

## Prison education in Brazil: state-of-the-knowledge

### Educação em prisões no Brasil: estado do conhecimento

### Educación penitenciaria en Brasil: estado del conocimiento

Francisco Carneiro Braga<sup>1</sup> , Josélia Euzébio da Rosa<sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> University of Southern Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil.

#### Corresponding author:

Francisco Carneiro Braga

Email: franciscocarneirob@hotmail.com

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#### ABSTRACT

This work presents an overview of recent scientific production on prison education in Brazil. Thereunto, a survey was carried out in the CAPES theses and dissertations catalog, achieving 15 works published in 2019 and 2020. Initially, the main elements of each work (justification, methodology, theoretical references, and results) were analyzed, from which was possible identify convergences and divergences, further most recurrent issues in discussions. Thereby, it was possible identify that analyzed researches focused on characterization of prison education in Brazil and its conditions, on experience reports and faced challenges, and on pointing possible paths to overcome these challenges. The study concludes that in general analyzed researches point to limitations that pedagogy in prison system imposes, also identified in non-prison contexts, and proposes a reflection on the relation between the teaching organization system and these limitations.

**Keywords:** Prison education. State-of-the-knowledge. Youth and adult education.

#### RESUMO

Apresenta um panorama da produção científica recente sobre a educação em prisões no Brasil. Para tanto, realizou-se um levantamento no catálogo de teses e dissertações da CAPES, chegando a um corpo de análise de 15 trabalhos publicados nos anos de 2019 e 2020. Inicialmente foi realizada a análise dos elementos principais de cada trabalho (justificativa, metodologia, referencial teórico e resultados), a partir do que foi possível identificar convergências e divergências, além das questões mais recorrentes nas discussões. Desse modo, foi possível identificar que as pesquisas analisadas giram em torno da caracterização da educação em prisões no Brasil e de seus condicionantes, de relatos de experiências e desafios enfrentados e pelo apontamento de caminhos possível para superação desses desafios. Conclui que, de modo geral, as pesquisas analisadas apontam as limitações que o fazer pedagógico no sistema prisional impõe e que também são identificadas em

contextos não prisionais, e propõe uma reflexão sobre a relação entre a organização do sistema de ensino e essas limitações.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação de jovens e adultos. Educação em Prisões. Estado do conhecimento.

## RESUMEN

Presenta un panorama de la producción científica reciente sobre la educación en las cárceles en Brasil. Para tanto, se realizó una encuesta en el catálogo de tesis y disertaciones de CAPES, llegando a un cuerpo de análisis de 15 trabajos publicados en los años 2019 y 2020. Inicialmente se realizó el análisis de los principales elementos de cada trabajo (justificación, metodología, marco teórico y resultados), a partir de los cuales fue posible identificar convergencias y divergencias, además de las cuestiones más recurrentes en las discusiones. Así, fue posible identificar que los estudios analizados giran en torno de las características de la educación en las cárceles de Brasil y de sus condiciones, de relatos de experiencias y desafíos enfrentados y por la identificación de caminos posibles para la superación de estos desafíos. Concluye que, en general, los estudios analizados señalan las limitaciones que la práctica pedagógica en el sistema penitenciario impone y que también se identifican en contextos no carcelarios, y propone una reflexión sobre la relación entre la organización del sistema educativo y estas limitaciones.

**Palabras clave:** Educación de jóvenes y adultos. Educación penitenciaria. Estado de conocimiento.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper presents an introductory study on the State of the art about prison education. This design enables mapping the main discussions performed in studies produced in Brazil on Prison Education. This type of study provided a general view on what is being discussed, how these discussions are occurring, and which path are taken regarding prison education. To summarize, we searched for identifying legal aspects on prison education, how this teaching is happening, and understanding characteristics of legal aspects of prison education.

In this scenery, education is conceived regardless the context that it occurs, as a right of everyone and which is a duty of the State, as foreseen by the Federal Constitution. From the Early Years in life, insertion in educational scope must drive the citizen to his/her intellectual development, then in the future he/she may contribute with the society through work.

Prison education is ensured by the law number 7.210, July 11<sup>th</sup> 1984, which assures right and free access to the school sphere, and professional training for the freedom deprived citizen as well. Offered as Youth and Adult Education, this teaching modality aims at, among other things, contributing to re-socialize the convict ones.

Reality of professionals who work in prison contexts, however, is marked by challenges of different nature and the right to education for freedom deprived people is not always ensured. Reports of absence of continuing education are not rare, as well as teaching material shortage, also structural and political difficulties. Given the above, this paper has the aim at analyzing recent scientific production on prison education in Brazil to understand what and how has been researched on this theme.

## METHODOLOGY

Theses and / or dissertations analyzed were selected in the CAPES catalog, considering “prison education” as thematic axis, with 2019 and 2020 as time frame. In total, 15 works were analyzed: 8 dissertations published in 2019, 5 theses in 2019, 1 technical report in 2019 (Professional Master’s) and 1 dissertation published in 2020.

