



UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY: A COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY APPROACH

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Abstract

The purpose is to analyze, from Community Psychology's perspective, psychosocial expressions of poverty and their contributions for intervention in public policy. Community Psychology accents the criticism about the factors that maintain those material and symbolic aspects that interfere with the subjective constitution of the poor. Exploratory research, quantitative and qualitative, was conducted with 417 adult subjects from a rural and urban community in Brazil. Poverty involves moral explanations about the poor. Family, neighbors and religion are emphasized as sources of support, which highlights the need for strategies then community relations and resizing of performance in public policy.

Keywords: community psychology; poverty; public policy; subjectivity; social support.

Community psychology is an area of Social Liberation Psychology (Góis, 2008) that emphasizes the community and the lifestyles of subjects as potential for intervention. Part of the criticism of the individualistic conception historically associated with knowledge in psychology (Montero, 2004). The collective task of community psychology is to act according to the desires and needs of the population (Montero & Soon, 2009). Since its origin, it establishes a



relationship with public policies (Alfaro, 2013) and the expression of the discipline in Latin America emphasizes the need to overcome the conditions of poverty of large sectors of the population, and takes the strengthening of social participation as an important element. to overcome poverty (Wiesenfeld & Sánchez, 2012).

In Latin America, community psychology as a field of knowledge and praxis must act with a view to problematizing the hegemonic neoliberal system, which accentuates poverty, exclusion and individualism, to the detriment of collective and solidarity values (Rodríguez, 2012). . By questioning the situations and psychosocial processes associated with the quality of life of groups in precariousness and inequality, community psychology is concerned with the variables that prevent or block the population's experience of democracy (Wiesenfeld, 2011). It is, therefore, constituted as an interdisciplinary field of knowledge, capable of contributing to the expansion of discussions on the topic of poverty, based on the establishment of a multidimensional and critical analysis of the phenomenon, in its psychosocial dimensions,

According to Montero and Serrano-García (2011), when analyzing the history of community psychology in Latin America, two constants are found: the locus of the sphere of public life and the establishment of a relationship with the State (confrontational). or support), as elements inherent to the intervention processes. In Brazil, actions in community psychology began in the 1970s and 1980s, under the influence of social movements and popular demands (Lane, 2002), which also became a driving force for the redemocratization of the country, after the military dictatorship. In the decade of the 90s, in Latin America, action in state actions linked to the problem of poverty and social inequality was consolidated (Alfaro, 2013), a phenomenon also observed in



Brazil. Regarding the relationship between psychology and public policies, Carvalho and Serrano-García (2008) highlight these as capable of producing an improvement in the quality of life of the population, as an expanding field of action of psychological science and lacking research development. Faced with such a scenario, community psychology, based on the paradigm of liberation (Guareschi, 2009) and the development of participatory methodologies, has proven to be important for the processes of formulation, intervention and evaluation of public policies, contributing to the fight for overcoming social oppression, typical of contexts marked by poverty, through a greater approximation between public policies and popular problems. Carvalho and Serrano-García (2008) highlight these as capable of producing an improvement in the quality of life of the population, as an expanding field of action of psychological science and lacking research development. Faced with such a scenario, community psychology, based on the paradigm of liberation (Guareschi, 2009) and the development of participatory methodologies, has proven to be important for the processes of formulation, intervention and evaluation of public policies, contributing to the fight for overcoming social oppression, typical of contexts marked by poverty, through a greater approximation between public policies and popular problems. Carvalho and Serrano-García (2008) highlight these as capable of producing an improvement in the quality of life of the population, as an expanding field of action of psychological science and lacking research development. Faced with such a scenario, community psychology, based on the paradigm of liberation (Guareschi, 2009) and the development of participatory methodologies, has proven to be important for the processes of formulation, intervention and evaluation of public policies, contributing to the fight for overcoming social



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The present study is based on the assumptions that poverty is expressed through material and symbolic issues, interfering with the subjective constitution of individuals. Consequently, community psychology, as a theoretical, practical and ethical field, would be the reference capable of providing help to strengthen the performance of public policies and community support networks, based on the consideration of subjective expressions in contexts of poverty. Given the above, this article aims to analyze, from the perspective of community psychology, the psychosocial expressions of poverty and its contribution to intervention in public policies.



