

BACHELOR'S DEGREES IN BRAZIL: WHAT DOES ACADEMIC PRODUCTION REVEAL BETWEEN 2015 AND 2021?

LICENCIATURAS NO BRASIL: O QUE REVELA A PRODUÇÃO ACADÊMICA ENTRE 2015 E 2021?

LICENCIATURA EN BRASIL: ¿QUÉ REVELA LA PRODUCCIÓN ACADÉMICA ENTRE 2015 Y 2021?

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Abstract:

This paper aimed to investigate the academic production on undergraduate teacher education degrees in Brazil, focusing on theses and dissertations available in the Thesis and Dissertation Catalog of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel, considering the period between 2015 and 2021. Methodologically, the data were obtained through a bibliographic survey. A total of 89 theses and 311 dissertations were analyzed, amounting to 400 academic studies at the doctoral and master's levels. In conclusion, we observed, among other aspects, that studies on teacher training policies, notably teaching degrees, and curriculum are the main areas of interest among research. Thus, from a socio-spatial perspective, the Southeast Region accounts for most of the academic production. However, the State University of Ceará stands out as the institution that has produced the most research on the topic.

Keywords: teacher education; undergraduate degrees; educational research.

Resumo:

Este estudo objetivou mapear a produção acadêmica acerca das licenciaturas no Brasil, no que toca as teses e as dissertações disponíveis no Catálogo de Teses e Dissertações da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), considerando o período entre 2015 e 2021. Os dados foram produzidos, em termos metodológicos, por meio de levantamento bibliográfico. Foram analisadas 89 teses e 311 dissertações, totalizando 400 produções acadêmicas. Como conclusão, pontua-se, entre outros aspectos, que os estudos sobre as políticas de formação docente, as licenciaturas específicas e o currículo são focos de interesse pelos pesquisadores. Do ponto de vista socioespacial, a Região Sudeste concentra a maior parte da produção acadêmica. Por outro lado, a Universidade Estadual do Ceará é a instituição que mais

desenvolveu pesquisas acerca da temática. Essa realidade eleva quali-quantitativamente a produção acadêmica, no sentido geral, acerca da formação de professores no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: formação de professores; licenciaturas; pesquisa educacional.

Resumen:

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo mapear la producción académica acerca de las licenciaturas en Brasil, añadiendo Tesis y Disertaciones disponibles en el Catálogo de Tesis e Disertaciones de la Coordinación para el Perfeccionamiento del Personal de Educación Superior (CAPES), considerando el período entre 2015 y 2021. Los datos fueron producidos, metodológicamente, a través de un levantamiento bibliográfico. Se analizaron 89 tesis y 311 disertaciones, totalizando 400 producciones doctorales y disertaciones. En conclusión, cabe resaltar, entre otros aspectos, que los estudios sobre políticas de formación docente, las licenciaturas específicas y el currículo son focos de interés para los Investigadores. Además, desde una perspectiva socio espacial, la región Sudeste concentra la mayor parte de la producción académica. Por otro lado, la Universidad Estatal de Ceará es la institución que más ha investigado sobre este tema.

Palabras clave: formación docente; licenciatura; investigación educativa.

Introduction

Initial Teacher Education in Brazil has historically assumed a central role within the field of educational research. This prominence is justified by the fact that, over time, teacher education has been highlighted as an essential dimension for the quality of education in the country (André, 2009; Martini; Hobold, 2024). Nevertheless, developments such as the expansion and interiorization of higher education have also taken place, directly impacting the production of knowledge regarding the education of basic education teachers (Caldas; Tibola, 2025). Studies known as *State of the Art* investigations—such as those conducted by Romanowski (2013), Maia and Hobold (2014), and Raimundo and Fagundes (2018), based on different bibliographic sources—have systematized relevant syntheses of existing knowledge on the topic and, at the same time, have indicated the need for further research.

This study, derived from a broader *State of the Art* research project—funded through the Universal Call No. 18/2021, Track “A”, Emerging Groups, of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI), and the National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FNDCT)—aimed to map the academic production on teacher education programs (*licenciaturas*) in Brazil. The analysis focused on theses and dissertations available in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog, covering the period from 2015 to 2021.