At first, a meticulous work was performed to characterize the main elements of each study (justification, methodology, theoretical reference, and results), and from which was possible

identify convergences and divergences, further most recurrent issues in discussions. Posteriorly, three thematic poles were systematized, as presented as follows.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Prison education: public policies, conditions and characteristics

Historical development process of prison education was always related to the cultural context in which it was inserted along years, and not linearly (Carvalho, 2019). This movement was conditioned even with the education and prison conceptions current at each moment, including some movements have marked time, among them the New School Manifest (*Manifesto da Escola Nova*), headed by authors like Anísio Teixeira, who supported great debates in favor of a quality public education and extensive to all subjects, regardless the social class.

According to Bittencourt (2019), education offers a complete and human formation to the individual, who may be changed by it. Thereby, it offers the necessary convergence for the social welfare. The author also highlights the role played by education while a historical construction, result of social class clashes, in favor of a balance in the effective education act.

When speaking about education, in a general way, it is part of the daily life, within families and several activities until the schooling, which presuppose more formal models. However, it is possible observe that the ways in which education is configured is not separated from the socio-historical-cultural issues (Ramos, 2019).

There is no linearity in history, likewise there is no geographic homogeneity. Different territories of the country have planned and implemented prisons and the prison education itself according to convergences also imposed by each territory. Hence, Ramos (2019) elaborated a brief history on the prison reforms for Brazil Northwest countryside, “within the three modern prison reforms in Brazil: Reformatory, Detention house, and Agricultural colonies. From them, the oldest one is the Reformatory, designed as monuments of capitals of the republic, with Panoptic structure and Alburnum work system” (Ramos, 2019, p. 7).

From the regulatory movements’ viewpoint, according to Amorim (2020), we must start by the consolidation of the right to the basic education of every Brazilian citizen, established by the Federal Constitution in 1988 (Brasil, 1988) and ratified by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDB in Portuguese acronym), Law number 9.394/96 (Brasil, 1996). Besides, by establishing the Criminal Enforcement Law (LEP in its Portuguese acronym - Brasil, 2000), the access to educational assistance is defined as a right ensured for freedom deprived people and must be offered by the State as school instruction and professional one, to reintegrate prison population to the society.

Therefore, the Criminal Enforcement Law, number 7210/1984, affirms:

Art. 17. Educational assistance will comprehend school instruction and professional training to the convict and internee.

Art. 18. Elementary School teaching will be obligatory, integrating itself in the Federal Unit school system.

Art. 18-A. High school, regular or supplementary one, with general formation or professional training at secondary level will be implanted in prison units in obedience to the constitutional precept of its universalization (Brasil, 1984).

This law aims at ensuring the right to education also to people who are serving their time in prisons. Besides, it detaches time reduction to those who take part in the Reading Project, studying to be benefited with time reduction in their verdict.

As Souza (2019) observes, after the Criminal Enforcement Law (LEP) considered that education could contribute to reduce verdict time and consequently to re-socialization, youth and

adult teaching and learning practices start to be used. Ercolano (2019) points the notorious understanding that education within prison is a right of all people who are there, and it is supported by national law and international rules, such as the Criminal Enforcement Law (LEP), Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil 1988, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Ercolano, 2019). However, Prison education is a result from laws, corresponding to the society requirements as a social clamor, and it should meet the circumstances which correspond to the subjects in that reality demanded.

For this reason, prison education is constituted as a heterogeneous public policy, non-linear, and submitted to several characteristics, as territorial and historical among them. In addition, it is important pointing prison education characteristics identified by the authors in the works analyzed.

Goffman (2018) characterizes prison as a total institution. According to this author, a total institution may be defined as a residence and workplace where individuals in similar conditions, separated from the larger society by a significant time live a closed and formally managed life.

The author also classifies institutions into five groups. In his study, he prioritizes the organized group “to protect the community against intentional dangers, and isolated people welfare does not constitute an immediate problem: prison and penitentiaries” (Goffman, 2018, p. 17). Hereupon, professors work inside a total institution, where all the “aspects of life occur in the same place and under a single authority” (Goffman, 2018, p. 15).

Carvalho (2019) points that the current social context is still marked by the structure shortage, overcrowding, and even family abandonment in the cases of female convicted. As Silva (2019, p. 34) affirms,

Dialoguing on the penitentiary system and its tangles, such as overcrowding, crime perpetuation, human rights violation, among other, means talking about their contradictions. If education has the objective of emancipating the human being, then the objective of the penitentiary system is to (re)socialize, although its facets flee from this principle, resulting in the social stigmatization and segregation of freedom deprived people.

Furthermore, Silva (2019) points that freedom deprived people tend to come from social vulnerability contexts, and the prison becomes another one of these contexts; the penitentiary system ends up not exercising its role, punishing to “teach” and the low educational level of its audience and overcrowding become recurrent.

