

**DOCUMENTARY-RESEARCH ON THE INVISIBILITY OF INFORMAL
WORKERS LIVING ON THE STREETS**

***PESQUISA-DOCUMENTÁRIO SOBRE A INVISIBILIDADE DE TRABALHADORES
INFORMAIS EM SITUAÇÃO DE RUA***

***INVESTIGACIÓN-VIDEO-DOCUMENTAL SOBRE LA INVISIBILIDAD DE LOS
TRABAJADORES INFORMALES EN SITUACIÓN DE VIDA EN LA CALLE***



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ABSTRACT: This experience report presents the theoretical and methodological contributions of a course within a Graduate Program in Psychology focused on the production of a Documentary-Research (D-R). The study aimed to report the experience of producing a documentary on the invisibility of informal workers experiencing homelessness. The methodology was grounded in D-R as a strategy for psychosocial research and intervention, guided by ethical-political, participatory, and collaborative principles. The method assumes the shared construction of knowledge between researcher-documentarians and subject-characters, using audiovisual resources as a space for listening, dialogue, and the collective production of narratives and affects. The findings demonstrated that the use of audiovisual resources promoted the co-production of knowledge, increased the accessibility of science, and strengthened social feedback. It is concluded that the audiovisual method constitutes an ethical and innovative device for giving visibility to historically marginalized subjects and experiences.

KEYWORDS: Audiovisual. Informal workers. Homeless people.

RESUMO: Este relato de experiência apresenta contribuições teórico-metodológicas de uma disciplina de um Programa de Pós-Graduação em Psicologia voltada à produção de uma Pesquisa-Documentário (P-D). O estudo objetivou relatar a experiência de elaboração de um documentário sobre a invisibilidade de trabalhadores informais em situação de rua. A metodologia fundamentou-se na P-D como estratégia de investigação e intervenção psicossocial, orientada por princípios ético-políticos, participativos e colaborativos. O método pressupõe a construção compartilhada do conhecimento entre pesquisadores-documentaristas e sujeitos-personagens, utilizando o audiovisual como espaço de escuta, diálogo e produção coletiva de narrativas e afetos. Os resultados demonstraram que o uso do audiovisual favoreceu a coprodução de conhecimentos, ampliou a acessibilidade da ciência e fortaleceu a devolutiva social. Conclui-se que o método audiovisual constitui um dispositivo ético e inovador para visibilizar sujeitos e experiências historicamente marginalizados.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Audiovisual. Trabalhadores Informais. Pessoa em Situação de Rua.

RESUMEN: Este relato de experiencia presenta las contribuciones teórico-metodológicas de una asignatura de un Programa de Posgrado en Psicología orientada a la producción de una Investigación-Documental (I-D). El estudio tuvo como objetivo relatar la experiencia de elaboración de un documental sobre la invisibilidad de los trabajadores informales en situación de calle. La metodología se fundamentó en la I-D como una estrategia de investigación e intervención psicossocial, guiada por principios ético-políticos, participativos y colaborativos. El método presupone la construcción compartida del conocimiento entre investigadores-documentaristas y sujetos-personajes, utilizando el audiovisual como un espacio de escucha, diálogo y producción colectiva de narrativas y afectos. Los resultados demostraron que el uso del audiovisual favoreció la coproducción de conocimientos, amplió la accesibilidad de la ciencia y fortaleció la devolución social. Se concluye que el método audiovisual constituye un dispositivo ético e innovador para visibilizar a sujetos y experiencias históricamente marginados.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Audiovisual. Trabajadores informales. Personas sin hogar.

INTRODUCTION

Informal work, historically present in capitalist social formations, has been reconfigured in recent decades as a survival strategy in the face of structural unemployment and the precariousness of labor relations (Tavares, 2004). In Brazil, informality takes on multiple forms, ranging from street vending to so-called “odd jobs,” with the latter being one of the primary means of subsistence for people in situations of social vulnerability. According to Rodrigues Durães (2020), informal work carried out on the streets reflects a new logic of market integration, in which survival practices are articulated with business logic, but remain devoid of rights and social protection. In this context, the growth of discouraged workers is also noteworthy—that is, individuals who cease seeking entry into the formal labor market in the face of successive experiences of unemployment, turning to informal work as an alternative for survival. Thus, informality becomes a viable option for obtaining income, even if it is precarious or devoid of labor guarantees (Tiengo, 2021). Informality, therefore, should not be understood merely as the absence of formalization, but as a constitutive dimension of contemporary capitalism, which transforms precarization into the norm (Antunes, 2018). As Bernardino and Andrade (2015) point out, informality is associated with degrading working conditions, a lack of social security, and increased risks to physical and mental health. Thus, the everyday experience of these individuals is marked by vulnerability, insecurity, and the absence of social and economic recognition.