Data were produced and analyzed based on the following set of categories: (i) distribution of studies by year; (ii) spatial distribution of theses and dissertations across

Brazilian regions and states; (iii) fields of knowledge of the graduate programs in which the studies were conducted; (iv) distribution of studies by higher education institutions; (v) research themes addressed in the theses and dissertations; and (vi) gender of the researchers. It should be noted that the research was carried out between March and December 2022. A total of 89 doctoral theses and 311 master's dissertations were analyzed, amounting to 400 academic works.

The temporal scope from 2015 to 2021 adopted in this study is justified by two main reasons. First, it allows for a focus on the most recent academic production concerning teacher education programs in Brazil. Second, in 2015, a highly relevant normative framework for *licenciatura* programs was published in the country, resulting from a longstanding struggle led by several representative bodies in the educational field, such as the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Education (ANPED) and the National Association for the Education of Education Professionals (ANFOPE) (Souza; Mariano, 2024). This framework corresponds to Resolution CNE/CP No. 2, of July 1, 2015, which established the National Curriculum Guidelines for initial teacher education at the higher education level—covering *licenciatura* programs, pedagogical training programs for graduates, and second-degree *licenciatura* programs—as well as for continuing education (Brasil, 2015). Accordingly, this study considers the period from the publication of this significant regulatory milestone in 2015 through 2021, the year immediately preceding the development of the present research.

This article, in addition to this introduction, is organized into two further sections and a final considerations section. The next section presents the research methodology. Subsequently, the academic production on teacher education programs in Brazil is analyzed based on the established categories, drawing on theses and dissertations. Finally, the concluding section offers reflections on the academic production revealed by this study and its contributions to the field of basic education teacher education.

It is expected that this research will, in some measure, contribute to advancing knowledge on initial teacher education in Brazil. Likewise, it is hoped that this article will add value to the quality of the present issue of *Revista Práxis Educacional*, which has established itself as a relevant channel for the dissemination and scientific communication of research focused on teacher education in Brazil.

Methodology

This study consists of a bibliographic survey aimed at mapping the academic production on teacher education programs (*licenciaturas*) in Brazil through theses and dissertations available in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog, considering the period from 2015 to 2021. Furthermore, it represents a segment of a broader *State of the Art* research on *licencprojeiaturas*, as discussed by Medeiros, Fortunato, and Araújo (2023) and Romanowski and Ens (2006). Based on these methodological premises, the procedures described below were implemented.

In the first stage, the database for data production was defined. The CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog was selected because it currently represents the main database in Brazil that consolidates academic production from *stricto sensu* graduate programs (Nascimento; Medeiros; Amorim, 2022; Bizelli; Sene, 2022). Given that the study focused specifically on theses and dissertations produced within *stricto sensu* graduate education, this catalog was deemed appropriate for the research objectives. In the same vein, the descriptor “*licenciaturas*” was selected for retrieving the studies, as it represents the central thematic focus of the investigation. The descriptor was used within quotation marks in order to ensure a more precise filtering of works directly addressing the topic. At this stage, the temporal delimitation of the study (2015–2021) was also established.

In the second stage, searches were conducted and studies were retrieved using the predefined temporal scope (2015–2021) and the descriptor (“*Licenciaturas*”). A total of 400 theses and dissertations focusing on teacher education programs in Brazil were identified. At this same stage, data construction was carried out based on the analytical categories established for the study, as previously outlined in the introduction.

We specify that, among the 400 selected studies, it was possible to download the full text of 329 works. For the remaining studies, data production was carried out based on the descriptive records available in the repository itself—the catalog—which provided information such as the author’s name, the graduate program in which the research was conducted, the higher education institution hosting the study, the title, and the abstract, among other elements. These components served as a basis for constructing the analytical framework sought in the doctoral and master’s studies.

It should be noted that, during the data production process, primary emphasis was placed on reading the titles and abstracts of the inventoried theses and dissertations. According to ABNT Standard NBR 6028 (2021), a scientific abstract must concisely present the essential

elements necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the text, including thematic delimitation, research objectives, methodological procedures, and the main results of the investigation. Accordingly, abstracts constitute important sources for supporting bibliographic research, as is the case in this study (Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas, 2021; Silva *et al.*, 2022).