Lopes (2019) characterizes the prison education system as marked by profound precariousness, facing serious problems of access and quality, defined by the lack of policies addressed to the professionals who work there. Moreover, also there are:

Lack of pedagogical Project which meets the reality in these spaces, also the infrastructure shortage, lack of in-service training, teaching and support materials, among other needs, both from professors and students. Discontinuity, along with the resistance of agents and directors of prison units and the disarticulation between State institutions, further the lack of planning and State policies, low financial investment, lack of accurate diagnoses, among other problems contribute to worsen the teaching situation in prisons (Lopes, 2019, p. 60-61).

Onofre (2010) affirms that school in prison has a paradox logic, and the security and education logic interplay is necessary to maintain the imprisoned involved with educational projects which may improve his/her quality of life. From this distinction, it is important notice the social space in which the school is inserted to consider the complexity and singularity of this institution.

Regarding living and interpersonal issues, Amorim (2020) points that the prison staff follow the professors everywhere in the prison and they are inspected daily, like everyone who visits detainees. They also report that living with prison staff is a little uncomfortable, because there are

rules for everything, and among them they mention: time to enter and leave the cells where the classrooms are; it is not allowed to go to the bathroom or have a snack without the company of an agent; or that they feel watched all the time. The author concludes that penitentiary system faces major difficulties in putting the educational proposals provided for by law into practice, and apparently not much is done to change this reality. Between the lines, there is a feeling of self-indulgence, passivity, and conformity.

With reference to the relationship with classmates, Silva (2019, p. 51) reports that they are marked by “interpersonal relationships of behavioral differences, each one with his/her own subjectivity permeated by the path of life, by values, beliefs, frustrations, expectations, interest, complexes and limitations”. However, within the prison space these differences tend to be intensified because there is intolerance with the offenses for which they were imprisoned, or judged, and the culture of separation of coexistence in affinity groups of the same offense as well (Silva, 2019).

Experiences lived in prison become formative through the way prisoners act and react introspectively and *extrospectively* to situations. The individual brings particularities in his/her subjectivity, such as affections, values and beliefs acquired before imprisonment, which through new experiences in prison he/she will problematize new senses and significances for his/her identity. In this perspective, within prison he/she will tend to search for references that get closer to their social reality outside the prison for a first, which may change with time and under influence from new relations (re)constructed within/by the prison (Silva, 2019, p. 163).

As obstacles that show up on the path to ensure the right to education for prisoners (called re-educated in Brazil), Carvalho (2019) detaches the lack of security measures, administrative barriers posed by the prison system itself, which does not understand education in freedom deprivation as a right, but as a privilege, also absence of appropriate structure to develop educational activities, absence of professional training for professionals who work there, and lack of didactic and teaching materials.

It was also noticed the need for educational expansion and offer in the state and national penitentiary system, aiming at ensuring it as an indispensable right and an important means in the remission of the sentence and in the prisoner re-socialization (Carvalho, 2019).

Learning in prison, therefore, is marked by fear, repression, violence, submission and above all, for the helplessness that these people, who came into the system for violating someone’s human rights, and who, under another viewpoint, violated their own ones, because hurting someone means hurting himself/herself, as made evident by the meanings gave by their narratives (Silva, 2019, p. 164).

The lessons learned by the participants in Silva’s research (2019) report, throughout the life and training narratives, especially in the prison context, may retrospectively point out that they were built, mainly from a non-school education.

Therefore, there are the learning through handicraft, through labor practice, which arises from the knowledge of most of the prison population. Handwork helps to distract the freedom deprived person, works as a hobby, leisure or work because the prisoner is busy with the procedure of making the piece avoids negative thoughts, helps time pass faster, and reduces the incarceration days for the convicts (Silva, 2019, p. 167).

Interviewed by Silva (2019) detach that, in relation with other freedom deprived people, respect for differences is the ideal way to minimize problems and conflicts in the prison space,

further facilitating activities, collective and individual ones. They are concerned with (re)socialization process and add that familiar support is the base for the process mentioned.

Also regarding to the students' testimonies, Ferreira (2019) affirms that all of them highlighted sadness feelings as freedom deprived beings, added by humiliation and loneliness feelings. Besides, the sensations of "lack of privacy and idleness that finds an echo in the 'mortification' that occur in total institutions" (Ferreira, 2019, p.115).

On the opposite, 100% students interviewed by Ferreira (2019)

reported feel happy in the classes, because within that space they received attention from the professor, stopped being idle and learned new information, most of them feeding the wish to come back to the society and work, looking after their families and becoming different people. All these issues were noticed in several transcribed reports, breaking paradigms imposed by coloniality and searching for disrupting the domination pattern that Brazilian society lives (Ferreira, 2019, p. 115-116).

Hence, school environment appears as an immediate path, a kind of escape from the prison environment and a possibility of rebuilding oneself for the long-awaited moment of freedom (Ferreira, 2019).