Among urban informal workers, people experiencing homelessness stand out, as they face conditions of extreme poverty or social vulnerability, often marked by the breakdown of family ties and the lack of fixed housing, using public spaces as a place for staying and survival. These individuals face precarious working conditions and processes of social invisibility that hinder access to basic rights, public policies, and opportunities for integration into the formal labor market. Furthermore, the fragility of support networks and financial instability contribute to the worsening of psychological suffering and relational difficulties, intensifying processes of social exclusion and marginalization (Vasconcelos et al., 2023).

In the Brazilian urban context, it is observed that people experiencing homelessness engage in diverse informal activities such as the collection of recyclable materials (cans and cardboard), general civil construction services (construction helper), street vending, and the provision of sporadic services such as washing and watching cars in public parking areas, which function as means of survival and an expression of structural exclusion, highlighting the paradox between functional visibility and social invisibility (Cruz & Garcia, 2021). This

dimension of “work out of necessity,” as pointed out by Bucciarelli et al. (2024), reveals the intertwining between precarious entrepreneurship and social exclusion, in which the discourse of the “entrepreneur of the self” conceals the structural conditions of inequality.

Social invisibility is a complex phenomenon, anchored in psychosocial determinants, the structure of institutionalized racism, and the inequalities inherent in the organization of social classes. Within the scope of labor relations, this condition manifests itself in occupations characterized by precariousness and the denial of labor dignity, in which the so-called “invisible worker” performs activities that demand intense physical effort, and which offer no prospects for advancement or improvement of working conditions, being frequently neglected in their professional environment (Castro, 2021; Queiros et al., 2021)). This invisibility refers not only to the absence of inclusive policies but also to the symbolic erasure that relegates one to a socially denied existence, producing feelings of vulnerability, insecurity, and disposability.

In this scenario, the role of the National Policy for the Homeless Population (PNPSR) and of facilities such as the Specialized Reference Center for the Homeless Population (Centro POP) becomes fundamental. These spaces offer basic support such as food, hygiene, psychosocial assistance, training opportunities, document issuance, access to social benefits, and reintegration into the labor market. Such initiatives aim to break the cycle of exclusion, even though they face the limits imposed by the very neoliberal logic of individual responsibility and state retraction (Cacciamali, 2016).

Against this backdrop, university education in Psychology is based on the tripod of teaching, research, and extension. This last dimension is aimed at social transformation and the construction of dialogical and pedagogical praxis that are realized in the encounter between academic and popular knowledge. It is through extension that the academic institution breaks down its own walls, collectively building new knowledge and actions engaged with social demands (Lima et al., 2022).

Given this context, we problematize how informal work, performed by people experiencing homelessness, expresses the contradictions between survival and social exclusion, and how Documentary-Research (D-R) can contribute to the visibility and recognition of these individuals. The issue falls within the field of extension practices of the postgraduate program in Psychology and the production of knowledge committed to social transformation, by seeking to understand the conditions of existence and work of groups marked by invisibility and precariousness.

The relevance of this research is grounded in the need to break with the social and symbolic invisibility of people experiencing homelessness, understanding informal work not only as an expression of precarization, but also as a field of resistance, agency, and the production of meanings regarding living and working in the city. Furthermore, the study seeks to strengthen the social commitment of Psychology by integrating teaching, research, and outreach into a proposal that combines the use of audiovisual media with ethical listening and critical reflection on dignity, work, and citizenship. In this context, D-R is configured as an innovative and politically engaged methodological strategy, capable of promoting co-authorship and the collective construction of knowledge between university and community.

The present article has as its general objective to report the contributions of Documentary-Research to social visibility and to the construction of spaces for listening and the protagonism of informal workers in street situations in the urban context of Manaus. As specific objectives, it seeks to: (a) understand the relationships between informal work, social vulnerability, and invisibility; (b) discuss the potential of audiovisual media as an extensionist and methodological tool; and (c) reflect on the ethical-political contributions of D-R to training in Psychology.

To achieve these objectives, Documentary Research (D-R) was adopted as a methodological strategy capable of articulating ethical-political commitment, audiovisual language, and shared knowledge production. By integrating audiovisual media into extension practice, D-R fosters increased visibility for historically marginalized groups, contributing to the collective construction of knowledge and critical reflections on dignity, work, and social belonging. This perspective is in dialogue with Gondim et al. (2018), who point to the need for expanding methodological innovations in the field of research in Psychology.