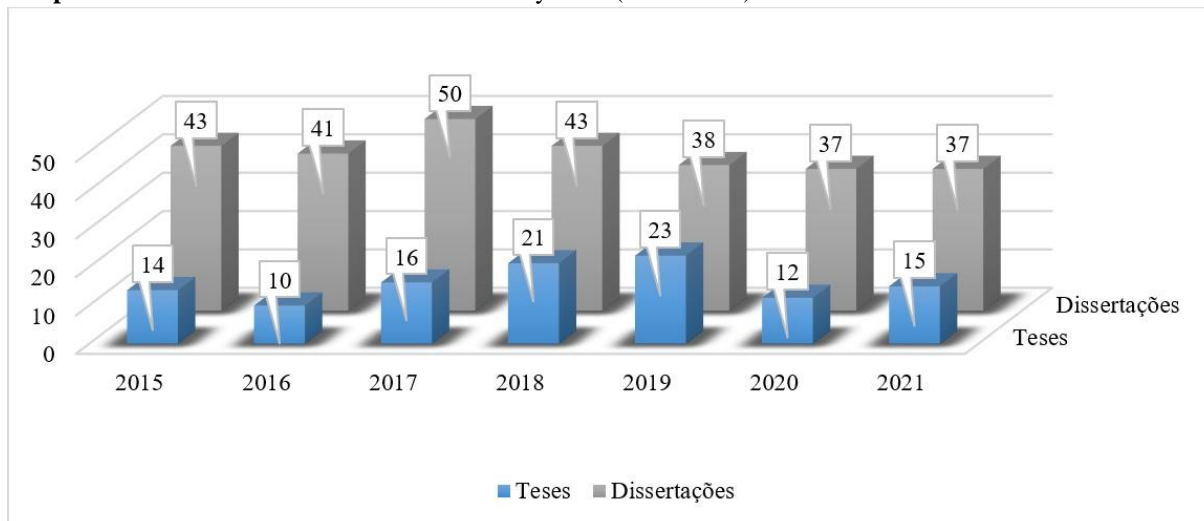
The data were compiled and stored in an online spreadsheet using Google Sheets and were discussed over the course of 16 meetings with the researchers and collaborators involved in the investigation. These participants are affiliated with three graduate programs in the fields of Teaching and Education in the states of Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba. The data production stage took place between March and December 2022, during which biweekly meetings were held with the purpose of deepening the analytical and interpretative engagement with the material produced. These meetings proved to be fundamental to strengthening the investigative process, as they enabled the continuous problematization of emerging questions and the collective construction of meaning around the data.

The final stage of the research involved organizing the quantitative data, which were presented in graphs, tables, and a map to facilitate visualization and interpretation for analytical purposes. As in the previous stage, collective discussions were required, particularly between January and April 2023, in order to ensure coherence and analytical rigor. Finally, a qualitative analysis of the graphs, tables, and map was conducted, taking the central objective of the study as the guiding reference. The resulting analytical discussion is systematized in the subsequent section of this article.

Teacher Education Programs in Brazil: Mapping the Field

The first category of analysis derived from the bibliographic survey conducted in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog on teacher education programs (*licenciaturas*) in Brazil concerns the annual distribution of doctoral and master's studies. Although the temporal scope of the research spans only seven years (2015–2021), the volume of works identified is substantial, allowing for the formulation of analytical considerations based on Graph 1.

Graph 1 – Number of Theses and Dissertations by Year (2015–2021)



Source: research data (2024).

The first aspect to be highlighted is that the number of dissertations consistently exceeds the number of theses in each year analyzed. This pattern can be explained by the fact that the number of graduate programs in Brazil offering only master's degrees is greater than the number of programs that also offer doctoral degrees. The National Graduate Education Plan in Brazil (2025–2029), for example, indicates that there were 2,390 graduate programs in the country in 2023, of which 1,319 offered only master's programs (Brasil, 2025). This context directly impacts the annual volume of dissertations, making it higher than that of theses in studies related to teacher education programs. Furthermore, it should be noted that the duration of master's programs is approximately half that required for the completion of a doctoral degree, which also contributes to this quantitative disparity.