On the other hand, there seems to be a low level of dropout, which corroborates the statements regarding the students' motivations to stay in school. Those who have ever thought about giving up reflected and found the motivation to continue in the family. Then, it was possible understanding the value that family ties have for these students, since they recurrently mentioned the family to justify the reason for having gone back to school, and in some cases, the reason for never had given up, thus realizing the meaning of "lack of some roles", as the social role of father, son, husband, and others (Ferreira, 2019, p. 116).

It is possible verify, as mentioned by Moreira (2007), that schooling in prison, even with legal changes, has been wasted because of the multiple limits imposed by the prison functioning dynamics, by structural and management problems, and by limitation for professors working, who many times have a practice that makes the school just another cog in the prison machine.

The ineffectiveness of the applicability of the Criminal Execution Law must be admitted regarding detainee re-socialization because there are still some problems that hinder the ultimate prison goal, which is the prisoner re-socialization, that Bittencourt (2019) characterizes as sociological penal problem.

Finally, it is noticeable, from the analysis carried out, that even with many public and private partnership initiatives, prison environment is hampered by overcrowding. However, in some measure, also the youth and adult education brings an opportunity to glimpse a better horizon and the access to knowledge. Meanwhile, responsible spheres are limited to offering the basics, just to meet the minimum requirements from the law, which leads to several problems regarding to prison education.

### **Teaching performance: experiences and challenges**

There is a broad understanding that education is an important human activity that requires from the teacher extensive knowledge about man, which can be achieved by philosophy that represents the highest form of understanding of man by man himself (Ercolano, 2019). The teacher cannot, therefore, carry out his/her work in an alienated way, he/she must be aware of his/her transforming role in the educational environment not only in the prison contexts, but in a general way.

In addition to teaching the content, teacher deals with numerous problems in prison education contexts, as presented in the previous section. Educational practices in daily prisons

suffer from several obstacles because they are inserted in an intense repression environment, although the mission to recover and readjust for the social reintegration of the convict has been historically incorporated into it. On the prison education teacher performance, Ercolano (2019) still affirms:

teachers activity was perceived as a very bureaucratic job, in which following certain patterns arranged by a hierarchy is necessary to meet the pre-established contents by the curricular structures and by the course plans; to record the students attendance and the activities performed; to prepare, correct and file evaluation documents that prove students' performance (tests and works); and to convert the appreciation of a student's complex learning process into a scale, the grade, for his/her approval or failure (Ercolano, 2019, p. 187).

Hence, the struggle that supports the concern with teaching and learning in prisons requires a careful look at stimulating the development of sociability and student identity, it is necessary rethinking the pedagogical work, focusing on the essence of education in general: learning and transforming lives.

The research carried out by Carvalho (2019) has the participation of teachers, and it could systematize, through their reports, the certainty that the teaching experience in the prison provides opportunities for enrich the pedagogical practice and challenges the search for new teaching practices to meet the convicted needs. Teacher also understood this activity as a means for expansion and enrichment his/her professional career, in addition to entering the job market.

When mentioning the changing education postulate by Paulo Freire, Zundt (2019) affirms that socially established prejudices should be set aside so that education in the prison space is really liberating and may contribute to people re-socialization. Then, it is possible understanding the need for breaking the paradigm in which the society considers education within prisons as a benefit, and that it should not exist because it looks at prisoners as social scum. Education professional must base his/her pedagogical practice to carry out the school and education role in the lives of these people for when they return to social living. This return will reflect on the own ex-prisoner life and his/her living in society.

The author found that there is no specific training to teach in the prison system. Several teachers had not even been in a prison or knew how it works before they started teaching in this so specific educational environment. Besides, the author points that there is no connection between school prison organization and students learning, also pointing the need for in-service training for those who work in the prison space.

Zundt (2019) still affirms that teaching difficulties are common in any educational space, but the author searched for showing that within prison everything acquires a bigger and different dimension because in this case the individual's time serving is considered, not his/her school walk. It was also demonstrated that public policies, actions about youth and adult education (EJA), and especially prison EJA are insufficient.

Specific training that was intended to study differs from the teachers continuing training in schools of the regular education network. In the prison context, it is a specific training for teachers who work in environments that are totally different from the regular school (Pereira, 2019).

Specific training for teachers who work with freedom deprived students in penal establishments is contemplated by the National Education Plan 2014-2024 (PNE/2014), along with the Law number 13.005, June 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 (Brasil, 2018), Goal 9, Strategy 9.8, Goal 10, and Strategy 10.10, specified as follows:

[...] Goal 9 [...], 9.8. ensure the provision of education for young people and adults in the elementary and high school stages to freedom deprived people in all the penal establishments, asseverating the specific training for teachers and implementing national collaborative

guidelines. [...] Goal 10 [...], 10.10. guide the expansion of the provision of education for young people and adults articulated with professional education to meet freedom deprived people in penal establishments, asseverating the specific training for teachers and implementing national collaborative guidelines (Brasil, 2018).