Therefore, an analysis of everyday poverty is carried out, expressed through socio-demographic variables (birth rate, access to income, work, education, health, leisure and culture), as well as an analysis of a subjective dimension of poverty. poverty, based on the variable conceptions of poverty and explanations of its causes, recognition of oneself as poor, moral dimension of poverty (faith, hope and dignity of poverty) and social support network.

Community psychology, poverty and public policies in Brazil

Poverty is constituted as a global phenomenon, perpetuated from historical processes of exclusion and social inequality (Demo, 2001). This phenomenon is understood from a multidimensional perspective (Sen, 2010), in which the spectrum of its understanding expands beyond income deprivation, moving towards an understanding of the various impacts that it causes in the lives of subjects, in the possibilities of developing individual potential and establishing a dignified life.

Poverty is structured within neoliberal capitalism, the current socioeconomic model, strongly marked by the globalization of the economy, minimization of the State, cutting expenses with social benefits, flexibility of the labor market, privatizations and policies aimed at strengthening the free trade (Accorssi, Scarparo, & Guareschi, 2012). In Latin America, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have strengthened neoliberal ideology, regulated and formulated social public policies (Gutiérrez, 2001). Since the 1990s, poverty reduction has become a guideline of international development organizations that define targeting policies as an intervention strategy, which in Latin American countries run the risk of translating into palliative measures, Data from the United Nations Development Program, 2014) reveal that around the world 1.2 billion people live on less than US\$ 1.25 per day; 1.5 billion live



in multidimensional poverty, with overlapping deprivations in health, education and living standards and 800 million are vulnerable to the risk of falling into poverty. In Brazil, currently, there are about 16.2 million people living in extreme poverty, and 59% of these are located in the northeast of the country (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE], 2011). According to the IBGE, the per capita family income of the richest 20% is 17.8 times greater than that of the poorest 20%. In pursuit of the eradication of poverty, in 2003, the Brazilian federal government implemented the Bolsa Familia Program (PBF) ¹. According to an evaluation carried out by Souza and Osório (2013), after 10 years of operation of the PBF, there was a decrease in poverty and extreme poverty, which together fell from 23.9% to 9.6% of the population. Such data show that important changes have occurred in the last decade, although there is much to do in terms of confronting poverty and social inequality, and affirming the role of public policies in this process.

In the Brazilian scenario, the Constitutional Charter of 1988 was the first legal instrument that regulated social rights, emphasizing health, prevention for social security and social assistance as a triad of Brazilian welfare policy security. Even so, the legal recognition of rights did not immediately imply their implementation, a process typical of countries that established their social regulation late (Sposati, 2003). In the following years, was the promulgation of the Organic Law of Social Assistance, of the National Policy of Social Assistance (Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate a Fome, 2004) and more recently the establishment of the plan "Brasil Sem Miséria" ² actions who stand out in the fight for the guarantee of social rights.

Despite having as its main foundation the constitution of social protection policies and not charity, this did not mean the implementation of principles of



autonomy and inclusion. It is known that, in contexts marked by poverty, the singularities of access to education, the specific modes of family structuring and organization of individual experiences are the elements that interfere with the ways in which subjects manage their situation (Rego & Pinzani, 2013). However, blaming the poor for their situation is still common. These visions highlight the culture of lack, of the "lack of" (Torossian & Rivero, 2013), to the detriment of views that should focus on the subjective modes of constitution of subjects in conditions of poverty.

One of the effects of blaming is the reinforcement in the social imagination of the poor as someone who is subaltern, helpless, incapable, dependent, ignorant and violent. Góis (2008) speaks of the existence of an "ideology of submission and resignation" that defines the conditions and collective way of living of the poor population, and can shape their living conditions and act on their psychic structure. In this way, poverty is demonstrated in its psychosocial dimensions, producing phenomena such as fatalism (Martín-Baró, 1998), the experience of shame and humiliation (Zavaleta, 2007) and the establishment of a social support network for coping. (Fence, 2000).