Thus, the article is organized into three main sections: the first presents the methodological procedures of the Documentary Research; the second discusses the results and the narratives produced in the field; and the third gathers the final considerations and the study's contributions to Psychology and to extension practices aimed at the homeless population.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the premise of Mussi et al. (2021) that knowledge is built through academic experiences and practices, the research was conducted between the months of March and December 2025, in the context of an extension course linked to the Graduate Program in Psychology at the Federal University of Amazonas (UFAM). The study has ethical approval from a Research Ethics Committee, through an umbrella project focused on the relationships between subjectivity, audiovisual media, and urban work in Manaus (CAAE: 78536124.7.0000.5020), articulated with extension actions directed at digital, educational, and social technologies and the promotion of mental health.

Documentary Research (D-R) constituted the central method, conceived as an innovative approach capable of understanding subjective and psychosocial dimensions, articulating itself with ethical-political principles of sensitive listening and the collective construction of knowledge about dignity, health, and citizenship. This methodological choice is grounded in the ethical-political character of university extension, which seeks to expand the visibility of historically marginalized subjects and ways of life, shifting Psychology's focus from the context of individualizing clinical practice to practices that recognize the collective dimension of subjectivity and the effects of structural inequalities (Carrijo et al., 2021; Queirós et al., 2021).

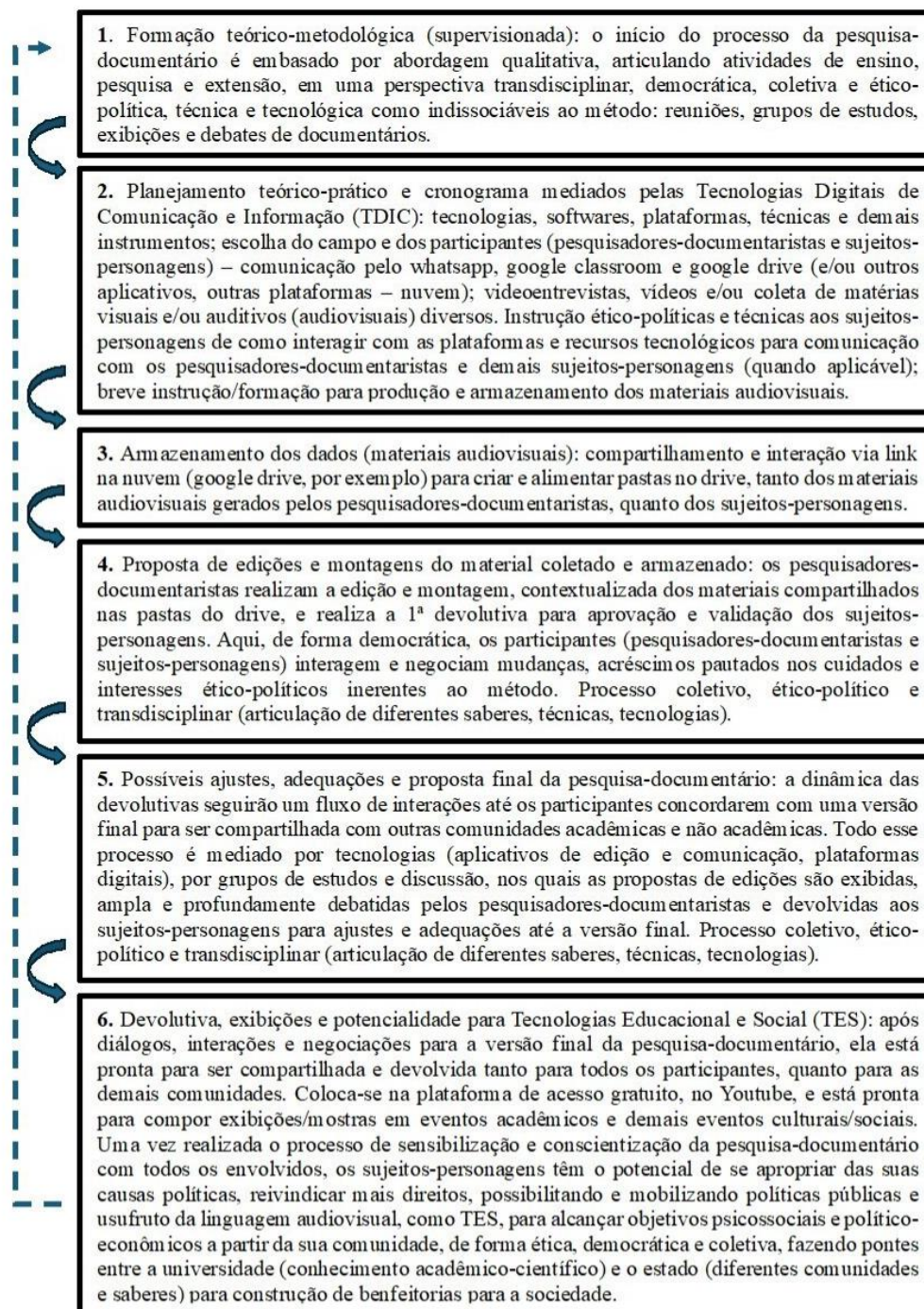
To delve into the nuances of the informal work of people experiencing homelessness, Documentary-Research (D-R) emerges as a method capable of articulating this ethical-political commitment to listening and to amplifying the visibility of historically marginalized groups, such as informal workers experiencing homelessness, whose social invisibility highlights deep contradictions between the discourse of citizenship and the real conditions of urban survival. By integrating audiovisual resources into extension practice, D-R fosters the collective construction of knowledge and the promotion of critical reflections on dignity, work, and belonging, contributing to the formation of a Psychology that is socially committed to the transformation of the realities it investigates. Thus, Gondim et al. (2018) demonstrated in their research the scarcity of methodological innovations in the field's research designs.