This specific training in this perspective is addressed to the group of teachers who works within prison system and considers the youth and adult education curriculum in prisons, particularities of the school, of the place in which works, of pedagogical and didactic resources necessary for the teaching and learning process, among other specificities from the prison (Pereira, 2019).

Curriculum proposal for specific training, according to Andriola (2018, p. 187), must be able to “articulate the reflective attitude, both in the teacher pedagogical practice and in the student training”. The author also adds:

[...] the teacher is responsible for conceiving the problems and situations of the place where he intends to teach, for determining observable features, for interposing the order he/she will try to impose and the lines that will be implemented to overcome the current paradigm, further the formal education (Shon, 2000 apud Andriola, 2018, p. 187).

To understand the importance of specific training for teachers in prison schools is necessary knowing the subjects participating in the educational context in prisons, namely: security agents and prisoners.

Hence, the notes by Ireland (2018, p.54) are pertinent when the author affirms that “working in prison, teaching in prison is sometimes meeting the worst thing about being human and it doesn't define man. Working as teacher in prison is replacing learning back into education and education at the heart of society”.

School education involves not only teacher participation but also all the other involved in; prison education will only be done if administrators, guards, and support staff are committed to the movement to try to gradually transform the prison into an educational space (Pereira, 2019).

Pereira (2019), when interviewing 33 teachers assigned to 10 prison schools State network, localized in 9 municipalities in the State of Tocantins, in Brazil, designed the profile of these professionals: “88% teacher are female and 12% are male; from them, 64% affirmed they are from 36 to 50 years old, 22% from 51 years old, 13% from 25 to 35 years old, and a small group corresponded to 0.04% from the sample was under 25 years old” (Pereira, 2019, p. 70).

The investigation found that in the last 2 years (2017-2018),

54.5% teachers researched affirmed that they did not participate in any activity for professional development regarding youth and adult education in prisons. Also 73% of them affirmed did not participate in specific training and / or other training before beginning of the 2019 school year, aiming at carrying out the class planning, according to the national and state youth and adult education guidelines for freedom deprived students (Pereira, 2019, p. 7).

The results of the analysis did not point to the perspective of the State having a continuing education or in-service program for prison education teachers. Including the class planning action did not show satisfactory influence for teachers who answered the alternative corresponding to this question (Pereira, 2019). Besides, “another viewpoint researched was regarding the workload of training activities that teachers participated in the last 2 years (2017-2018); the findings ratified the inexistence of a state training program for this group of teachers” (Pereira, 2019, p. 76).

Pereira (2019, p.81) affirms that teachers contradict themselves in relation to the item: “I consider my theoretical and methodological practice appropriate to work in this school.” Teacher



evaluated the day-to-day teaching action to consider the content transfer, and students' discipline as positive answers regarding the teaching. It turns out that, in theory, indiscipline in a prison school will hardly happen but this does not imply that the content transfer itself might bring positive effects on learning and consequently on re-socialization.

The absence of specific teacher training leads to the false culture that daily practice enables him/her to teach. However, teacher without continuous training ends up making the teaching and learning process a content transfer without significance for the real needs of the student in freedom deprivation context (Pereira, 2019, p. 82).

Regarding this understanding, Antunes (2001) affirms that in a mechanical and traditional teaching, the teacher was responsible for simply provide the student with specialized information in his/her area but because they are adult students and are in a situation of freedom deprivation, they are aware of their skills and experiences, and from this perspective, they require more involvement in the teaching-learning process.

The findings also shown that teachers had a "sense of belonging" when reported the schoolwork in prison as a "transformative experience", a "new learning", a "personal growth", a "great challenge", and an "opportunity", in the sense of learning, teaching, and contributing to the other (re-socialization) (Pereira, 2019, p. 94).

Data from the study by Pereira (2019) showed that 100% researched teachers had the higher education necessary to teach in basic education. Regarding teaching within prisons with adult freedom deprived students, most considered the initial training insufficient and inappropriate to develop an education with quality, which re-socialize and reinsert the student back to the society.

Ferreira (2019), on his turn, when trying to understand the perception of actors involved in prison education, affirms that a teacher interviewed in his research, in her speaking, reports work with a multigrade class, teaching modality that contains specifics that need to be considered by the teacher. Therefore, it is recommended that the teacher takes all these differences into account. This heterogeneity promotes greater dynamics regarding the topics covered, the texts and the language used to meet the diversity of interests present in the classroom (Ferreira, 2019).

Throughout the research, through the questionnaire answered by the teacher, it was noted that she faces structural problems in activities development, which leads to believe that this slows down the evolutionary process of students caused by the lack of contact with technologies and other tools that require personal interaction (Ferreira, 2019).

In her speech, the teacher who collaborated with the research makes explicit that there is a specific curriculum tailored to the interests of students through democratic choice. The answer by the teacher enables to understand that despite the specific curriculum structure, she points the need for a debate on some theme and brings it to the classes (Ferreira, 2019).