Community psychology develops important contributions to the analysis of poverty, due to the psychosocial reading it makes of the way of life of the popular classes. Beyond attention to the living conditions inherent to this context, it is dedicated to the cultural and symbolic processes that constitute and maintain social realities. They highlight the symbolic ways of constituting poverty and its impacts on the forms of structuring of the psyche (Cidade, Moura Jr., & Ximenes, 2012). In this sense, poverty implies a type of existence, woven from macro and microsocial relationships, established from structural,



symbolic, social and economic preconditions. Man being "a set of social relations embodied in an individual" (Vygotsky, 2000, p. 33),

Method

Design and participants

This exploratory research included quantitative and qualitative analysis. The study was carried out in two stages. In the first, a questionnaire with multiple choice questions was applied and in the second, focus groups were carried out with some participants from the previous stage. A total number of 417 subjects participated in the research, with 50.4% (N = 210) inhabitants of the Grande Bom Jardim Region, an urban community located in Fortaleza (Ceará-Brazil) and 49.6% (N = 207) residents of the community. rural Cana-fistula, located in the municipality of Apuiarés (Ceará-Brazil). All participants were over 18 years old, had lived in the localities for at least a year and were beneficiaries of some income transfer program, accounting for 61.2% of the sample. Among the participants,

The Grande Bom Jardim Region is made up of the neighborhoods Bom Jardim, Siqueira, Canindezinho, Granja Lisboa and Granja Portugal. It is located in the southwest of the capital, located in a region that has 541,511 inhabitants, characterized by being the most populated and poorest in the city, with 7.12% of people living in extreme poverty (Instituto de Pesquisa e Estratégia Econômica do Brasil [IPECE], 2012). The community of Canafístula is located 118 kilometers from Fortaleza (state capital), and about 170 families live there, counting just over a thousand people. In the municipality of Apuiarés, 37.84% of the rural population lives in extreme poverty (IPECE, 2014).

Instruments



In the quantitative stage of the research, a 37-item questionnaire was applied, the Multidimensional Poverty Questionnaire, which includes sociodemographic data (city, age, sex, religion, residential characteristics, birth rate, health, education, work, income, access to policies of income transfer) and items on self-definition in relation to poverty/wealth and social support. A descriptive statistical and variance analysis was applied to the results of the questionnaires, with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 18.0.

In the qualitative stage, focus groups were developed with the objective of investigating the participants' senses and meanings about poverty and the survival strategies undertaken. The quantitative data were analyzed according to the perspective of Thematic Content Analysis (Bardin, 2011), with the help of the Atlas Ti 5.2 software.

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered by the researchers individually (in most cases) and collectively. In the first case, the interviewer read the questions to the interviewee and marked his response; This procedure occurred due to the participant's low education level. In the second case, the questionnaires were self-administered in a group under the guidance of a researcher. Such procedures were based on home visits or prior appointment with a community group for a collective application.

Regarding the focus groups, the research team met with the participants in advance and organized the appropriate place for them to take place. A total of five focus groups were carried out: three in the community of Canafistula and two in the community of Bom Jardim, with an average of 6 to 12 participants, and a total of 38 people. The selection of these subjects occurred according to the following criteria: having responded to the questionnaire, having a personal



income of up to R\$ 339.00³, having up to 9 years of study, having the time to participate in the study and signing the Consent. Free and Informed Prior.

Ethical aspects

Based on the parameters and items that govern Resolution 466 of 2012 of the National Health Council of Brazil, which regulates research with human beings in the country, the research was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Ceará, being approved with documents CAAE: 07810512.3.0000.5054 and Opinion No. 191,508. In addition, the participants were included in the study through Free and Informed Consent, and each participant was explained the objectives and purposes of the research, the methodology applied, the non-obligation of participation and its voluntary nature, as well as the guarantee of confidentiality of the information and anonymity of the informant.

Results

The data presented below was structured according to the dimensions of everyday poverty and subjective aspects of poverty. Everyday poverty is analyzed in terms of how sociodemographic data are manifested through access to income, work, education, leisure and health. The subjective aspects integrate the conceptions of poverty, the explanations of the causes of poverty, the recognition of oneself as poor, the moral expression of poverty and the coping made possible through the offer of support networks.

TABLA 1
Dimensiones y variables del estudio

Dimensiones	Variables
Pobreza Cotidiana	Trabajo Renta Educación Natalidad Ocio y Cultura Seguridad Pública Salud
Aspectos subjetivos de la pobreza	Concepción sobre pobreza Explicaciones de las causas de pobreza Reconocimiento de sí como pobre Expresión moral de pobreza (fe, esperanza y dignidad de pobreza) Afrontamiento - Red de apoyo

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Everyday poverty

Regarding employment status, 55.4% (N = 232) report not having any type of paid work, as expressed in [Table 2](#) . In relation to this data, it is important to note that sporadic informal work is not recognized as a work activity. Whether in the urban or rural context, the configurations of the world of work are marked by unemployment, precariousness, the loss of acquired social rights and fragility in labor relations. Some subjects end up experiencing situations of financial insecurity and poverty. In the study, it is observed that 22.5% of the sample is located in the extreme poverty range, with income less than R\$ 85.00.

