *faith and religion*. One person wrote down 'faith in God', one 'religious support' and two answered with 'faith'.

The importance of *education* was stressed by five different people: 'doing courses for more qualifications', 'doing volunteer work to gain a bigger network' and simply 'education' (three people).

Some people found help in (small) concrete action like: 'supporting people that live in similar or worse situations', 'resistance against oppression' and 'music' (although this person didn't specify if it was about listening or making music).

Finally two people mentioned strategies of avoidance: 'avoid watching the news' and 'drugs'; and dreaming of future perspectives: 'living in a less violent neighbourhood'.

6.1.11. FEEDBACK ON THE SURVEY

Feedback from participants

The 'feedback and extra information'-section was the only question people were free to answer or not, as I didn't want to demand feedback if people didn't want to share anything.

A few people thanked me for listening and shared that they hoped to have helped. One person stressed the importance of my research topic.

One person confessed that answering the questions helped reflecting on one's privilege.

I received a few comments saying the research was great. But one person thought it was important to mention that it was a bit long and maybe too technical for some people, which could be demotivational.

Two people added a reflection. One said she believed to be one of the only Black women in the Cidade Baixa to obtain two academic degrees, and how this has been a struggle. I felt the need to share this in my research, as this person was expressing this in the feedback section. Another person finished by stating that *"the government has to invest more in education so that Brazilian youngsters don't need to dream about foreign education"*.

Personal reflections

A first reflection I made was that the survey was put online during the beginning of the Corona-pandemic. I didn't bring up the subject in the survey, because I wanted people to answer the questions with the state of mind of a normal day. I anticipated that if I would bring up the subject of Covid-19, this would maybe influence the person's thoughts even more than if I didn't mention it all. I realize that the difficult situation of the lockdown might bring anxiety in some, and have an impact on how they see their current situation. This could mean a more pessimistic outlook, but it could also mean that people have more time to reflect and become more conscious about certain realities.

A second reflection I made was that I realized I should've asked the question of correct representation in the media not only to POC, but also to people who suffer other discriminations like sexism, homofobia and gender discrimination. I believe I unconsciously only questioned this group because I have read a lot about the subject of representation of POC in the media, hence it got stuck in my mind.

A third reflection I made what about the series of questions about violence in the neighbourhood, where I realize I didn't specify if domestic violence is also part of that. I first wanted to make a separate section about domestic violence, but I figured this could make the questionnaire too extensive, and could also be triggering, considering the fact that this survey already asks a few question exposing difficult realities and that we are in the middle of pandemic that forces people to stay in the house, which can cause different forms of anxiety. I also didn't specify which forms of violence (verbal, physical, sexual,..). This also was a choice to keep the survey simple and not bombarded with small-letter-information, which I already did twice to explain the terms: 'heteronormativity' and 'toxic masculinity'.

A fourth and final reflection I made was that I eventually realized I focused a lot on my first sub-research-question, namely the obstacles in the personal and professional development of young adults. I could have gone more in depth, and asked more questions about overcoming these obstacles and how cultural centres like ICBIE could help with that. This might have made it too extensive of a survey to answer, which is why I don't regret having kept it like this, but it could, nonetheless, have been very interesting to have these opinions from such a large group.

6.1.12. CONCLUSION OF SURVEY

To answer the first subquestion:

What are the obstacles; related to structural mechanisms of oppression based on class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion; in the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

The findings in this survey motivate me to write the following:

When comparing the statistics I used in my literature study about different types of oppression such as class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion, and the statistics derived from this survey there is quite some overlap. The responses show us that every

type of oppression described in my literature study is experienced to a certain degree by a certain group of respondents of this survey.

Classism stood out as being the general factor that oppresses almost all of the above respondents. Financial difficulties were mentioned many times in the open questions and 40% of respondents didn't have the financial possibilities to pay for education. Other issues like a lack of space and privacy, having many responsibilities aside education and having difficulties finding a job are related to economic inequality and classism.

Racism, was experienced by POC, and especially Pretos. Factors such as not having a job, experiencing religious discrimination and suffering violence in the neighbourhood was experienced to a higher degree among them. More than half of all POC-respondents claimed being impacted by racism or highly impacted by racism.

A certain degree of sexism was showed to be experienced by 75% of women, experiencing higher degrees of feelings of unsafety, and with more difficulties finding a job, especially among Black women.

More than a third of LGBT feels strongly impacted by LGBT-phobia. None of them doesn't feel impacted. LGBT-women claimed to be more impacted by sexism than heterosexual women and compared to heterosexual men, LGBT-men were more impacted by toxic masculinity.

Of all respondents 63% claimed to be impacted to a certain degree by religious discrimination.

While all forms of discrimination were experienced, it is Classism that connects the majority of the respondents, and highlights the main problem youngsters of the Itapagipe Peninsula have to face. The obstacles related to Classism translate into: a low household income, high unemployment, poor education, bad transportation, violence and psychological challenges related to oppression.

6.2. OVERCOMING OBSTACLES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING AT ICBIE

In this chapter I will discuss how ICBIE helps to overcome the obstacles related to classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious intolerance, described in the previous chapter, and thus helps in the personal and professional development of young adults from the Itapagipe Peninsula.

I will start with some important notes made by the volunteers in the interviews that gives a better understanding of ICBIE and the volunteers relationship to it. Finally I will give an overview of the 17 functions of ICBIE I listed when listening to the answers of the interviews. From the 17 functions I also draw connections to the concepts described by Havighurst, the mission of ICBIE and the three different types of benefits of volunteering.

6.2.1. ICBIE, A PLACE AND A SPACE

Even though I wrote the questions to these interviews with a different research question in mind, they've led me to wonderful conversations with all of my interviewees. It were sunny and very hot days, the fan was blowing, and we were chatting and laughing together in different rooms of ICBIE. I hold a wonderful memory of these few days, where every participant has opened up a little bit about their life to me. Reading and re-reading these interviews has sometimes led me to emotional moments of 'saudade'. I was touched by their openness, intelligence, personal stories, desires and aspirations, but most of all by their authenticity and the way they all cherish love for this space I had the privilege to share with them in those brief moments.

ICBIE has the power to be a physical place and at the same time a space that holds no limitation of the time-space continuum. ICBIE is for some an experience, for others a part of daily life, a gift, for the founders; it's like a child, it's something that everyone that knows it has experienced in their own personal way; yet, there is collective experience, a collective knowing of what this place is and means, and a collective force of love, hope and beauty that resides within everyone that has ever been here. The building, that contains different spaces with different energies, is like a heartbeat that brings oxygen and nutrients to the body, a body that is made out of hundreds of little particles, some close to home, and some far away.

The fact that ICBIE is a place and space, will be important to remember in the next paragraphs.

6.2.2. VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH RIBEIRA

Ribeira is the neighbourhood where ICBIE resides. It's a very special place for some. Most of my interviewees live in this neighbourhood of the Peninsula and have a generational connection with it. Some recall the stories of their grandfathers and the historical stories they got to know from their neighbors, other explain how they were born and raised in the palafitas nearby. One of the volunteers wasn't born here, but explains how this neighborhood became her home: *"I come from a small town on the countryside, so moving to Salvador was a big change in my life, Ribeira was the best neighborhood for this change, because it feels like a small community"*.

Others explained how Ribeira breathes art, culture and a very rich history: *"Ribeira has a beauty that few other places have, it brings me peace, I have a lot of love for Ribeira"*. One volunteer reminded me how the Cidade Baixa doesn't have tall buildings, it's the only place at the Salvador coast with houses only, giving the people more space, and air to breathe like Russo Passapusso from BaianaSystem sings in his song 'lucro': *"Tire as*

construções da minha praia. Não consigo respirar. As meninas de mini saia. Não conseguem respirar". (Get the buildings off my beach, I can't breathe, The girls in mini skirts. They can't breathe).