Ramos (2019, p. 169) indicates that in "the meeting among precarious teachers and imprisoned women there is a power to humanize themselves, also an alienating overvaluation (ideal student and best teachers)". Besides, one of the main motivations for going back to the school was that imprisoned women may be an example for their descendants, reproducing the perspective of the social roles imposed to women in society.

An interesting point presented in different places of the interviews with students and teachers concerns the consequences of the insertion of the state education system in prisons and the characteristics that the meetings in this space provide. When speaking on the school education in prison unities, the interviewees presented several affirmations which demonstrate simultaneously richness and poverty of meetings, both among students and teachers and the secretariat of education with the Department of Penitentiary Administration (Ramos, 2019, p. 103).

The school was also seen as an opportunity, although distant, of social and personal growth. At this point, speeches that the schooling experienced in the prison space will bring numerous advantages and improvement in the perspective of post-prison future jobs appear in the speeches both of women prisoners and in the teacher ones (Ramos, 2019).

When analyzing the collaborator profiles, Lopes (2019) points that 35% teachers have between 4 and 8 years of profession, followed by 14% who have from 11 to 12 years, and equal percentage for those who have from 1 to 2 years working as teachers. It was found that most of these teachers have between four and eight years in their career, denoting a beginning teacher level.

The author also affirms that:

Results point that become teacher in these spaces involves living with a routine surrounded by overwork, also means learning from interaction with students, living with obedience to the strict rules and with the stress and tension of prisons (Lopes, 2019, p. 7).

Regarding the reasons that lead them to choose the teaching career in prison, the teacher placed great importance on their life experiences as students, further remembering some teachers and moments which marked their school journeys and, in some way, influenced their choices by teaching (Lopes, 2019).

For them, being in the condition of a teacher in these spaces was often more advantageous than being in the state education system, replacing some teacher. In the State education network, the teacher who does not have an effective contract undergoes a hiring process that does not guarantee functional stability and still submits them to power relations within the professional category (Lopes, 2019, p. 193).

When choosing to become a teacher, it must be considered that the subject, when doing it, takes (or not) elements into account that even for him/her are unknown. In his/her work, the teacher will not be the only one to select the knowledge to be worked on in the school, as the student also makes their selection, and will only do so productively when they assume, together with the teacher, the responsibility for their knowledge (Villani et al., 2006).

Organized proposal for education of freedom deprived adults highlights the findings previously elaborated. What everyday school life reveals, however, and which could be evidenced throughout the study, is that there is a huge distance between the official discourse provided for by law and the experience found in the schools of prison units (Lopes, 2019).

The teachers' speeches announced that the knowledge of teaching was built primarily in their teaching experiences in practice and with their peers. Data revealed by the work seems to refer to necessary evidence of the construction of public policies for the continuing education of professionals working in the prison system (Lopes, 2019).

Prison space, as a place of teacher reconfiguration, assumes some obstacles to overcome, whereas at the same time the conditions of imprisonment are instituted by a hostile environment and by the valorization of disciplinary and security measures, there is the implementation of policies aimed at guaranteeing the right to education for freedom deprived ones. In other words, these issues are antagonistic and somehow interfere in the school performance, and consequently in the actions of teachers. Given the above, thinking about the role played by youth and adult education within the prison implies identifying how the teaching work takes place and what are the conditions to develop educational activities.

The research by Lopes (2019) concluded that quality of pedagogical work depends almost exclusively on the interest and political and social commitment by the teacher. This fact may prevent the professional from fully playing his/her role to contribute with the promotion of an education

that meets the student training needs. Therefore, implementing adequate training policies that are contextualized with the reality of the prison system and freedom deprived students is necessary, especially those supported by democratic, ethical, and political principles.

José (2019, p. 222) points that as the public policies presented by the research, there is need for “Investments in initial and continuing teacher training, better working conditions, maintenance and restoration of libraries, service in all shifts, among others”.

The research by Oliveira (2019) shows that teachers report other problems, such as:

Difficulties in the relationship with the linking school, which does not support them and does not provide the necessary materials to develop the work with students. Furthermore, when teachers dodged the questions, we found that the lack of knowledge on the school daily life makes difficult to carry out planned actions and effective work. This lack of knowledge might be generated by an inexistent pedagogical project to guide the work (Oliveira, 2019, p. 242-243).

During the investigation process, Amorim (2020) found the importance of the re-socialization process, but the author points that according to the Director of one of the prison units, it is not possible offer the proposal for everyone, considering that the interviewee affirmed that “some detainees do not intend to educate themselves, but rather to cause violence and influence other detainees to do the same” (Amorim, 2020, p. 78). The teachers share the same conception on the importance of education for prisoners’ rehabilitation as well. Regarding the choice of those who can or cannot attend classes, they disagree, considering that the choice factor is good behavior, as the law guarantees education for all, without distinction. Finally, most students portray education in the prison system as very good and rewarding, they are happy to have the opportunity to study and complete their schooling, and possibly get better jobs than they had before they started their sentences.