TABLA 2
Características sociodemográficas de los participantes

	N	%
Actualmente, ¿usted está ejerciendo algún tipo de trabajo remunerado?		
No	231	55.4
Sí	183	43.9
No contesta	3	0.7
Total	417	100
Renta personal		
Hasta 85.00	94	22.5
De 85.00 hasta 170.00	40	9.6
De 170.00 hasta 339.00	63	15.1
De 339.00 hasta 678.00	121	29.0
Más de 678.00	83	19.9
No contesta	16	3.8
Total	417	100
Tiempo de estudio		
No estudió	33	7.9
Hasta 5 años	106	25.4
Estudió de 6 a 9 años	69	16.5
Estudió de 10 a 11 años	44	10.6
Estudió de 12 años o más	160	38.4
No contesta	5	1.2
Total	417	100
Número de hijos		
0	140	33.6
1-2	114	27.3
3-4	75	18
5-6	28	6.8
7 o más	48	11.4
No contesta	12	2.9
Total	417	100
Número de beneficiarios de programa de transferencia de renta en la familia (p. ej. Programa Bolsa Familia y otros)		
No	156	37.4
Sí	255	61.2
No contesta	5	1.2
Total	417	100
Acceso a los servicios de salud		
Nunca	31	7.4
Pocas veces	197	47.2
Frecuentemente	79	18.9
Siempre	107	25.7
No contesta	3	0.7
Total	417	100

Fuente: elaboración propia

Due to such insecurity, in families where there are pensioners, it is common for them to become the main providers of the home, as seen in the following speech: "(...) my father is old and lives with me (...)). We practically live off my father's help. Because my husband, he is a worker, but he is already of a certain age and is sick" (GF2BJ).

Among those interviewed, 61.2% (N = 255) claim to receive some type of income transfer benefit from the government, as explained in Table 2, [which](#) has provided families with the basic resources for their existence, which, in periods of drought in the rural context, prevents the accentuation of hunger and the occurrence of food looting. The subjects affirm that such programs may contribute to the apathy of the beneficiaries in the face of a given situation, but they do not recognize it as the only cause of maintenance. On the contrary, they point to a cycle of perpetuation of poverty, closely related to precarious access to public policies.

The issue with families is that they get used to this help, but they get used to it, they adjust, but the need exists because that help does not cover everything and that has an impact on health, that has an impact on education... it seems to me very little (...), but even so, families are already so needy that for them, they do not have that vision of better health, of better education, of the issue of leisure, they continue to be in need and this has repercussions on the health, in education. (GF2C) ⁴

In addition to the dimension of income, the narratives highlight the importance of work as a constitutive activity of the subject. The relevance of few employment opportunities is recurrent in the rural context, which announces, especially for young people, the need for migration to the urban context. In the focus groups, a fragility of public policies aimed at early childhood was evident,

since mothers confirmed the challenge of the lack of daycare for their children, which prevents them from taking up jobs. This is stated in the speech of one of the subjects of the focus group:

Lack of daycare here, here there are many mothers who need to go to work and help a little with their salary, but there is none. They don't go and then call them lazy, ah! That lazy woman doesn't want to go to work, she even wants to, but she hi (sic), she has many small children. (GF1BJ)

It stands out that among the subjects who had schooling, only 38.4% studied 12 or more years, according to [Table 2](#) , enough time to finish secondary education and/or insertion into higher education. The stories of the five focus groups point towards the recognition of the importance of schooling for overcoming poverty and highlight changes that have occurred in formal access over the years and a relationship between schooling and local development.

(...) I studied there for a short time, I only have completed the first grade, but I find it interesting and if the person was more interested in the studies (sic) because Canafístula grew more with the studies that are now happening (...) Canafístula improved a lot, it grew a lot and had a large increase in population after that energy. (GF3C)

Birth rate is another important element of analysis. According to [Table 2](#) , contrary to the common sense view that the poor have a high number of children, the total mean of the sample was 2.6 children per person ($\alpha = 3.32$). The t test between the number of children and receipt of the Bolsa Familia Program showed a significant correlation (0) between the means of the two variables, in which the number of children per family decreased. Such a result responds to the view that those who are poor and/or beneficiaries of the

income transfer program have more and more children with the intention of obtaining more financial resources from the Government.