D-R, by recording and constructing narratives with participants, produces not only documentation and audiovisual records, but also spaces for listening, belonging, and symbolic elaboration, transforming both the subjects and the spectators (Gomes-Souza et al., 2024). This strategy strengthens the commitment of psychosocial sciences to social mobilization, the promotion of dignity, and health (Bertollo, 2024).

In the present study, the six stages of the Documentary-Research comprised: (1) theoretical-methodological training and extension planning, involving integration between areas of scientific knowledge and community practices; (2) territorial engagement and building bonds with the participants; (3) production of video interviews and audiovisual records, in which the Character-Subject (Cha-Su) participated in decisions regarding the content and form of the recordings; (4) organization, transcription, and shared editing of the material; (5) collective validation and feedback with the subject-characters; and (6) scientific and social dissemination of the documentary on digital platforms and in academic spaces. These stages occurred in an interdependent and procedural manner throughout the research, respecting the principles of horizontality, participation, and co-responsibility that underpin the D-R, presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Flowchart of the documentary research conducted in the study in 2025



Note. Adapted from Gomes-Souza (2025a).

Procedurally, the audiovisual was produced at the university and in a public space of an institution specialized in assisting people experiencing homelessness, with the participation of 22 people (17 researchers, 4 character-subjects, and 1 employee of the public institution), following all the standards of the Ethics Committee. Accessible Digital Information and

Communication Technologies (DICT) were used, including a Samsung Galaxy A21 smartphone, tripod, and microphone for audiovisual recording, as well as applications such as WhatsApp, Google Drive and the free software Capcut for communication, storage, sharing, editing, and collaborative assembly of the audiovisual material. The interviews, guided by a semi-structured script, captured narratives, affects, and lived experiences related to informal work, the absence of public policies, stigma, and forms of resistance.

The engagement with the participants took place within their own daily contexts of living and working, respecting the territorial and relational dynamics that organize the experience of life on the streets. After the initial contact, the participants were individually invited to join the research, and were presented with the study's objectives, methodological procedures, and ethical aspects related to audiovisual production. In some cases, the approach was facilitated by previous experiences built within the professional context of the research participants, which contributed to strengthening the bond, trust, and collaborative participation.

In addition to the signing of the Informed Consent Form (ICF) and the Consent Form for the Use of Image and Voice (CFUIV), the Documentary-Research (D-R) adopted an expanded and procedural ethical perspective. In this approach, consent was not understood as a one-time and definitive act, but as a continuous process subject to review at all stages of audiovisual production, including recording, editing, validation, and dissemination of the material. Social feedback was a central element of the method, since the final version of the documentary was only authorized for circulation after review and consent by the character-subjects. In this way, the participants played an active role in narrative construction, exercising autonomy over their audiovisual representation and sharing in decisions related to the retention, exclusion, or reformulation of content.