The reality of Ribeira being less dangerous and violent than other neighborhoods of the Cidade Baixa and the city are also mentioned as an important aspect of liking the neighborhood, and evaluating this as a great place for ICBIE to be situated. All interviewees from Ribeira claimed wanting to stay in Ribeira to live. Even though many have a desire to travel, they all would want to come back home to Ribeira and the Cidade Baixa eventually.

6.2.3. APPRECIATION OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Even though there is a great love for Ribeira, all volunteers described how this place is not appreciated and given value by its inhabitants and by the government. Historically, it's a very important place in the city, yet the government doesn't spend much money on renovation and preservation. The volunteers comment that the people of the neighborhood usually don't realize the richness of this area, they just see it as a place to live, but don't make the best out of it. There is a lot of trash on the streets, the beaches and the water is polluted, the buildings are old and often in a bad state. There is some tourism at the Sorveteria, a famous ice-cream shop, but people usually have ice cream and leave. The nightly activity is mostly reserved to men, as women tend to feel less safe going out at night. Many complain about how Barra, another neighborhood of the city, gets all the investments, just because the tourists go there. The tourists get all the innovation, but the people of Salvador don't get anything. There aren't many places in Ribeira and the Cidade Baixa to enjoy art, everything is far away in the city centre, which means that many people are deprived from art, especially children and elders who are less likely to leave the neighbourhood (personal interviews with volunteers).

6.2.4. FROM PARTICIPATION TO VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering and participating in activities goes hand in hand as ICBIE doesn't have specific applications or volunteer programs. It's an organic process of giving and taking, of sharing, and of spontaneous involvement for those who wish to engage in the organisation. For all six interviewees volunteering at ICBIE has started from participating in activities, naturally flowing into wanting to do more. Some discovered ICBIE through friends, and some by walking by and seeing a library sign. But it was curiosity and courage that all made them enter for the first time. Two volunteers started at ICBIE by doing a language course and another two entered for the theatre course, one started with a singing class and one came to do a computer class. Another volunteer describes how at the time her parents didn't have the money to pay for the course. To participate she decided together with Marlene to exchange the language course for a bit of her time helping around.

After one course, all volunteers started doing other courses: informatics, drawing, another language class,.. All of them gradually became more interested in the organisation and wanted to be more involved. They have been at ICBIE 14, 12, 6 and 5 years.

6.2.5. ROLES IN VOLUNTEERING

Although all six interviewees answered that they always help wherever help is needed and wherever they can, becoming more involved sometimes means finding a specific task. One of the girls described how she started to become interested in the library,

someone else explained how administration became his thing. Others have their own specific task that they usually take up, like: informatics, publicity, financial management, public relations, technical visits, social media,... Taking up these different roles helps the volunteers to develop certain skills. One of the volunteers from the library describes:

All have their own preferences and talents, but in the end the volunteers function as a family, it's a cooperative and organic system, where everyone helps when and where they can, whatever is needed, someone will be here to do it.

6.2.6. ICBIE AS A CATALYST OF CHANGE

It's not a secret that to all volunteers ICBIE is seen as a catalyst of change, as a place of transformation. The enthusiasm for participating with the interviews for many came from the excitement of being able to talk about a place they love so much. They describe it as a place of opportunity and a second home. All of the volunteers spoke about their lives before and after their encounter with ICBIE, and how big of a contrast they feel when comparing both. One of the volunteers mentions having felt lost before ICBIE and having no contact with arts and culture, believing it to be "*something for crazy people*".

6.2.7. THE 17 FUNCTIONS OF ICBIE

In attempt to categorize and analyse all of the elements related to my research question, that came to surface through these interviews, I distinguished 17 different functions ICBIE has related to the development of the volunteers. Throughout this list of 17 functions I will make comparisons with three elements of my literature study, namely: the *7 functions* of ICBIE's mission (chapter 4.3.), the *9 developmental tasks of young adults* by Havighurst (chapter 2.2.) and the 3 different types of benefits of volunteering described in chapter 2.3. 'benefits of volunteering' (job-related, positive feelings and health benefits)

I distinguish 5 different types of functions within the 17 functions of ICBIE:

- The first five are related to the **activities** ICBIE offers **and the roles** volunteers can take up, **and how these reflect on their personalities and sense of identity.**
- The second three are related to **obtaining knowledge and implementing that knowledge on personal worldviews.**
- The four functions that come after that describe **interpersonal relationships and the skills acquired to improve those.**
- The last three showcase how ICBIE functions as a place of **well-being and healing.**
- Finally, I separately discuss two more functions that are related to **future perspectives** and how ICBIE functions as a place of hope and new perspectives and as a place of challenges and problem solving.

The words 'place' and 'space' can be used interchangeably throughout this enumeration.

1. ICBIE as a place of first experiences

ICBIE has been a place of first experiences for the volunteers: a first experience with theatre, a first contact with a computer, a first time meeting people from different cultures and countries or a first time hearing fellow Brazilians speaking a different language.

Aside from opening up a new world of possibilities and the benefits of coming out of your comfort zone to try out something new, these experiences were sometimes real eye-openers. One of the volunteers describes how seeing other Brazilians speak Italian

made her realize in only a few seconds that "yes, it is possible to learn another language!". These aha-moments of seeing or doing something for the first time are brief, but leave a lifelong impression.

Having these first experiences can make one feel *capable* and *confident*, as if there are always new things to discover in the world and although it might be nerve wracking or intimidating to enter a new space, start a new hobby or learn a new language, it is often also related to feelings of *joy*. It takes away limits that might have been created in the mind and opens up new perspectives.

2. ICBIE as a place of personal growth through participating in activities

The volunteers explain that participating in the activities were chances to learn something they have wanted to learn for a long time. One of the guys explains that he wanted to learn about diction, expression, that he wanted to be more clear in his expression. Skills that are important in almost every aspect of life, and that he learned this through the theatre course at ICBIE. Another interviewee said that he was a very shy and timid person, the theatre classes totally changed his posture, he became louder in his way of speaking and clearer in the way of expressing himself. He says ICBIE is the place he started to let his voice be heard. He even learned how to make and do a speech in front of an audience.

Another volunteer described being shocked to find a place where she could afford a language class. This was a rare opportunity that made a large impact on her life, as through this course she was able to learn some Italian.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a place of developing and exposing talents*'. In Havighurst's theory this can be linked to '*achieving autonomy / emotional stability*'.

Throughout the years ICBIE has provided so many different activities that everyone at least had a chance to try out something they thought was interesting. As the volunteers are active participators in the activities, they benefit from all the different courses that are being organised at ICBIE. In most activities they actively learn a (*hard*) *skill*, like a language, or painting, but at the same time they learn many of the (**job-related**) *soft skills* that are learned through group activities: *communication, confidence, public speaking*, and so on.

3. ICBIE as a place to take up responsibility and develop own initiatives

Volunteering demands a level of maturity and responsibility. These are necessary skills if you want to make an impact, if you truly want to help out and mean something for the organisation, however small this help may be. A volunteer describes:

Everyone is welcomed here, but you need to show yourself. You need to bring your talents and presence. It's a question of trust. It's a place where my voice can be heard, but you need to be responsible for what you say, you need to show that what you say is worth something. It's not a place to come and gossip about neighbours.

Showing these talents is not something that is forced upon the volunteers, but rather a process that happens naturally, because people feel at home, they feel as if they are being respected and appreciated, which makes them want to share their aspirations and passions.

One of the volunteers started teaching dance, another one started the theatre group and became the coordinator, another one organised a book release for a book she wrote herself, one took up a role in financial gestion and administration.

Another example of an initiative is the EBM, 'exposição, bazar e musica' (exposition, bazaar and music), an annual event that was launched after an idea of one of the volunteers.

These are all examples of **pleasure and positive feelings**, like: building up *feelings of capability and confidence* through *action-taking*.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a place of developing and exposing talents*' and '*ICBIE as a place to form professional skills*'. In Havighurst's theory this can be linked to '*achieving autonomy*'.