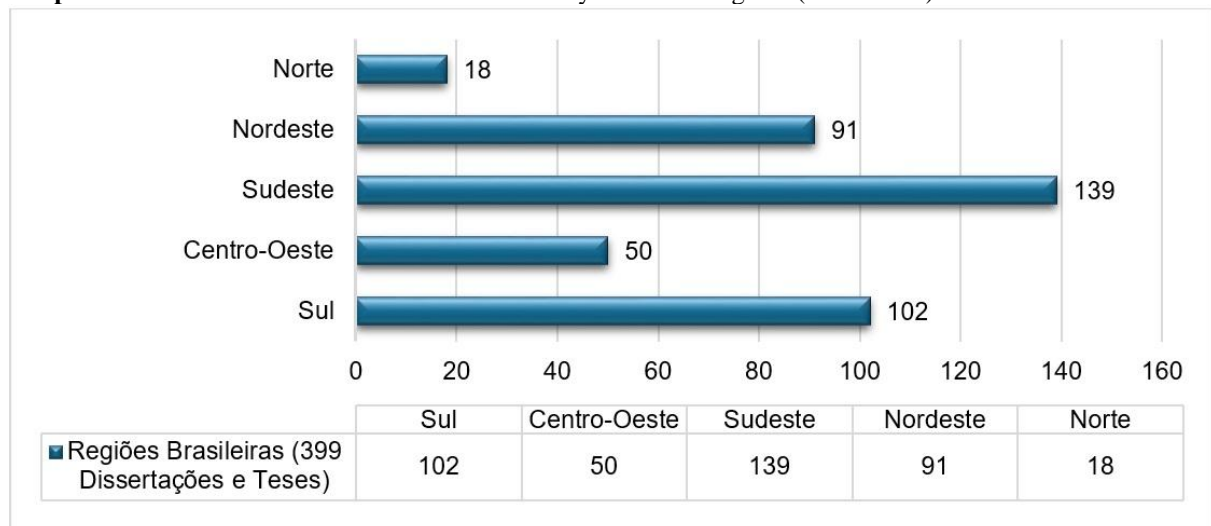
Regarding the distribution of studies by year, we observe that the total number of dissertations ranges between 37 and 50 works, while doctoral theses vary between 10 and 23 studies. Overall, no clear trend of growth or decline in the volume of studies was identified in any specific period. A slight decrease in both theses and dissertations is observed in 2020 and 2021, which may be related to the COVID-19 pandemic; nonetheless, the number of studies addressing the topic remains high for each modality—theses and dissertations—during this period.

The annual volume of studies on teacher education programs (*licenciaturas*) in Brazil further demonstrates sustained scholarly interest in the topic. On average, 57 studies were completed each year within the temporal scope defined for this research. This finding indicates an increase in research on *licenciaturas* when compared to earlier investigations that also examined academic production on the topic in Brazil based on theses and dissertations. For

instance, André (2009) identified 115 theses and dissertations published on *licenciaturas* between 1999 and 2003, corresponding to an average of 23 studies completed per year during that period. It is worth noting that this growth in research output may be associated with the expansion of Brazilian graduate education and its interiorization over recent decades.

Continuing the analysis, we turn to the distribution of studies across Brazilian regions. Graph 2 presents the relevant data.

Graph 2 – Distribution of Theses and Dissertations by Brazilian Regions (2015–2021)



Source: research data (2024).

At first glance, the data do not differ from those reported in other bibliographic surveys addressing the panorama of academic production in Brazil, particularly studies focused on the education of basic education teachers, such as those by Nascimento, Medeiros, and Amorim (2022) and Medeiros *et al.* (2023). Most notably, there is a marked disparity between the Southeast Region and the other regions, with 139 studies. From both a quantitative and demographic standpoint, the Southeast stands out for concentrating the largest number of graduate programs in the country and for consistently leading national statistics on scientific production (Raimundo; Fagundes, 2018).