Regarding access to leisure and culture, interviewees from the focus groups demand improvements. There is also a lack of confidence in public security policies, as stated by one participant: "We have (sic) to live with everything closed inside the house (...). I go to the police, I arrive and report. The The police are coming, what are they going to do? Nothing, just look, pass" (GF1BJ). In relation to health policies, basic care stands out positively, which contrasts with the quality and access described in other levels of care. When asked about access to health services when necessary, 54.6% of those interviewed reported never or almost never getting it, according to Table 2. In the focus groups, demands for improvement of health policies were raised.

I spent three months (...) to see if I could get a consultation (...) I consulted with the doctor, the doctor gave me the tests to do, I am still on the waiting list (...) if it were a A more serious thing gives the person time to die and will not be treated. (GF1BJ)

The inconveniences in carrying out tests and obtaining medications, in addition to the lack of attention from health professionals, were difficulties that were mentioned. The impact that health problems cause on family income is also highlighted, increasing health expenses and/or preventing the subject from working. The population in the rural context still shows the difficulty of accessing health services, due to the lack of public transportation.

Subjective aspects of poverty

When asked about poverty, participants raised definitions associated with not having access to goods and services and moral factors. They described poverty



as a phenomenon associated with hunger, dietary restrictions, the absence of housing and debt; as evidenced in the speech that follows:

Because if today you have something at home, but you have a large account at the store, you are poor (...) because you have something to eat at home, but (...) your non-compliance is high (...) that I consider it hunger, if you didn't have that debt you would be starving. (GF1C)

The qualitative analysis allowed us to identify a moral conception associated with the idea of a subject in conditions of poverty as someone who, above all adversities, must act according to previously established values and principles. Poverty would be related to having dignity, with a potential for resistance and integrity that is forged by life in conditions of poverty and claimed for themselves by the subjects. Being worthy implies: having faith, finding the strength to not give up in the face of adversity and not enter the world of crime, helping others, knowing how to live with neighbors, having joy, valuing the place where you live and the life you have, claiming quality In public policy actions, promote unity among peers and value simplicity.

According to the statement of one of the participants: "Think of better days. We are (sic) poor, yes, but we have, I have hope, to live better" (GF2BJ). Having faith refers to the hope of improvements, to the understanding that there is a supreme being who cares and drives us to action, who gives the necessary strength to overcome adversity, as can be seen in the following expression: "(...) without God you cannot have a direction in your life" (GF1C). Faith appears related to attributes that refer to fatalism, hope and religious support. According to [Table 4](#) , 40% of those interviewed find support in the Church always, almost always and frequently.

TABLA 4
Apoyo social

	Iglesia		Servicios Públicos (PSF, CRAS, CREAS, Escuelas)		Vecinos		Familia	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Nunca	137	32.9	206	49.4	130	31.2	28	6.7
Pocas veces	97	23.3	100	24	163	39.1	82	19.7
Siempre o casi siempre	99	23.7	42	10.1	63	15.1	187	44.8
Frecuentemente	68	16.3	50	12	44	10.6	104	24.9
No contestado	16	3.8	19	4.6	17	4.1	16	3.8
Total	417	100	417	100	417	100	417	100

Fuente: elaboración propia

In times of difficulty, the family is also noted as a support reference, being mentioned by 69.7% of the participants, according to Table 4. Family support is found more in the rural context ($p = 0.003$) than in the urban context.

There is also reference to other indicators, such as restricted or precarious access to schooling and professional qualification spaces, as well as limitations on leisure and purchasing potential. "Ah! my daughter, poverty is not having leisure. Children (sic) ask for clothes, you can only buy one clothes each year, and look" (GF2BJ).

The subjects consider poverty a structural problem inherent to the current socioeconomic model, unemployment, mismanagement and diversion of public resources by those in power. According to one of the subjects, "(...) in capitalism there will always be the poor and the rich" (GF1BJ). In contrast, another holds the subjects responsible for their poverty, attributing it to the fact of "having settled" (GF1C) or not knowing how to take advantage of the opportunities offered. There would, however, be a certain difference between "poverty of the belly and poverty of spirit" (GF2C), since the second would encompass subjects who value principles such as consumerism or who do not have an adequate schooling process.