4. ICBIE as a space of self-discovery, a place to discover one's talents and aspirations.

The volunteers describe how taking up these responsibilities and being given the chance to start something from zero, had often led them to discover new parts of themselves. Some explanations: "*I discovered myself, who I am, who I want to be, where I want to go*"; "*I started to get in touch with myself. Thanks to ICBIE I now know that I want to work in administration*".

Having this space, that is outside of formal education, outside of home, where maybe a lot of expectations exist, is like having a place that is free to experiment, free to do something else and be someone else that is usually expected. It's liberating and can lead to new ways of looking at oneself, with the chance of discovering new passions and talents.

It taps into the **positive feelings** of *capability, confidence* and *usefulness* and helps in the creation of a more *optimistic future orientation* since the person is discovering new ways of standing in life.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a place of developing and exposing talents*'. In Havighurst's theory this can be linked to '*achieving autonomy*', '*establishing identity*' and '*establishing a career*'.

5. ICBIE as a place to connect with roots and give value to one's own country and history

"*I felt a strong relationship with the neighbourhood because of stories of my grandparents, but they only told their experiences and not the historical stories, the bigger picture. Now that I know more thanks to ICBIE, I value more. I started to value my heritage and how it is related to this place*",

"*I started to appreciate and analyse Bahian culture, which I never did before. I started to recognize and acknowledge art in my surrounding, that has been there all along*",

"*Now I realize Brazil has much more to offer. We have so much cultural and natural richness, I learned to validate my own country.*"

These three quotes belong to volunteers describing their process of *conscientization* and *valorization* of their own cultural heritage and history. They describe how they feel more connected to themselves in a historical perspective and how their sense of self has changed by learning and understanding more about their ancestry and the art-forms that carry and showcase this cultural heritage.

ICBIE contributes to this in many forms, through the ME.PE museum for example, that collects narratives and objects about the Itapagipe Peninsula. Promoting Afro-Brazilian artforms like Afro-Brazilian dance and capoeira are other examples.

These stories about one's origins don't have to be elaborate lectures or activities, but they reside in the explanation and discussion of small cultural things that usually go by

unnoticed. An example of this is a graffiti nearby the centre of ICBIE. At a first glance this looks like a graffiti of an old Black man, while this image actually symbolizes a 'preto-velho', an entity in the Umbanda religion in the form of old Black men and women who tell the story of their ancestry. Knowing this, can spark a whole conversation about ancestry, religion and heritage and can also be great way of analyzing art and how it is used in society. These types of informal interactions and ways of informal learning are the core of ICBIE.

Another interesting point is that some volunteers describe how learning about other cultures made them more aware of the specificities of their own, which takes something out of banality into the light of the extraordinary. It gives value to what they have before seen as a normal, everyday thing, like the simple fact of eating rice and beans, prepared the Bahian way.

This can contribute to a *stronger sense of community*, a feeling that *increases (mental) health*.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a place of intercultural exchange*'. In Havighurst's theory this can be linked to '*establishing identity*' and '*becoming part of a group or community*'.

6. ICBIE as a centre of knowledge through language learning and artistic education

Five volunteers told me they have learned (at least the basics of) Italian or English and some of both. This is in itself a huge accomplishment, giving access to a whole world outside of Brazil and offering new kinds of way of thinking and people to connect with.

All volunteers talk about important information they have learned throughout the artistic education they have received at ICBIE. It's interesting to see how they mention having a "small mind" before, that has been opened up through their experiences at ICBIE. Someone mentioned coming from a small, religious town and how this limited her beliefs. They all express how their minds were opened up to arts and culture, something some thought of as boring, or abstract; and to learning new skills they didn't necessarily believe were interesting before, like for example the development of cultural projects or administration.

These new skills often form the seeds to professional interests and opportunities. One of the volunteers even mentions that ICBIE is a great first step towards finding a job, as you learn new skills, gain knowledge and create a bigger social network. One of the volunteers says:

Even this interview is a really interesting exchange, I'm here telling my story, and you will bring a part of this story with you to your country, and maybe share it with someone else; this often happens with volunteers that come here. I also remember a moment where we were doing a goodbye-party and everyone was speaking different languages, and I realized I could understand 80% of everything. That felt so amazing. It was like I was not only a Brazilian, but I felt part of something bigger.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a place of cultural development*'.

7. ICBIE as a place to broaden perspective about the world

ICBIE is a place to learn about the world: the language courses, the library, the opportunities for intercultural exchange, all create possibilities to broaden one's perspective.

Volunteers describe it as a place where their knowledge about foreign countries grew a lot, as Brazilian's formal education doesn't provide these opportunities. A volunteer

explains that for people of Salvador, it is more rare than common to meet many foreigners and learn about their language, culture and habits. *"Yes, there are tourists, who spend a vacation here, but it is not the same as sitting down with someone, and exchanging about their life and country, ICBIE provides this opportunity"*.

Political knowledge is often gained through conversation, and for example the many film nights organised in the centre. A volunteer describes how many of her ideas and biases were deconstructed through her experiences at ICBIE. One explains that his interest for foreign countries became more genuine, compared to before when he wanted to know about other places so he could just escape from Brazil. He now understands that other countries also have their own problems, and that no country in the world is ideal.

Another volunteer adds that ICBIE has no intention of deciding what is culturally relevant, rather, ICBIE wants to offer the possibility to research all that there is, to gather a broad perspective on what culture and art is, so that people can decide for themselves what they find relevant, important and interesting.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to *'ICBIE as a place of cultural development'* and *'ICBIE as a place of intercultural exchange'*. In Havighurst theory this can be linked to *'becoming part of a group or a community'*.

8. ICBIE as a place to practise reflection, critical thinking and the expression of that

"I have opened my eyes to so many things", is what one of the volunteers said. Another stated: *"ICBIE is where I started to raise my voice on topics like culture, art, politics and education"*. Both examples of how ICBIE created a transformation through its activities and through the opportunities of volunteering.

This happens through small everyday interactions with the many different people that stop by at ICBIE. Someone explained this to me through an example. I asked how he sees his involvement with ICBIE in the future and he responded: *"Before you asked me this question I have never stopped to think about my future at ICBIE. You see, these kind of unexpected moments of reflection we experience here all the time."*

Critical thinking is stimulated, as the activities of ICBIE are always interactive. There are no people coming in to give a lecture and then leave, no, there is always space for sharing, thinking together, coming to conclusions or starting a debate. A great example of this stimulation of critical thinking is when ICBIE organises film nights. At the end of the film there is always a group-reflection, where people can give their opinion, ask questions to each other, or the filmmakers if they are present. I witnessed such a debate in 2019 when ICBIE organised a film screening of Angolan filmmakers on the topic of graffiti arts. It was wonderful to see how the audience felt free to express their opinions and ask each other questions.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to *'ICBIE as a place of developing and exposing talents'* and *'ICBIE as a place to form professional skills'*. In Havighurst theory this can be linked to *'establishing identity'*.

9. ICBIE as a place to learn interpersonal skills

All volunteers describe how being at ICBIE has made them grow in their communication skills with others. The simple fact of working together in group often, organising things together, creates learning experiences that demand gentle and positive ways of communication. It is through practice that these skills become better. Growing into adulthood together with other youngsters, doing the same activities and helping each other out is a great motivation to communicate in a better way.

A volunteer describes that ever since she came volunteering at ICBIE, her relationships became much better, because by interacting with many different people and receiving

feedback, she could understand which communication tools she needed to work on. The fact that she found a place she could call a second home, a place where she felt passionate about and happy to go to, also made her more stable emotionally, giving her a more positive energy in her communication with others. She describes how she became more soft, clear and direct in her communication. She traded passive aggressiveness for assertiveness.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a place of cooperation*' and '*ICBIE as a place to form professional skills*'. In Havighurst theory this can be linked to '*emotional stability*'.