The researches analyzed point to a multitude of specific prison education challenges faced by teachers, further those specific challenges from the educational process. Prison environment and the way that the State conducts the prison policy and education in prisons also limit the teacher work, restrict his/her professional development, and restrict the possibilities of success of the initiatives presented.

Presented this picture, it is important point the possible paths showed by the authors researched, who detach the for a structural transformation in the prison education system.

### **Possible paths**

From their academic and professional trajectories, many studied authors pointed to possible paths to face the challenges presented.

Souza (2019) emphasizes that there must be knowledge and appreciation of the subjects that make up the prison population to make education a bridge to re-socialization. Thereunto, this author points to the adoption of peer instruction in prison education, adapting it to the possibilities of material and physical structure, in addition to systematizing the contents based on the daily experiences of each subject. Assuming the reality of students goes far beyond the immediate experiences of their daily lives, the author makes us reflect on whether systematizing the contents based on the students’ daily experiences is the best option.

Hereupon, an education called for that is linked to the awareness of the subjects to make them reflect on themselves, their ways of life and their conditions to make them critical and active in transforming their reality. Thereunto, it is important to carry out educational practices that value the dialogue established by a horizontal relationship between teacher and student in which the teacher’s role is not to reproduce dominant and moralizing discourses, but rather leave the

discourse and implement practices which are effective. How to achieve this? One of the possibilities pointed out by our research would be rethinking the way in which teaching is organized.

To illustrate the value of the school as a training institution, Bittencourt (2019) mentions works by renowned authors, such as Dermeval Saviani, to conceive this space as a training one by excellence. Then it is possible to affirm that

exactly this subject would occupy the central place in the new educational tenet of the school of our time: a unitary school because guided by the same principle, that radical one historicity of man and organized around the same content, the history of men, identified as the common path to form fully developed individuals. Indeed, what other way could we find to produce, in each singular individual, the humanity historically and collectively produced by all men [...] (Vidal, 2011, p. 172 apud Bittencourt, 2019, p. 21).

Bittencourt (2019) attributes to the school the denomination of locus in which its interdisciplinarity is more evident. Thereby, it is possible that cultural diversity is linked to a plural teaching model, not only tied to a single work proposal. The author brings the contribution by Miotto (1983) to detach that the interaction between the community and the State, as a central power, has the duty to ensure the prisoner decent conditions of survival and personal training, even within a prison. Regarding this issue is important to highlight:

Community participation in the treatment (in a broad sense) of prisoners to solve the prison problems, as well as in the inspection of compliance with the conditions, rules of conduct, obligations to do and not to do, to which convicts serving sentence in the community are subject (benefited from parole) and the precautionary observation and protection of the released ones. This participation is always ancillary to the right to punish, and cannot interfere, it must always be subordinate, at least through inspection by a State agency (Miotto, 1983, p. 87).

Bittencourt (2019) concludes that education is still insufficient to change the lives of detainees, since even with interventional actions, the rates of recidivism are still recurrent and high, which among other issues is due to the insufficiency of the education concepts that are being taught in prison environments.

In this sense, another important finding is the fact that both the prison and the activities developed therein must seek more than to adapt the individual to prison life, it must also prepare him/her for freedom in society. Education may impact lives inside and outside the intramural school, and might directly contribute to the re-socialization of students, not only by raising their education level, but also by providing them with a chance to achieve a more dignified life in an exclusionary society.

Zundt (2019) detaches that it is necessary to start from a reflective analysis that allows the assumption of prison education as a plural space capable of understanding the student in their peculiarities and understanding how the traditional education model for the marginalized promotes the exclusion and selectivity of the education system. "Within prison either the subject changes or he/she will be destined to spend a long period in it. The imprisoned person is the perfect target of control, social discipline; he/she is punished, controlled, forced to work, docile, without identity" (Zundt, 2019, p. 48). Therewith, we understand that prison schools need to have an educational bias that strengthens the subject, promoting his/her potential and prioritizing his/her transformation.

Zundt (2019 p. 89) proposes a training for a

conscious, reflective, and attentive teacher to demands of the students with whom he/she works, and didactic material designed from the reality experienced by students, elaborated to instigate them to knowledge, lead them to discoveries, it is the essential objective of education

in prisons. So that, in this way, the student really feels that he/she belongs to a certain context that he/she may return to social life.

Therefore, specific training for teachers working in prison schools needs to be understood as one of the primary tools, capable to ensure that “education” it is the basis for a culture of respect for human dignity, transcends the culture of “weapons” as an instrument to maintain security for society.

Silva (2019), regarding school education in the penitentiary unit, affirms that is a priority the non-restriction only to the teaching, but effectively to “an opportunity for prisoners to decode their reality and understand the causes and consequences of their acts that led them to prison” (De Maeyer, 2006, p. 22).

The study by Silva (2019) pointed to actions within prison which aim at the dialogue and the respect, strengthening family and group ties, insertion in the labor market, as strengtheners of a more dignified, citizen and harmonious life and society.