The subjects were asked if they recognized themselves as poor, according to [Table 3](#). Among the responses, 59% claim to be "neither rich nor poor." Such data allow for discussions regarding the criteria used by people to evaluate their conditions. In the focus groups, it was identified that being at an intermediate point between wealth and poverty was due both to the analysis of historical conditions, which allowed the recognition of improvements in access to food, schooling and consumption, and to the recognition that there are moral values that interfere in this definition process, by allowing subjects to recognize themselves as "rich in spirit" (GF2BJ).

TABLA 3
¿Cómo se considera usted?

	N	%
Pobre	154	36.9
Ni rico ni pobre	246	59
Rico	15	3.6
No contesta	2	5
Total	417	100

Fuente: elaboración propia.

In the focus group, it stands out that no discourses were identified in the urban context that referred to family support as support for conflict resolution, contrary to what happened in the rural context: "For me, the family is the most precious thing (...). It's where I lean on, when I have a problem, they are the first people I look for" (GF2C).

On the other hand, 49.4% of those interviewed recognize the State (public services) as a source of protection. "The Church helps a lot, in terms of support. Even materially as well (...). But we have more support from religion than from the State" (GF1BJ). The ANOVA did not reveal significant differences between urban and rural communities ($p = 0.598$).



The social support found in neighborhood relationships was also low, since 25.7% of the subjects claim to obtain frequent support, always or almost always. Conducting the ANOVA revealed significant differences between the two types of community ($p = 0$), with neighborhood support being greater in the rural context.

Discussion

The reality presented by the subjects shows that living in conditions of poverty implies submitting to a series of deprivations of access to education, health care, public transportation and income. However, the expansion, in urban and rural contexts, of access to income transfer and social security policies through the granting of pensions stands out, thus enabling families to make some profit and escape extreme poverty. The problem of hunger is presented in a new guise, described in terms of low nutritional quality, but not the absence of food.

The predominance of informal work makes it evident that, sometimes, the occupations available to subjects in conditions of poverty are those that ratify a place of subordination, vulnerability to unemployment, low remuneration and instabilities in the labor market (Castel , 2006). It is highlighted that, in the rural context, climatic conditions and precarious access to production incentive policies for small workers minimize the possibilities of obtaining financial conditions to remain in the countryside, which generates migratory processes, modifying ways traditional ways of directing life.

The articulation between education policies and income transfer policies, based on the establishment of conditionalities, has made it possible to guarantee the punctual nature of the granting of the financial resource, as well as the increase in the schooling of the population and its valuation as a strategy. to overcome poverty (Fernandes, 2014; Silva, Brandão, & Dalt, 2009). It is about the



possibility of overcoming a historical debt of the Brazilian public power towards its people. The data even reveal, in line with other research (Alves & Cavenaghi, 2013), that fertility has decreased in poor families as there has been a progressive increase in the years of schooling.

Added to this are the transformations resulting from family arrangements, especially with regard to the role of women, who by referring to the ownership of the resource of the Bolsa Familia income transfer program, have increased their decision-making power and autonomy in home management (Rêgo & Pinzani, 2013). In this way, the need is affirmed for policies that emphasize "full employment and decent work for all" (Alves & Cavenaghi, 2013, p. 243) and that consider the specificities of single-parent female families, where the woman is the only provider. of the home, responsible for external work, domestic activities and child care (Camargo, Currello, Lício, & Mostafa, 2013). In this sense, the absence of daycares,

It is evident that symbolic elements are added to the issues present in life in conditions of poverty. On subjective evidence, not having and not being are two faces of poverty, which in addition to expressing a socioeconomic order (quantitative, material), also manifests a political sphere (qualitative and material) (Demo, 2001), therefore, symbolic . This double dimension is also evidenced by Accorssi (2011), who reveals that poverty is conceptualized from two central aspects: from the socioeconomic point of view (related to lack) and from the moral point of view (related to positive elements). such as strength and spiritual wealth). From the moral perspective, in the face of material poverty, what matters is having traditions, values, a religion, happiness, self-esteem,

It is highlighted that subjects in conditions of poverty, by not recognizing themselves as poor, denounce the social stigmas to which they are exposed. It is



necessary that public policies consider the guilt networks of individuals, which nourish the social imaginary with visions of the poor as someone well-off, lazy, incapable of managing their resources and violent (Sprandel, 2006). Finally, valuing the rich for their ability to succeed in the capitalist system and blaming the poor for their failure are subtle ideological strategies for legitimizing exclusion (Guareschi, 2001), which serve to maintain inequalities. It is about the articulation between the material aspects and the symbolic issues associated with poverty, when precarious access to goods and services is presented as a justification on a moral and cultural level, as one that perpetuates inequalities. On the one hand, there would be the subjects without power, expropriated of the ability to intervene in their own reality and, on the other, those who ensure the conservation of the status quo through ideological networks that maintain submission and resignation (Góis, 2008).