10. ICBIE as a place of community and broadening of the social network

A place to come together, to learn, to practise, to discover, and to do this surrounded by others can be very meaningful to an individual. Meeting new people can be exciting, refreshing and full of surprises. It can suddenly open new doors in our lives, when we least expected them. We might make a new friend, have a romantic connection with someone, learn something new about someone else, or simply broaden our social network a little bit. Meeting new people was something seen as very valuable by all the volunteers, most of them met through ICBIE and became like a family. They told me it was hard to imagine their lives without one another. They connect through their experiences at ICBIE and through the volunteer work they do together. They recognise elements of themselves in one another and feel a sense of harmony. It's like they have created a second family outside their first family.

The sense of community makes people feel safe, they have a safety net, a group of people to fall back to when they are in need of support. It makes them feel heard, knowing that whatever happens or whatever their opinion is on something, they will always be respected for who they are. ICBIE is a place of acceptance, with wide open doors.

This feeling of community leaves them with the desire to spend a lot of time there. For some, this means spending time away from places or people that possibly will have less of a good influence on them. Some describe how they have seen friends, outside of ICBIE become involved with drugs and trafficking, and when reflecting upon it, they imagine that it could might as well be them, if they didn't find the passion and sense of community they found through ICBIE. One of the volunteers explained how this makes him sad, knowing that these friends could have found a passion too, and could have grown into citizens with a really good impact on society.

And of course not all new encounters turn into lifelong friendships, but they however can lead to new paths: "*In the theatre course I organised, I met someone who was doing theatre somewhere else, he presented me and after that I started doing theatre there as well, if it wasn't for meeting him, I would have never known that place*".

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a meeting place*' and '*ICBIE as a place of cooperation*'. In Havighurst theory this can be linked to '*becoming part of a group or community*'.

11. ICBIE as a place of intergenerational challenges and cooperation

ICBIE is led by Marlene and Pietro, two wonderful people that have carried this project since the beginning and have already arrived at a certain age. As the founders of ICBIE they have a strong vision on what the cultural center represents and how they wish to organise their activities. Marlene is very active, and has a lot of different functions in the organisation. She knows how everything works, and for almost everything, the volunteers will need her help or advise. Because of all the responsibilities she has carried throughout the lifespan of ICBIE, it is hard for her to hand over the torch to someone else, as she would have to teach them everything she knows.

The times change fast, 15 years ago it was rare to find a computer, and now many young people are addicted to their cellphones. *"It takes away all of their time"* says Marlene, while she explains to me how she notices that young people are much less engaged with activities and volunteering. She confesses that it is hard for her to understand some of the trends of the new generation.

On the other hand the volunteers explain that when they have new ideas, they always sort of have to consider the approval of Marlene and Pietro. They try to be considerate as to what they will find good and interesting activities to organise. They try to be sensitive to the fact that they might have different views than this older generation.

In the end this challenge can be seen as a beautiful exchange. One of the volunteers says: *"We bring a lot of new and refreshing ideas, but Marlene and Pietro have all the wisdom to guide us and give advice to our naive spirits, it's an exchange of the different talents of both generations"*.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to *'ICBIE as a place of cooperation'*.

12. ICBIE as a place of intercultural challenges and cooperation

'Instituto Cultural Brasil, Italia, Europa', it's all in the name! ICBIE's main objective is to represent different cultures. By giving the volunteers opportunities to get in touch with people from different cultures, they get out of their comfort zone and discover the diversity of the world. This brings them in contact with different, new ideas about society, and a possibility to look at their own reality from a different perspective.

Meeting people with a totally different cultural background, a different language, creates interesting exchanges, that sometimes go paired with challenges. These challenges create opportunities to learn intercultural and code-switching skills (adapting your behaviour to the social context you're in).

One of the volunteers explained to me that in Bahia, where physical proximity is the cultural norm, it is normal and even desired to dance close to other people on the dancefloor. When a French girl entered the Institute of ICBIE and they were having a party, he was dancing close to her, and she noticed a feeling of discomfort on her face. That moment he realized that physical proximity might be experienced differently in France, and he became more aware of this aspect. Now when he meets new people from other countries, he is more cautious in his way of engaging with them.

Intercultural meetings can also create moments of tension, when the understanding of some cultural practises are not (yet) understood. Meeting new people that have a very different background isn't always a joyful process. Some volunteers of ICBIE explain that they have already met people that look down on them, that have misconceptions about their lives, and come to ICBIE with a (white) saviour-complex. This results in painful experiences, but at the same time these experiences are important to understand that there are different people in the world. It also encourages the people of ICBIE to tell their stories from their perspectives, and not let other people tell it wrong.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to *'ICBIE as a place intercultural exchange'* and *'ICBIE as a place of cooperation'*.

13. ICBIE as a place of safety and love

Everyone needs a place to feel safe, and the more places like that exist, the better. Safe, in this context refers to a place where people can be themselves, where there is no shame or taboo, where there is no discrimination. In the context of Salvador, feeling safe sometimes also refers to physical safety, as many people indicate that they don't always feel safe in the neighbourhood due to the high levels of crime in the city.

Volunteers explain how ICBIE feels like a second home. They describe the warmth and friendship they feel, but also the comfort of knowing the space and knowing it is theirs as well. There is no feeling of discomfort, they know they are welcome at any time of the day. They describe it as their 'place of peace', their 'refuge', their 'paradise', as 'alegre' and 'acolhedor'(Portuguese words that can loosely be translated to 'joyous' and 'embracing'). And while everyone in Bahia embraces everyone, ICBIE embraces 'de verdade' (for real!). They describe feelings of freedom, invincibility, belonging and liberation.

Some explain how they often come to ICBIE for no particular reason, to eat their lunch there or have a chat, read a book. They are not always there to fulfill their duties as volunteers, most of the time it's just a place for them to hang out.

Being this space of love and safety, ICBIE has developed its own set of values, based on respect and mutual care. However, not everyone that comes to ICBIE fits into this story, some enter looking down upon the volunteers. Usually, these people soon find a way to change and deconstruct these attitudes of disrespect, or a way to leave, understanding that they may not be a 'good fit' for the organisation.

Many volunteers put a lot of emphasis on the extremely important role of Marlene, or how they call her: 'a nossa mãe' (our mother).

In Havighurst theory this can be linked to '*becoming part of a group or community*' and '*finding intimacy*'.

14. ICBIE as a place of joy and small victories

'Small victories' are moments in life that are not necessarily recognized as rites of passage, like graduating or marriage for example, but rather as small moments that are of great personal significance. These moments usually gain significance when we realize that they have happened, and why they were important to us, sometimes this is immediate, but that realization can also happen in a retrospective context, like when someone asks: "*When was the first time you...?*". These moments of small victories are usually related to emotions like: joy, nervousness and faith, and often have an important function in overcoming obstacles. A small victory can mean one has overcome a small obstacle, or it can be a small step towards overcoming bigger obstacles.

One respondent describes an experience of a small victory:

During a theatre piece I had to recite a poem that was written on a paper, but only after the play had started I realized I couldn't find the paper. I had to improvise! I was so nervous. But then, when the scene arrived I recited the first poem that I remembered, probably the only one I know by heart. At first I felt like a disaster, but when I realized I managed the situation I shone, on the inside, and from the inside out, I overflowed!.

Aside from these small victories, ICBIE is clearly a place of joy, a place of celebration. No one's birthday is forgotten, whenever something positive happens in the lives of the volunteers, it is celebrated. It makes people feel seen and supported, two things that play an important role in feelings of confidence.

In Havighurst theory this can be linked to '*emotional stability*'.

15. ICBIE as a place to rest and recharge

For many volunteers ICBIE is a place of rest. Some literally come here to take a little nap, meditate, read a book, or simply be away of the crowdedness and loudness of city, where music is playing everywhere, all the time. For those who live in more crowded neighbourhoods of the Peninsula this is particularly important, as they may not have a space in their house that is quiet and/or spacious. ICBIE has these days, where no

activities are organised, and one can quietly sit in the garden or in the library to enjoy some me-time, some space to think, or not think at all. This gives the volunteers new energy to continue their routines, and deal with the challenges of everyday life.