Such an ethical stance strengthens the protection of participants and reaffirms the use of audiovisual media as a tool for collective mobilization, critical visibility of informal work, and the promotion of social rights (Carrijo et al., 2021; Gomes-Souza, 2025a; Gomes-Souza & Sousa Lima, 2025). Furthermore, the collaborative perspective of D-R contributed to shifting participants from the condition of objects of investigation to the position of co-authors of the investigative experience, expanding spaces of recognition, belonging, and citizenship.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured video interviews held in the participants' living and working spaces, respecting their pace, boundaries, and modes of expression. The guide covered issues related to work trajectories, daily experiences in informal work, perceptions of risk and insecurity, physical and emotional suffering, coping strategies,

relationships of solidarity, experiences of social stigmatization, and meanings attributed to work and masculinity.

As a methodological differentiator, the D-R articulated scientific research, extension practice, and collaborative audiovisual production. Each participant was able to decide on their form of participation, including filming, being filmed, producing supplementary records in audio, video, or photography, as well as suggesting changes, deletions, or additions of content during the editing process. This shared construction favored the democratization of knowledge production and enabled the encounter between academic and popular knowledge from a transdisciplinary and participatory perspective (Gondim et al., 2018).

The final version of the documentary was constructed through successive movements of dialogue, revision, collective validation, and continuous consent, involving researchers and character-subjects in all phases of production. Following collective approval, the audiovisual material was made available on free digital platforms, such as YouTube, in addition to being used in extension activities, cultural exhibitions, and academic-scientific activities, expanding the research's social impact.

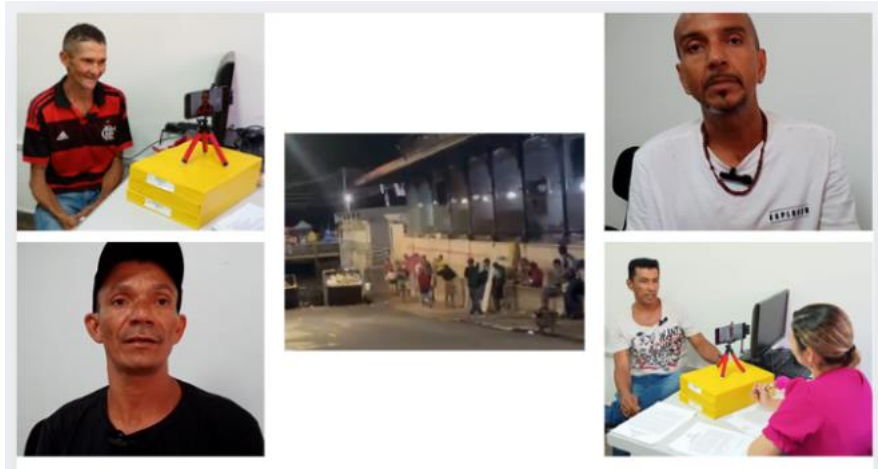
The data analysis was grounded in the frameworks of the Psychodynamics of Work, especially on the contributions related to the experiences of pleasure and suffering in the work context, to defensive mechanisms, and to the psychosocial repercussions of precarious work on mental health (Dejours, 2017). The audiovisual interviews were fully transcribed and subjected to interpretive thematic analysis, articulating verbal narratives, bodily expressions, silences, affects, and observational records produced during fieldwork.

Initially, a floating reading of the empirical material was carried out, followed by the identification of core meanings related to experiences of precariousness, social invisibility, psychological distress, recognition, masculinity, and defensive strategies. Subsequently, the analytical categories were constructed through semantic approximation and interpreted in light of the Psychodynamics of Work and the ethical-political frameworks of Documentary-Research.

The method deeply impacted the subjective dimension of the participants, promoting recognition, autonomy, agency, and a space for their voices to be heard. The documentary research followed all theoretical-methodological stages, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.

Screenshots of the frequented urban area and of the interviews with the character-subjects, 2025



Note. Authors' own collection (2025)⁸.

Thus, Documentary-Research has consolidated itself as a method and an ethical-political device for listening, making visible, and the shared construction of knowledge. By fostering processes of co-authorship and active participation of the characters-subject, the audiovisual medium made it possible to access subjective and psychosocial dimensions often rendered invisible in traditional research approaches, broadening the understanding of the experiences of informal work and survival on the streets. Based on these narratives and audiovisual records, the results and discussions constructed throughout the investigative process are presented below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The D-R developed with informal workers experiencing homelessness is based on the use of audiovisual production as a methodological device for listening, narrative visibility, and problematization of experiences related to informal work and trajectories of social vulnerability. The construction of the proposal emerged from observations made by the documentarians-researchers (Doc-Re) during their professional practice at a municipal public institution specialized in serving the homeless population, a context in which multiple forms

⁸ Images authorized through TCUI.

of labor precariousness, fragility of social bonds, and barriers to accessing fundamental rights were evidenced.