The existence of support networks for the popular classes allows important strategies to overcome the adversities present in life in conditions of poverty to be strengthened. The importance given to the support offered by the Church and by the family are relevant elements. Valla (2000) states that, in religious groups, subjects find support and also a way of explaining the material difficulties they go through, as well as a possibility of resignification of life, they feel capable of interfering in their destiny and to find more meaning in life. The family represents an important protection factor for subjects in vulnerable situations, which confirms the idea that the reference of public policies in this monitoring is of great relevance (Carvalho, 2010; Morais, Koller, & Raffaelli, 2012). The recognition that the territory brings together community ways of life and networks of unique relationships can also provide elements to think about the specificities of family configurations and interactions between neighbors that



give indications of the different references to family and neighbors. as support in the urban context and in the rural context. It must be considered that community dynamics in the rural context are characterized by the personality that marks the relationships between families, neighborhoods and permeates all the practices lived specifically in the territory (Dantas & Oliveira, 2014). The low reference to public services as a space for formal support may be associated with deficiencies in the connection between people and institutions,

In Brazil, social assistance policies stand out as a point of reference for intervention (Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome, 2004) and, according to the results of this study, it is evident as a locus that must be valued, since It emerges as a protective element against adversities coming from contexts of poverty. A closer approach of public policies to families, based on an intervention articulated with the community territory, can enhance the establishment of community networks (Goncalvez de Freitas & Montero, 2003) and become a crucial element in confronting poverty and recognition and appropriation of public policies as a protective space, thus overcoming

The development of collective interventions that strengthen processes of awareness and critical reading of reality, allied to the establishment of community actions in the territory of action of public policies, can contribute to changing such a scenario. Community psychology, by leaning towards subjective expressions of poverty, contributes to strengthening the performance of public policies and community support networks. It starts, therefore, from the need to overcome an oppressive daily life, marked by apathy, by discredit in the understanding of oneself as someone capable of transforming one's own reality and at the mercy of financial and political issues. Strengthening, from the perspective of community psychology,



Public policies, especially income transfer policies, aligned with improvements in access to education and health, have great power to establish a change in the lives of the population in conditions of poverty, by anchoring their actions in the emphasis on networks. of local support, highlighting family, religion and relationships between neighbors. Such articulation constitutes an important strategy to confront poverty. It is also concluded that the analysis and intervention in contexts of poverty must consider it in its material and psychosocial aspects, giving relevance to the suffering and oppression that is produced and perpetuated at the symbolic level, which supports the need for the contributions of community psychology. in public policies. The importance of strengthening the support networks established in the community context is also highlighted and that social change is confirmed when subjects are offered spaces for mobilization and articulation, even considering their specificities, their unique modes of representation and significance of reality. The development of projects, research and interventions that contribute in this sense is of great importance.

The results presented also point to the need to develop research that evaluates the impact of each of the policies with regard to tackling poverty, as well as their integration. It is also worth highlighting the importance of developing studies that highlight the psychosocial dimension of poverty, exploring prejudices in relation to the poor, their networks of blame and fragility, the importance of social support networks in coping with this flagellum.

Footer

¹ The Bolsa Família Program (PBF) is "a direct income transfer program that benefits families in situations of poverty and extreme poverty throughout the

country. The Bolsa Família integrates the Plano Brasil Sem Miséria BSM)" (BRASIL, 2004)

² The "Brasil Sem Miséria" program has three structural axes: access to services (area of education, health, social assistance and food security), guaranteed Bolsa Família income and Continuing Benefit Benefit (BPC) and productive inclusion in rural contexts and urban. (Plano Brasil Sem Miséria, 2011)

³ The equivalent of half the minimum wage in Brazil in 2013.

⁴ The acronym means: GF = focus group, focus group number and C = Canafístula or BJ = Bom Jardim.

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