In Havighurst theory this can be linked to '*emotional stability*'.

16. ICBIE as a place of hope and new perspectives.

Although some volunteers admitted having fears about the future of ICBIE, most of them see this as a place that will only grow and create new opportunities for the people from the neighbourhood.

When I asked the volunteers if they ever have ideas to organise things at ICBIE, they all enthusiastically told me about their hopes, dreams and future projects.

They see themselves staying involved in ICBIE, even if they will have new responsibilities in life. ICBIE is so full of possibilities that it really has no age, it's an open center for everyone: children, adolescents and adults. Most of them see themselves supporting ICBIE in the same way they are doing now, by volunteering, some have specific desires about teaching or organising certain events, involving the community in different and new ways. A few also mention the desire to be able to support ICBIE financially.

Ideas like a meeting of artist, an open house day for people to get to know the organization, or events to bring awareness around Brazilian politics were examples I heard during the interviews.

Overall, a lot of hope is cherished for ICBIE, the volunteers visualize it as a place that will be full of people, from the community and beyond. Liberating the same potential from the new people as it did from the current volunteers.

Some express their wish to see ICBIE more visible and more studied, saying that the importance of ICBIE needs to be noticed and understood and valued.

I believe we will arrive at a certain point where people are so fed up with how society functions that people will demand places like ICBIE. The need for places with historical knowledge and different contacts is only growing. It's a hope I cherish.

This hope that is commonly shared is not only hope they cherish for ICBIE, it's a hope that reflects onto their own lives and the possibilities they will encounter. Having a place like ICBIE, this second home or community gives them a sort of platform to discuss their ideas and opportunities. It enforces their network and amplifies their ideas, as they can try out things in a safe environment, where it is okay to fail and start over again.

In ICBIE's mission this can be linked to '*ICBIE as a place of hope*'. In Havighurst theory this can be linked to '*emotional stability*'.

17. ICBIE as a place of challenges

Just as ICBIE is a place of hope and new perspectives, it definitely also is a place that faces many challenges. Each of the volunteers explained the way they saw the challenges of ICBIE; 5 elements reoccurred every time: investment and financial resources, human resources, visibility, the development of new projects and the current political climate that offers no support.

One of the volunteers describes:

The government doesn't value education and art, because education and art gives power to the people, and sometimes having this power in the hands of citizens means breaking the current political power. That is why ICBIE is neglected. ICBIE is of extreme importance for our community, even if it's sometimes not perceived by the locals. We need to be more visible, we need more investment, and especially from our own governance. People in poverty don't have a quality of education, and this makes them lazy. And I'm not saying this to point the finger at them. All of their life, they are made to believe that they will not reach more than the condition of poverty. But we need them to get up and realize that they have the power in their own hands. If people would show more interested in ICBIE, the sponsors would be obliged to invest more, and ICBIE could in return do more for the people. ICBIE can be uncomfortable for quite some people, because people around here conform to their current situation and ICBIE's proposal is exactly the opposite: it is to look at one's reality critically, which makes you want to not-conform and work for change. And this work is tremendous. You need to be present, to study, debate, learn and finally: act. This is all because of the lack of (critical) education. This lack makes people not value the place. And that's why so many institutions struggle. I don't blame it all on the government. And I don't blame it all on the people. But I encourage people to take up responsibility.

Future challenges are not always predictable, but many volunteers worry sometimes about how ICBIE will be handed over to the next generation, when strong leaders like Marlene and Pietro will need more rest after all these years of hard work.

These challenges can demotivate, as they sometimes seem endless and without much perspectives. Some people miss 'the old days' when ICBIE was full, and activities were constant. Yet, the people are very resilient, and take pride in how they manage to do great things with little resources, it demands creativity, cooperation, and a lot of effort, that in many cases comes along with amazing learning opportunities. These lessons are lessons in resilience, an important skill in the face of oppression. One of the volunteers said:

In the beginning I felt helpless when I understood the kind of difficulties ICBIE is facing, it made me feel powerless, but now, ever since I started helping more and more and started to enjoy the process of questioning and problem solving. It became something that, at the end of the day, gave me a lot of satisfaction.

6.2.8. CONCLUSIONS OF INTERVIEWS

After having described the different obstacles young adults of the Itapagipe face in the previous chapter, I have attempted to analyze the results of the second sub research question in this chapter:

How does volunteering at ICBIE help to overcome these obstacles?

I assembled a large amount of data and paraphrased and quoted responses from the interviews throughout the above analysis. To conclude this chapter, and answer this second sub question more briefly I will summarize the answer to the question:

ICBIE has functions in the lives of its volunteers. These functions answer the needs of developing certain kind of tasks that are present in the transition from adolescence to adulthood like developing autonomy or becoming part of a community. These functions generate a wide range of benefits linked to volunteering in the specific context of ICBIE, a cultural centre located in the middle of an urban area where certain social problems like violence, poverty and different types of oppression have a big impact on its citizens.

However I distinguished 17 different functions, they can be categorized into 5 head-functions.

- organising activities and the facilitation of taking up responsibilities that positively reflect on personality and the sense of identity
- facilitating the obtaining of knowledge and the implementation of that knowledge in personal worldviews
- stimulating interpersonal relationships and acquiring skills to improve them
- creating well-being and healing
- sparkling hope for the future and challenging problem-solving skills to improve it

These functions are indirect ways of doing anti-oppression work through the search of recognition of the oppression; through knowledge and raising critical awareness, and by mitigating the effects of oppression by creating a communal space of possibilities, which aims to equalize the power imbalance in society.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis I researched how volunteering at ICBIE contributes to the personal and professional development of young adults of the Itapagipe Peninsula, focusing on different forms of oppression (classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious intolerance) that are experienced as obstacles.

I discussed how volunteering has positive effect on individuals. These effects can be job-related (like learning new skills), or related to feelings of joy and pleasure that lead to positive physical and mental health outcomes.

I sketched some aspects of Brazilian society through the lens of different groups that are inevitably part of systems that benefit a certain group by oppressing another; highlighting Capitalism, the Patriarchy and White Supremacy, that I have described as the root-causes of classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious intolerance, five forms of oppression I have validated through the explaining of their main concepts and supported by providing data from different sources of research.

I framed ICBIE within the practise of anti-oppression work; and through the methods of a survey, interviews and participatory observation, I confirmed that ICBIE indeed partakes in anti-oppressive practises by having various positive functions in the lives of its volunteers.

The survey, that aimed to answer the first sub question, examined the obstacles faced by young adults of the Itapagipe Peninsula. It brought to light a multitude of obstacles that are present: these are structural as well as personal, a dimension I didn't research extensively in this dissertation. However, this personal dimension is usually related to the structural problems that seep through our everyday lives.

Even if all five discussed mechanisms of oppression were present in the lives of different respondents, admittedly in different measures according to which groups they belong to, it was classism and its consequences that stood out most; being a factor that connected most of the respondents of the survey, creating a shared reality for the habitants of the Peninsula.

The second sub question, how ICBIE contributes to overcoming these obstacles, was answered with a lot of information and personal stories regarding ICBIE. Concluding it is the multitude of 17 positive functions that ICBIE take in the life of their volunteers that make the difference. Making it a place they can learn, take up responsibility, open their view on the world, create meaningful bonds, feel safe and loved and cultivate hope and resilience for the future.

The relevance of researching oppression lies within the realities we learn to name and conceptualize, giving us an opportunity to make certain problems more discussable and statistically supported, providing more sources of knowledge for those who want to take an active stance against all oppressive practices, while giving a chance of further education for those who are not aware of how oppression is embedded in our foundational systems.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the conclusions I drew in this research there are two types of recommendations I would like to make. On one hand for ICBIE, and on the other hand for further research on this subject.