Anchored in the ethical-political principles of university extension and in participatory approaches to knowledge production, the D-R was established as a space for the shared construction of narratives, fostering the emergence of subjective, affective, and sociopolitical dimensions frequently marginalized in institutional discourses and social representations about the homeless population. In this sense, the audiovisual resource was understood not only as a recording tool but as a relational mediator capable of producing approximations, interpretive shifts, and reflective processes between researchers and participant-subjects.

During the recordings with the Cha-Su, open-ended questions were used, focusing on the trajectories that preceded their homelessness, income-generation strategies, affective experiences related to work and daily survival, as well as the future perspectives constructed by the participants. Such a dynamic mobilized both the Cha-Su and the Doc-Re in a dialogical and formative process, enabling the development of narratives about suffering, resistance, belonging, and the production of meanings regarding their own social experience. As highlighted by Carrijo et al. (2021), D-R is configured as a practice of co-authorship and co-responsibility, in which the camera goes beyond its merely registrational function, actively participating in the production of bonds, the negotiation of meanings, and the reinscription of ways of seeing and narrating the social world.

Invisibility, as a psychosocial phenomenon, emerged in the accounts of the subject-characters as a mark of exclusion, but also as a silent resistance. In one of the most emblematic statements, participant 2 stated: “The street gets into your blood and it’s hard to get out”. The metaphor conveys the internalization of the street as an existential condition, revealing that social marginalization is not only external, but permeates the body, affect, and identity. Participant 1 synthesizes the experience of loss and the dissolution of the self: “I forget who I was, and I miss who I used to be.”

These expressions highlight the subjective dimension of invisibility: the pain of being socially erased turns into a form of self-forgetfulness, producing feelings of helplessness and disidentification. As Rolnik (2018) states, subjective suffering is also political, as it results from the hollowing out of the bonds of recognition and belonging. The street, from this perspective, is not only a physical space of exclusion, but a symbolic territory that produces specific ways of being, surviving, and resisting.

Labor precarization appears intertwined with this invisibility. Participant 2 reports: “People generally don’t hire you because you live on the street”, highlighting the stigma that transforms the condition of homelessness into a marker of distrust, disqualification, and exclusion from the formal labor market. This systematic exclusion, as Tiengo (2021) argues, constitutes one of the most perverse facets of informality, insofar as it denies the value of labor and naturalizes precarity as a destiny. However, even in the face of this scenario of exclusion, elements related to dignity and the production of meaning in work emerge in the narratives. By stating: “I feel happy because I am making a person happier, as she needs that work” participant 2 reveals that work transcends its exclusively economic dimension, also constituting a space for subjective recognition, social utility, and self-valuation. Thus, even when carried out under precarious conditions and marked by the absence of rights, work appears invested with ethical and affective meaning, functioning as an important mechanism of resistance against processes of social invisibilization.

For the Doc-Re, experiencing these narratives in the field while maintaining direct contact with the life stories, mediated by the camera and by interaction, produced a type of situated knowledge, constructed with and not about the participants. As Freire (2011) argues, listening is a political act, as it implies recognizing the other as a subject of knowledge and not as an object of research.

During the process, the research group found itself affected by what Gomes-Souza et al. (2024) call the intersubjective field of D-R: a space in which the researcher is called upon to feel, elaborate, and revisit their own world references. Listening to statements like those of participant 2: “The street is a jungle. “If you are weak, they will walk all over you” or participant 1’s: “At night, people are sleeping under a store, it rains, there is no shelter” generated in the students an expanded awareness of social suffering, but also of the resilient power of these individuals.

The narratives produced reveal a complex relationship between individuals experiencing homelessness and the concept of work. There is a striking contrast between the interviewees’ previous professional trajectories and their current survival conditions. Two participants reported work experience at large companies in the Manaus industrial hub, government institutions, military service, and construction work as a foreman. The other two mention trajectories linked to artistic production (sculptures, drawings, and paintings), in addition to providing services such as car washing.

At present, however, their activities are marked by precariousness and informality, being described by the participants themselves as “odd jobs.” This reality appears in the statements of participant 1: “I carry things, I weed, [do] yard work, I collect cans...” and of participant 2: “I work at the port with loading and unloading activities, and in construction”. In this context, Tiengo (2021) highlights that calling people experiencing homelessness “beggars” constitutes a conceptual error and a degrading practice, as it disregards that homelessness represents a radical expression of the social question. Work is central to these people’s lives, and many are ashamed of strategies such as begging.