Following this distribution, and with relatively small differences between them, the South Region accounts for 102 studies, followed by the Northeast Region with 91 works. The North and Central-West Regions present more modest figures in comparison, with 50 and 18 studies, respectively.

Despite the predominance of the Southeast Region, as indicated in Graph 2, a substantial number of studies is also observed in the South and Northeast Regions. According to Silva *et al.* (2022), there has been a significant increase in the number of Graduate Programs in

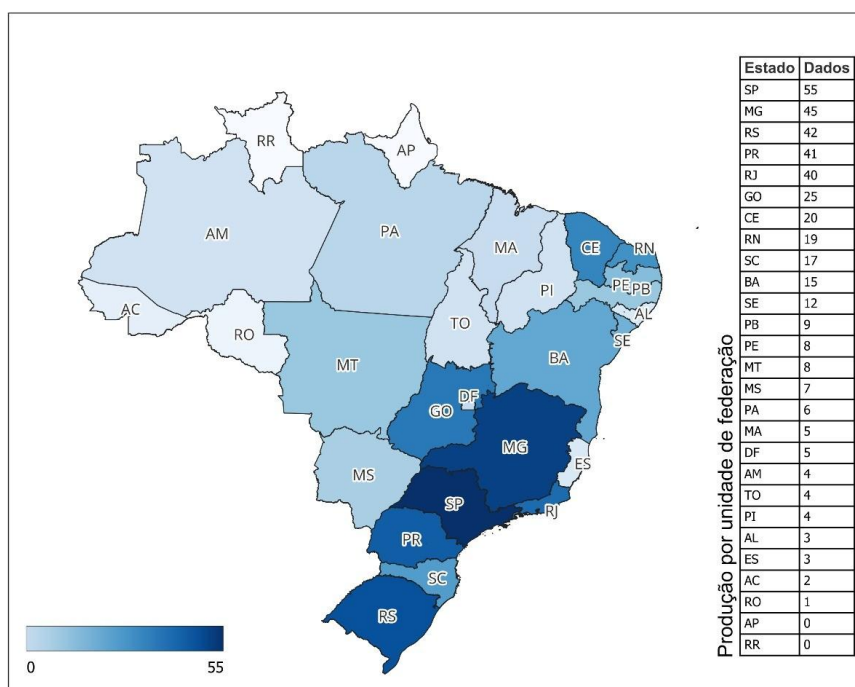
Education in recent years, particularly in the Northeast Region, where the number of programs tripled between 2007 and 2019. This expansion has a direct impact on academically relevant research production and on doctoral training in the field.

Continuing the analysis, the data from this study indicate the South Region as the second most productive in the country with regard to research on teacher education programs—a pattern already identified in earlier studies on teacher education, such as that by Silva, Nóbrega-Therrien, and Farias (2013). Finally, it should be emphasized that the number of *stricto sensu* graduate programs directly influences academic production. Consequently, the lower volume of research in the North and Central-West Regions can be explained by the smaller number of such programs in comparison with other regions.

An additional aspect to consider is that the Southeast Region has the largest number of research groups in the country, with particular emphasis on the state of São Paulo, which alone concentrates more than 6,000 groups (Diretório, 2023). In contrast, the North and Central-West Regions do not reach 2,000 research groups per state—in some cases, they do not even reach 1,000. In our interpretation, this broader context, historically rooted in the development of Brazilian graduate education, helps to explain the scenario presented in Graph 2.

As a subsequent analytical dimension, we examine the distribution of theses and dissertations across Brazilian states, as shown in Map 1.

Map 1 – Distribution of Doctoral and Master’s Productions by Brazilian States (2015–2021)



Source: Research data (2024).

In line with the findings of Raimundo and Fagundes (2018, p. 907, our translation), we observe that “the state of São Paulo is the largest producer of research on the topic of teacher education [...]” in basic education over time. Overall, states in the South and Southeast Regions exhibit a high volume of production related to teacher education programs (*licenciaturas*). The data presented in Map 1 identify São Paulo as the leading state (55 studies), followed by Minas Gerais (45 studies), Rio Grande do Sul (42 academic works), Paraná (41 theses and dissertations), and Rio de Janeiro (40 academic works). In other words, the five states that together account for 56% (223 studies) of the academic production on *licenciaturas* are located in the Southeast and South Regions.