For ICBIE

To the volunteers ICBIE is known as place that has a positive impact on their lives. However many express that their first encounter with ICBIE was a bit uncomfortable, and courage to enter the place was needed. As ICBIE sometimes struggle with attracting new people, whether that be new visitors, new students, new volunteers, new teachers or new artists that want to create projects, it is important to work on the visibility and accessibility of ICBIE. A place that at moments seems to be a bit unapproachable.

Some suggestions include:

- Clarity about the activities and possibilities at ICBIE through their social media canals, but also by making this visible on the building itself, by for example hanging out a programme. This could spark more curiosity and give the signal that ICBIE welcomes new people.
- Clarity about the mission of ICBIE could give people more insight into what exactly goes on in the cultural centre. Staff and volunteers could come together and write the mission, based on their own experiences of ICBIE and how they see ICBIE evolving in the future.
- Clarity about the opening hours and people to contact, as to not discourage people who want to make a first step towards ICBIE.

Other things I would suggest is to research new ways to actively involve the local community. By making this a priority, ICBIE will have more people involved, which increases the level of interest in the cultural center, generates more hands to help out and creates a larger network of support in the search for funds.

For further research

As this research was quite atypical; doing interviews in a very short time-frame and changing research-question afterwards, it would be interesting to continue exploring participatory research with ICBIE and with inhabitants of the Itapagipe Peninsula.

As this research was constructed upon a very shifting focus of subject, it would be recommendable to create new interviews that are more connected to the survey.

The five different types of oppression should ideally be researched separately, which could give the possibility to ask more in-depth questions and specify with cases and examples. Researching themes of oppression separately however can not be a pretext to erase the realities of intersectionality.

As the subjects of the research also implies the understanding of complex concepts, it could be interesting to organise participatory workshops around these subjects and concepts as to create a common sense of awareness. These workshops could be through direct forms of learning like conversation, but also through more indirect forms like artistic workshops. The collective exchange- and learning process could be monitored and discussed in further research.

Comparing ICBIE with other places that engage in anti-oppression work could also bring useful insights.

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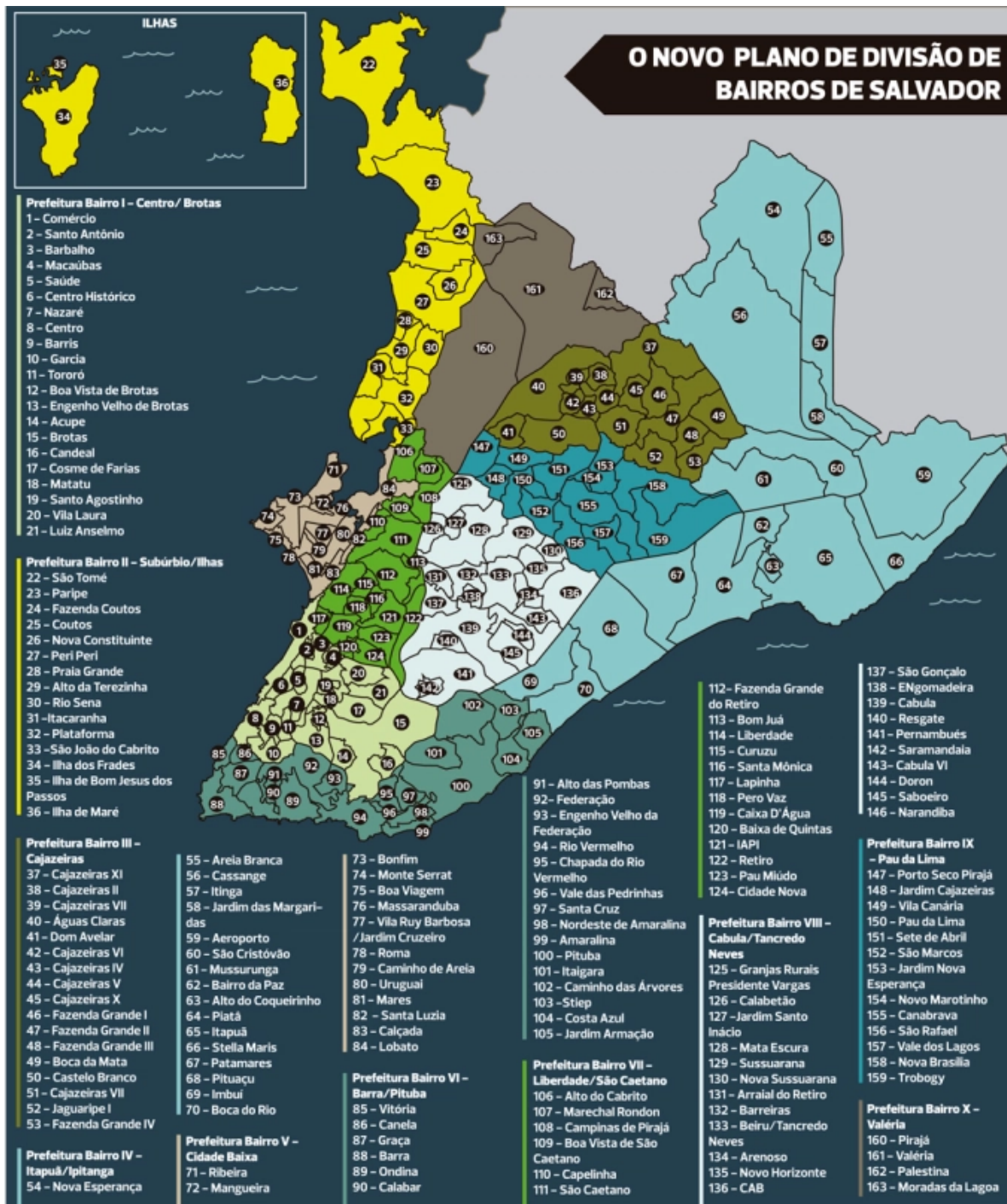
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APPENDIX 1



Retrieved from: <https://desigualdadesespaciais.wordpress.com/2015/11/24/mapa-racial-de-salvador-bahia/> on March 30, 2020.

In this image you can see the 163 neighbourhoods of Salvador divided into 10 prefectures. The Cidade Baixa is prefecture number V (5). The Itapagipe Peninsula is considered to be the whole Cidade Baixa, except for (82.) *Santa Luzia* and (84.) *Lobato*.

APPENDIX 2

Interview questions - volunteers

Basic information sheet:

Number of interview:

Where are you from?

How old are you?

Gender: M/F/X

Interview questions:

1. Can you tell me your story about how you became involved in ICBIE?
2. What is your relationship with Ribeira? What is your opinion on the region?
3. How do you feel at ICBIE?
 - A. Do you feel at home?
 - B. Do you feel included?
 - C. Is it a place where your voice can be heard?
4. Can you describe the role ICBIE has had in your life?
5. Can you describe a positive experience you ever had at ICBIE?
6. Did you ever have negative experiences at ICBIE?
7. Do you believe that ICBIE has an important role in the local community?
8. What do you think are the difficulties ICBIE has to deal with?
9. How would you describe what you do at ICBIE? Do you consider yourself a 'volunteer'?
10. How do you see your involvement at ICBIE in the future?
11. Do you sometimes have ideas about things that could be organized at ICBIE?
If yes, do you believe it's possible to make these ideas a reality?
If no, do you think it would be interesting to think about this together with other people?
12. If more people would be involved in ICBIE, what kind of people would you want them to be? Youth? People from the neighbourhood? Artists? People from other countries?
13. How do you imagine the future of ICBIE?
14. I'm doing my research about the quality of volunteering at ICBIE. Is there something you would like to add about this topic?