Homelessness is a multifaceted social phenomenon, intersected by economic, affective, familial, institutional, and subjective dimensions, and is not limited to the absence of conventional housing. The narratives of the participating subjects evidenced trajectories marked by ruptures in social and family ties, processes of vulnerability, and experiences of psychosocial suffering. Among the recurring elements in the reports, feelings associated with shame, family estrangement, and the difficulties of rebuilding previously weakened bonds stood out.

In participant 1’s account, marital separation is presented as a significant element in their trajectory towards homelessness: “The separation was a crucial point that led me to homelessness”. Similarly, participant 4 mentions health issues, family conflicts, and restrictions related to contact with their children, including the existence of a protective order requested by the mother. Such experiences indicate contexts of emotional suffering, relational instability, and the weakening of social support networks, aspects frequently identified in the literature as associated with the processes of remaining in or worsening of homelessness.

The obstacles faced regarding employability are challenging, but the emotional impacts are equally devastating. The interviewees suggest that the use of psychoactive substances and alcohol may be more of a consequence than the main cause of life on the streets. Participant 1 refers to them as “the cherry on top”, indicating that they are a complement to an already established condition. The dreams of recovering the life from before the streets remain, but one is confronted with the harsh reality that “it’s no use dreaming, you have to chase after your reality” (participant 2). This statement summarizes the paradox of having hope, but feeling trapped in a situation where the way out is “difficult.”

In light of the above, the D-R, by promoting this rapprochement between worlds, provoked what Bertollo (2024) calls formative decentering, shifting the researcher from a position of neutral observer to that of an implicated, sensitive, and co-responsible subject. This implication was decisive for the ethical and political formation of the students, as it revealed

that the production of knowledge is inseparable from listening, empathy, and social responsibility.

The choice of audiovisual media mediated by Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT) has allowed for the expansion of the traditional boundaries of research in Psychology. As argued by Gomes-Souza (2025a, 2025b) and Colombo et al. (2022), audiovisual language is simultaneously a form of scientific communication and a practice for the democratization of knowledge. By co-creating a short film, D-R transformed complex concepts from the psychosocial sciences into images, gestures, and affects accessible to a wider audience, bringing academia closer to society.

This aspect proved particularly relevant when the Cha-Su, upon watching the first version of the documentary, stated that they recognized themselves in the images and the spoken words. This visual and symbolic recognition operated as a process of mirroring and subjective elaboration, granting them visibility and a sense of belonging. Co-authorship, in this sense, becomes a device for citizenship. As participant 1 summarizes: “Today I live with longing... longing for who I used to be”. This statement, when displayed on screen, shifts the stigma of “begging” to the human dimension of loss and hope.

Furthermore, the experience mobilized the team of researchers to think about science from an aesthetic, ethical, and affective perspective. The technical challenge of handling cameras, editing sound and images, and discussing framing and cuts became an exercise in dialogue, sensitivity, and political rigor. Every aesthetic decision was also an ethical decision: what to show, what to silence, how to represent pain without exploiting it.

In this sense, the documentary’s construction process proved to be a powerful formative experience. Living with the Cha-Su, sharing editing decisions, and the ongoing dialogue about the versions of the short film transformed the way the researchers understood the role of Psychology and the university. As Lima et al. (2022) state, extension is the place where academic knowledge meets popular knowledge and, in this encounter, both are transformed.

The practice of D-R by ensuring the expansion of voice and authorship to participants, taught students that doing science is also an act of social responsibility. By recording and exhibiting the narratives of those who live on the margins, D-R has become a pedagogy of listening and recognition. Invisibility, in this context, ceased to be merely an object of analysis to become a shared experience, felt by both the subjects and the researchers.

As described by Gomes-Souza and Sousa Lima (2025), the audiovisual operates as a device of subjectivation and resistance, capable of transforming listening into visual narrative

and is in political movement. This transformation became evident the moment the participants saw themselves on the screen: the act of watching themselves broke the cycle of invisibility, restoring to them a place of public existence. For the researchers, this moment consolidated the perception that science can and should be a practice of emancipation.

The Documentary-Research experience demonstrated that the investigative process went beyond the technical dimension of audiovisual production, establishing itself as a space for encounter, listening, and ethical implication between documentarian-researchers (Doc-Re) and character-subjects (Cha-Su). Throughout the construction of the documentary, each stage produced distinct formative and psychosocial effects, both in the elaboration of the narratives and in the way the participants came to perceive their own trajectories and social positions.

In the process of establishing contact and building rapport, it was observed that the researchers' presence in the territories and communal spaces fostered relationships of trust and acceptance, enabling participants to share experiences marked by suffering, exclusion, and resistance. This movement contributed to shifting the traditional logic of research centered solely on data collection, favoring more horizontal and dialogical relationships.