Upon completion of the reading and analysis of the synthesis, it is possible observing that education in prison system presents the same problems of social vulnerability, and limitations due to physical space and environment organization. However, possible solutions identified for the problems presented in the results are superficial and generic.

Ferreira (2019) affirms that teaching based on liberating and reflective practices may promote interest in studying and the possibility of a better future for incarcerated students. The author still affirms that there are perspectives for the application of reflective pedagogical practices that respect the reality of the freedom deprived student, hence, teaching that favors the construction of the student must be used.

These understandings are far from being finite and finished, given the complexity that involves human subjectivity, emphasizing a multigrade classroom composed of individuals with different views, feelings, and thoughts, ergo needing multifaceted looks on reality.

As mentioned by Lopes (2019, p. 61), Julião (2017) believes that

in the context of the discussion on the diversity of youth and adult education subjects, prison education effectively becomes recognized as education for young people and adults, thus, investing in a political and pedagogical proposal that considers particularities, specificities, and characteristics of subjects in a situation of restriction and freedom deprivation is necessary.

Lopes (2019) was based on the conception that teacher needs to have an education permeated by the principles of Popular Education, Human Rights, the teacher's intellectual autonomy and the technical, aesthetic, ethical and political dimensions. It is considered that training should move towards the strengthening of educational practices, which enable the individual to participate in decision-making in his/her work, articulated together with educational peers, such as committees, councils, unions, and other collaborative networks that participate of school-wide decisions. In this perspective, it seeks to strengthen policies for youth and adult education teachers training.

Gonçalves (2019) reports the experience of carrying out a specific pedagogical project: a Project called *Transformar* (To transform) was conceived by the Municipal Department of Education and Culture in partnership with the Judiciary aiming at taking the curricular teaching of Portuguese Language and Mathematics to the prison system of Formoso do Araguaia, State of Tocantins, in multigrade classes as a teaching and learning option for prisoners.

To obtain the remission of the sentence, which means the reduction in the days to which prisoners were sentenced, the reading project brought as themes cultural values, such as citizenship, ethics, health, art, etc. Thereby, each month the prisoner was motivated to read a book and make a summary or a review, so that he could record his understanding of the work read.

According to the Recommendation number 44, November 26th 2013, by the National Council of Justice (CNJ in its Portuguese acronym), the prisoner has from 21 to 30 days to read the book, after this period, he/she will have to submit a reading sheet with a review about the subject and following evaluation criteria proposed by the program.

Findings from the research by Gonçalves (2019) point the relevance of implementing educational projects in public prisons because in these spaces the number of detainees is smaller than in comparison with large prisons. This provides better monitoring of student development in the proposed activities. The author still concludes that the extension of these educational projects to other public prisons is a necessary measure to provide the possibility of transformation, re-socialization, and rehabilitation of the prisoner.

To sum up, the author makes evident the necessity that prisoners have opportunities and possibilities for their development during their walk as freedom deprived people. The author also points that it requires skills and for such, all possible means should be used, such as religious care, education, and professional training.

Therefore, education should not be considered and treated as an extra and optional activity in the list of activities offered to prisoners. Firstly, education should focus on the necessities of the individual who needs to be reintegrated into the family, work, and social life, so that all people who are in prison for any length of time may learn skills such as reading, writing, and doing basic arithmetic calculations that will help them survive in the modern world (Amorim, 2020, p. 98-99).

Onofre (2015) detaches educational practices in prison give voice back to the human being who is there, a voice that he/she does not have or that is silenced in other prison environment spaces. According to this author:

[...] in prison spaces, listening to people who are silenced by the rules of the penitentiary system is essential, opening spaces for life narratives means giving them opportunity to know themselves in the past-present in which they are mired. It means rescuing citizenship and dignity, as they are no longer a number given based on the crime committed or on their registration number (Onofre, 2015, p. 250).

This confirms the importance of education for the freedom deprived person, in fact being an extremely important element in rehabilitation and re-socialization process of the prisoner.

## **CONCLUSION**

Altogether, researches mentioned present limitations that the pedagogical work in prison system impose, resulting from limitations inflicted by the system itself as well. The authors also found a lack of initial and continuing training for teachers who work in the prison system, which has caused damage to the quality of education provided. Besides, their results propose meeting the immediate need for investment in public policies for this purpose, and improvement of physical spaces and specific teacher training for professionals who work in this context. We understand that these findings are also valid for Education outside the prison system.

Furthermore, little is said about how to organize teaching in Brazilian prisons, which is one of the problems we consider fundamental in school education in general. Hereupon, from the logical-dialectical perspective and considering the diversity of pedagogical practices that can help to overcome the obstacles imposed by the empirical reality for the realization of the right to education of prisoners at theoretical level, searching for understanding this relationship between the way teaching is organized and the challenges faced in this context is necessary.

To summarize, we believe that future researches may bring elements on the pedagogical process to address it for understanding that the teacher work may effectively the contemporary school real function.

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