Português:

1. Você pode me contar sua história sobre como você se envolveu no ICBIE?
2. Qual a sua relação com a Ribeira? Qual a sua opinião sobre a região?
3. Como você se sente no ICBIE?
 - A. Você se sente em casa?
 - B. Você se sente incluído?
 - C. É um lugar onde sua voz pode ser ouvida?
4. Você pode descrever o papel que o ICBIE teve em sua vida?
5. Descreva uma experiência positiva que você já teve no ICBIE?
6. Você já teve experiências negativas no ICBIE?
7. Você acredita que o ICBIE tem um papel importante na comunidade local?
8. Quais são as dificuldades que você acha que o ICBIE tem que lidar?
9. Como você descreveria o que você faz no ICBIE? Você se considera um "voluntário"?
10. Como você vê seu envolvimento no ICBIE no futuro?
11. Você já teve ideias sobre coisas novas que poderiam ser criadas no ICBIE?
 - (Se sim) você acredita que é possível tornar essas ideias realidade?
 - (Se não) você acha que seria interessante pensar nisso junto com outras pessoas?
12. Se mais voluntários estivessem envolvidas no ICBIE, qual perfil você gostaria que elas estivessem? (Jovens? Pessoas da comunidade local? Artistas? Pessoas de outros países?)
13. Como você imagina ICBIE no futuro?
14. Estou fazendo minha pesquisa sobre o trabalho voluntário no ICBIE. Há algo que você gostaria de acrescentar sobre este assunto?

Basic information sheet:

Number of interview:

Where are you from?

How old are you?

Gender: M/F/X

Interview questions:

1. Can you tell me your story about how you became involved in ICBIE?
2. What is your relationship with Ribeira? What is your opinion on the region?
3. How would you describe what you do at ICBIE?
4. How do you feel at ICBIE?
5. In your opinion, what are the difficulties ICBIE has to deal with?
6. Would you agree that there is a culture of violence and fear present in Salvador? If so, do you think it affects the work of ICBIE?
7. In an ideal situation, how many people would work at ICBIE?
8. How important is the role of volunteers at ICBIE?
9. How do you think the volunteers at ICBIE are being impacted by their work?
10. Can you count on volunteers from ICBIE when you need help?
11. What are the differences you notice in the culture of volunteering between Bahia and the place you are originally from?
12. What do you think the current volunteers need to stay involved?
13. How do you think ICBIE could attract new volunteers?
14. What should be the qualities of a volunteer at ICBIE?
15. I'm doing my research about the quality of volunteering at ICBIE. Is there something you would like to add about this topic?

Português

1. Você pode me contar sua história sobre como você se envolveu no ICBIE?
2. Qual a sua relação com a Ribeira? Qual a sua opinião sobre a região?
3. Como você descreveria o que você faz no ICBIE?
4. Como você se sente no ICBIE?
5. Na sua opinião, quais são as dificuldades que o ICBIE enfrenta?
6. Você concorda que existe uma cultura de violência e medo presente em Salvador? (Você acha que isso afeta o trabalho do ICBIE?)
7. Em uma situação ideal, quantas pessoas trabalhariam no ICBIE?
8. Qual é a importância dos voluntários no ICBIE?
9. Quais efeitos que o trabalho no ICBIE podem causar nos voluntários?
10. Você pode contar com os voluntários do ICBIE quando precisa de ajuda?
11. Qual diferença você pode notar na cultura de voluntariado entre a Bahia e o local que você é de origem?
12. O que você acha que os atuais voluntários precisam para se manter envolvidos no ICBIE?
13. Como você acha que o ICBIE poderia atrair novos voluntários?
14. Quais devem ser as qualidades de um voluntário no ICBIE?
15. Estou fazendo minha pesquisa sobre o trabalho voluntário no ICBIE. Há algo que você gostaria de acrescentar sobre este assunto?

APPENDIX 3



- It doesn't work anymore Fran, we need to go home to do the quarantine!
- We need to take care of our families



- Family?! Your children are already big Dinah!
- Stop right there! Pedro Henrique is 13, Maria Vitoria is 11!



- Marli, you don't have children that I know of!
- But I have my mom! 75 years. Risk-group. I need to take care of her.



- Ok, then. But I can't pay for you to stay at home. I need to cut your salaries in half.
- What do you think?
- What to do? I need to stay with my mom.



- And you, Ju? Are you going to abandon me too?



- Stay with me! Do the quarentaine here at home. Better than to stay in the favela, isn't it?
- I'll do it. But I have one condition.



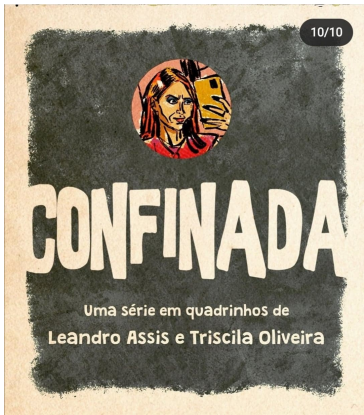
- The money you cut from them? Pay it to me.
- How absurd!
- Or else, I'm not doing their job. Take it or leave it.



Day 10 of the quarantine. Always seeing the good side of things. Even of the coronavirus. The masks are falling. The people are showing who they truly are. But the biggest mistake of the ungrateful is that they forget that one day they will need you again. #peace #meditation #gratituz



- Girls, I arranged to get your money. After, send me your accounts.
- Really, Ju?
- Ju! We were going to need this money! I don't know how to thank you.
- Nothing to thank me for. Us for us.



APPENDIX 4 - Management Summary

Aside from the personal challenges of going from adolescence to adulthood that are quite universal, young adults in the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador face specific challenges related to their living area, like unemployment and violence and challenges depending on their personal socio-economic background, race, gender, religion and sexual orientation.

Classism, racism, sexism, homophobia and religious discrimination are mechanisms of oppression that are still present in 2020. All the while empowering Brazilian activist movements like the *Black feminist movement*, "*Vidas Negras Importam*" (the Brazilian slogan for "Black Lives Matter") and "*Marielle Presente*" (a movement that support people of color, LGBTQ+, people in poverty, and people from the favelas) have been around and are arising, the Brazilian electorate (who elected the far-right Jair Bolsonaro) and the many statistics delivered by different institutions like IBGE and IPEA, show us that Brazil is far from reaching equality between its inhabitants.

No place in the world is free from inequality, it is a challenge that we need to face globally. However, we need to understand local realities so we can tackle inequality from different perspectives, listening to the voices of the people that are being silenced by the power structures that shape our highly unequal world (Capitalism, Patriarchy and White Supremacy).

I strongly believe that community building, coming together and working together on participatory projects (and especially creative ones), has the power to uplift and emancipate. When people come together under the right circumstances there is a chance for learning and growth.

The objective of this thesis was to map out the reasons why this place has positive effects on its volunteers, all youngsters from the Itapagipe Peninsula, so that the dynamics that create this environment can be reinforced and the dynamics that are working against these positive results can be analyzed and changed.

Research questions

The questions I researched were:

How does volunteering at ICBIE contribute to the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

With a division of two sub-questions :

A. What are the obstacles; related to structural mechanisms of oppression based on class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion; in the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

B. How does volunteering at ICBIE help to overcome these obstacles?

Methods

The methods used to collect stories, knowledge and insight were: a survey, interviews and participatory observation.

The online survey was conducted in April of 2020 and aimed to answer the first sub question. It was filled in by 27 young adults of the Cidade Baixa/Itapagipe Peninsula. The questions revolved around the 5 types of oppression I widely discussed in my literature review: classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious intolerance. Other questions in the survey revolved around other possible obstacles young adults

experience and perceive. Ideas for solutions and coping-mechanisms in dealing with oppression were also answered through this survey.

The interviews were conducted in March of 2019, a year prior. The questions were based on a previous research question I eventually decided no to use. They, however, covered a wide range of subjects, making them usable in the context of this new research. I used the vast amount of information collected to answer the second sub question as mentioned above.

Participatory observation was limited, as I only got to know ICBIE in the last three weeks I was in Brazil in 2019. Further observation wasn't possible in my second trip, because of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, which obliged me to go back home. The few occasions of observation however helped me to establish some connections with participants of ICBIE, and notice interesting dynamics, which helped me to complement the answers from the interviews, in the process of responding to the second sub question.