During the video interviews, the use of open-ended questions allowed the character-subjects to narrate their trajectories freely, attributing their own meanings to their experiences of informal work, homelessness, family ties, and life projects. In this context, the audiovisual proved to be not only a methodological resource but also a mediator of subjective expression, capable of making visible experiences often silenced in hegemonic social discourses.

The process of shared editing has also assumed analytical and ethical relevance. The possibility of watching, discussing, and reviewing the audiovisual narratives allowed the participants to exercise greater autonomy over their representations, negotiating permanences, exclusions, and reformulations of the produced material. This movement reinforced the collaborative dimension of D-R and expanded the participation of the character-subjects in the construction of knowledge.

Another relevant aspect refers to the formative effects produced in the documentarian-researchers. Living with the participants and continuous contact with their narratives produced ethical, affective, and political shifts in the understanding of work, dignity, and social exclusion. Research has ceased to occupy exclusively the place of academic observation and has come to constitute an experience of social co-responsibility and subjective implication.

In this sense, D-R has consolidated itself as a practice of listening, recognition, and shared production of meanings. As discussed by Gomes-Souza and Sousa Lima (2025), the

audiovisual can operate as a device of subjectivation and resistance by transforming individual experiences into socially shared narratives. This dimension became particularly evident during the moments of collective feedback, when the character-subjects recognized themselves in the images and narratives constructed throughout the documentary. This recognition produced symbolic effects related to visibility, belonging, and the validation of their social experiences.

Beyond the investigative dimension, the circulation of the documentary in academic, outreach, and cultural spaces expanded the social impact of the research and strengthened the dialogue between the university and the community. The socialization of audiovisual narratives has contributed to problematizing stigmas associated with homelessness and informal work, fostering critical reflections on social inequality, human rights, and social recognition.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The experience developed through D-RIt highlighted the potential of audiovisual media as a theoretical and methodological strategy for research, psychosocial intervention, and the shared production of knowledge in the field of Psychology. By articulating teaching, research, and extension from an ethical-political and participatory perspective, the D-R went beyond the instrumental dimension of audiovisual production, establishing itself as a device for listening, social visibility, and the collective construction of narratives about work, suffering, and human dignity.

The results demonstrated that the integration of Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT) favored the expansion of the social circulation of scientific knowledge and strengthened the processes of community feedback from the research. The use of audiovisuals allowed the character-subjects to recognize themselves as protagonists of their own narratives, producing symbolic effects related to belonging, social recognition, and validation of their experiences. In this sense, the D-R contributed to challenging historical processes of invisibilization associated with homelessness and informal work, reaffirming the political potential of audiovisual language in the democratization of science and in expanding the dialogue between university and society.

Another relevant aspect refers to the dimension extension and collaborative of the method. The circulation of the documentary in academic, cultural, and community spaces through the link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dkw1ziKAi_k, expanded the dialogue between university, public authorities and community, strengthening Psychology's social

commitment to confronting social inequalities and to valuing knowledge produced in historically marginalized contexts. The experience has demonstrated that university extension, when linked to research and audiovisual media, can foster more horizontal practices of knowledge construction, in which participants cease to exclusively occupy the position of object of investigation and begin to act as active subjects of the investigative process.

From a formative perspective, the experience produced significant impacts on the ethical, political, and professional constitution of the documentarian-researchers. Direct contact with the character-subjects, their trajectories, affections, and experiences of social suffering favored shifts in the understanding of the role of Psychology, research, and the public university. The experience in the field allowed us to recognize that the production of scientific knowledge is inseparable from social responsibility, qualified listening, and a commitment to human rights.

As perspectives for future studies, it is suggested the development of documentary research of a longitudinal nature, enabling the tracking of subjective, social, and labor transformations of the character-subjects, allowing for the observation of subjective and social transformations over time. It is also recommended to expand research aimed at the public reception of audiovisual productions, particularly regarding the impacts of audiovisual media on social awareness, the formulation of public policies, and the deconstruction of stigmas.

It is considered that D-R has proven to be a powerful methodology for the production of critical and socially implicated knowledge, articulating science, art, territory, and ethical-political commitment. By fostering processes of listening, participation, and co-authorship, D-R reaffirms the role of Psychology in the defense of human dignity, in the valuing of historically marginalized subjects, and in the construction of academic practices committed to social transformation. Within this perspective, the audiovisual is consolidated not only as a methodological resource, but as a political and formative language capable of amplifying voices, challenging inequalities, and strengthening the social role of the public university.

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