Research results question 1: obstacles

To answer the first subquestion:

What are the obstacles; related to structural mechanisms of oppression based on class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion; in the personal and professional development of young adults living on the Itapagipe Peninsula of Salvador, Bahia?

The findings in the survey motivate me to write the following:

When comparing the statistics I used in my literature study about different types of oppression such as class, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion, and the statistics derived from the survey there is quite some overlap. The responses show us that every type of oppression described in my literature study is experienced to a certain degree by a certain group of respondents of this survey.

Classism stood out as being the general factor that oppresses almost all of the respondents. Financial difficulties were mentioned many times in the open questions and 40% of respondents didn't have the financial possibilities to pay for education. Other issues like a lack of space and privacy, having many responsibilities aside education and having difficulties finding a job are related to economic inequality and classism.

Racism, was experienced by POC, and especially 'Pretos'. Factors such as not having a job, experiencing religious discrimination and suffering violence in the neighbourhood was experienced to a higher degree among them. More than half of all POC-respondents claimed being impacted by racism or highly impacted by racism.

A certain degree of sexism was showed to be experienced by 75% of women, experiencing higher degrees of feelings of unsafety, and with more difficulties finding a job, especially among Black women.

More than a third of LGBT feels strongly impacted by LGBT-phobia. None of them doesn't feel impacted. LGBT-women claimed to be more impacted by sexism than heterosexual women and compared to heterosexual men, LGBT-men were more impacted by toxic masculinity.

Of all respondents 63% claimed to be impacted to a certain degree by religious discrimination.

While all forms of discrimination were experienced, it is Classism that connects the majority of the respondents, and highlights the main problem youngsters of the Itapagipe Peninsula have to face. The obstacles related to Classism translate into: a low household income, high unemployment, poor education, bad transportation, violence and psychological challenges related to oppression.

Research results question 2: overcoming obstacles

To answer the second subquestion: "*How does volunteering at ICBIE help to overcome these obstacles?*", I summarized:

ICBIE has functions in the lives of its volunteers. These functions answer the needs of developing certain kind of tasks that are present in the transition from adolescence to adulthood, like developing autonomy or becoming part of a community. These functions generate a wide range of benefits linked to volunteering in the specific context of ICBIE.

I distinguished 17 functions of how ICBIE positively impacts the personal and professional development of young adults:

1. a place of first experiences
2. a place of personal growth through participating in activities
3. a place to take up responsibility and develop own initiatives
4. a space of self-discovery, a place to discover one's talents and aspirations.
5. a place to connect with roots and give value to one's own country and history
6. a centre of knowledge through language learning and artistic education
7. a place to broaden perspective about the world
8. a place to practise reflection, critical thinking and the expression of that
9. a place to learn interpersonal skills
10. a place of community and broadening of the social network
11. a place of intergenerational challenges and cooperation
12. a place of intercultural challenges and cooperation
13. a place of safety and love
14. a place of joy and small victories
15. a place to rest and recharge
16. a place of hope and new perspectives.
17. a place of challenges

These can be categorized into 5 head-functions:

- organising activities and the facilitation of taking up responsibilities that positively reflect on personality and the sense of identity
- facilitating the obtaining of knowledge and the implementation of that knowledge in personal worldviews
- stimulating interpersonal relationships and acquiring skills to improve them
- creating well-being and healing
- sparkling hope for the future and challenging problem-solving skills to improve it

These functions are indirect ways of doing anti-oppression work through the search of recognition of the oppression; through knowledge and raising critical awareness, and by mitigating the effects of oppression by creating a communal space of possibilities, which aims to equalize the power imbalance in society.

General conclusion

In this thesis I researched how volunteering at ICBIE contributes to the personal and professional development of young adults of the Itapagipe Peninsula, focusing on different forms of oppression (classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious intolerance) that are experienced as obstacles.

I discussed how volunteering has positive effect on individuals. These effects can be job-related (like learning new skills), or related to feelings of joy and pleasure that lead to positive physical and mental health outcomes.

I sketched some aspects of Brazilian society through the lens of different groups that are inevitably part of systems that benefit a certain group by oppressing another; highlighting Capitalism, the Patriarchy and White Supremacy, that I have described as the root-causes of classism, racism, sexism, LGBT-phobia and religious intolerance, five forms of oppression I have validated through the explaining of their main concepts and supported by providing data from different sources of research.

I framed ICBIE within the practise of anti-oppression work; and through the methods of a survey, interviews and participatory observation, I confirmed that ICBIE indeed partakes in anti-oppressive practises by having various positive functions in the lives of its volunteers.

The survey, that aimed to answer the first sub question, examined the obstacles faced by young adults of the Itapagipe Peninsula. It brought to light a multitude of obstacles that are present: these are structural as well as personal, a dimension I didn't research extensively in this dissertation. However, this personal dimension is usually related to the structural problems that seep through our everyday lives.

Even if all five discussed mechanisms of oppression were present in the lives of different respondents, admittedly in different measures according to which groups they belong to, it was classism and its consequences that stood out most; being a factor that connected most of the respondents of the survey, creating a shared reality for the habitants of the Peninsula.

The second sub question, how ICBIE contributes to overcoming these obstacles, was answered with a lot of information and personal stories regarding ICBIE. Concluding it is the multitude of 17 positive functions that ICBIE take in the life of their volunteers that make the difference. Making it a place they can learn, take up responsibility, open their view on the world, create meaningful bonds, feel safe and loved and cultivate hope and resilience for the future.

The relevance of researching oppression lies within the realities we learn to name and conceptualize, giving us an opportunity to make certain problems more discussable and statistically supported, providing more sources of knowledge for those who want to take an active stance against all oppressive practices, while giving a chance of further education for those who are not aware of how oppression is embedded in our foundational systems.

Recommendations

From the conclusions I drew in this research there are two types of recommendations I made. On one hand for ICBIE, and on the other hand for further research on this subject.

For ICBIE

To the volunteers ICBIE is known as place that has a positive impact on their lives. However many express that their first encounter with ICBIE was a bit uncomfortable, and courage to enter the place was needed. As ICBIE sometimes struggle with attracting new people, whether that be new visitors, new students, new volunteers, new teachers or new artists that want to create projects, it is important to work on the visibility and accessibility of ICBIE. A place that at moments seems to be a bit unapproachable.

Some suggestions include:

- Clarity about the activities and possibilities at ICBIE through their social media canals, but also by making this visible on the building itself, by for example hanging out a programme. This could spark more curiosity and give the signal that ICBIE welcomes new people.
- Clarity about the mission of ICBIE could give people more insight into what exactly goes on in the cultural centre. Staff and volunteers could come together and write the mission, based on their own experiences of ICBIE and how they see ICBIE evolving in the future.
- Clarity about the opening hours and people to contact, as to not discourage people who want to make a first step towards ICBIE.

Other things I would suggest is to research new ways to actively involve the local community. By making this a priority, ICBIE will have more people involved, which increases the level of interest in the cultural center, generates more hands to help out and creates a larger network of support in the search for funds.

For further research

As this research was quite atypical; doing interviews in a very short time-frame and changing research-question afterwards, it would be interesting to continue exploring participatory research with ICBIE and with inhabitants of the Itapagipe Peninsula.

As this research was constructed upon a very shifting focus of subject, it would be recommendable to create new interviews that are more connected to the survey.

The five different types of oppression should ideally be researched separately, which could give the possibility to ask more in-depth questions and specify with cases and examples. Researching themes of oppression separately however can not be a pretext to erase the realities of intersectionality.

As the subjects of the research also implies the understanding of complex concepts, it could be interesting to organise participatory workshops around these subjects and concepts as to create a common sense of awareness. These workshops could be through direct forms of learning like conversation, but also through more indirect forms like artistic workshops. The collective exchange- and learning process could be monitored and discussed in further research.

Comparing ICBIE with other places that engage in anti-oppression work could also bring useful insights.