In the Northeast Region, four states concentrate the majority of theses and dissertations on *licenciaturas*: Ceará (20 studies), Rio Grande do Norte (19 academic works), Bahia (15 investigations), and Sergipe (12 studies). The volume of research in these contexts can be explained by the existence, in some graduate programs in the fields of Education and Teaching—such as those in the states of Ceará, Bahia, and Rio Grande do Norte—of research lines or areas of concentration specifically focused on teacher education. This feature is also evident in graduate programs located in Southeast states (São Paulo and Minas Gerais) and in the South Region (Paraná).

Conversely, several states present low research output on *licenciaturas*, with fewer than 10 studies identified within the defined time frame (2015–2021). In this group, 15 states were identified, most of them located in the Central-West and North Regions. In the states of Roraima and Amapá, both in the North Region, no studies were identified.

Magalhães's (2023) doctoral research highlights, among other issues, the historical discrepancy in the field of education regarding knowledge production in the states of Brazil's North Region. Sociopolitical factors have significantly contributed to the limited growth of *stricto sensu* graduate education in this geographical context. In addition, persistent challenges related to higher education infrastructure, scarcity of resources, and the absence of equitable policies addressing the specific needs of each region have further exacerbated this scenario. Although this situation reveals a gap in academic production related to teacher education programs, it also reflects broader patterns within graduate-level academic production, affecting multiple fields of knowledge (Castro; Oliveira, 2021).

Continuing the analysis, Table 1 presents the distribution of theses and dissertations by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). It should be noted that we chose to summarize only those institutions that produced at least three theses or dissertations, a decision intended to enhance the quantitative readability of the data presented in the table.

Table 1 – Distribution of Theses and Dissertations by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)	Number per HEI
Universidade Estadual do Ceará	17
Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho	16
Universidade Federal do Paraná	14
Universidade Federal de Goiás	13
Universidade Estácio de Sá	12
Universidade Federal de Santa Maria	11
Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Rio Grande do Norte	10
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná	10
Universidade Federal do Triângulo Mineiro	8
Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina	7
Universidade Federal da Bahia	7
Universidade Federal de São Carlos	7
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul	7
Universidade Federal de Sergipe	6
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro	6
Universidade Estadual de Campinas	6
Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora	6
Universidade Federal de Pernambuco	6
Universidade Tiradentes	6
Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica de Minas Gerais	5
Universidade de Brasília	5
Universidade de São Paulo	5
Universidade do Estado da Bahia	5
Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro	5
Universidade Estadual de Londrina	5
Universidade Federal de Viçosa	5
Universidade Federal do Pará	5
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande	5
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte	5
Universidade Federal Fluminense	5
Universidade Federal do Triângulo Mineiro	4
Universidade Estadual de Ponta Grossa	4
Universidade Federal da Paraíba	4
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina	4
Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro	4
Universidade Regional Integrada do Alto Uruguai e das Missões	4
Universidade Federal do Tocantins	3
Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás	3
Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte	3
Universidade Estadual de Maringá	3
Universidade Estadual de Mato Grosso do Sul	3
Universidade Federal de Itajubá	3

Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso	3
Universidade Federal de Pelotas	3
Universidade Federal de São Paulo	3
Universidade Federal de Uberlândia	3
Universidade Federal do Abc	3
Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo	3
Universidade Federal do Maranhão	3
Universidade Metodista de São Paulo	3

Source: research data (2024).

Despite the predominance of theses and dissertations produced in states of the Southeast Region—particularly São Paulo and Minas Gerais—the Ceará State University (UECE) stands out among Higher Education Institutions, with a total of 17 productions. It is followed by São Paulo State University “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” (UNESP), with 16 works, the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), with 14, and, in fourth place, the Federal University of Goiás (UFG), with 13 studies.

It is pertinent to highlight the geographical diversity represented by these four HEIs, each located in a different region of the country. Furthermore, all of them are public institutions—two state and two federal—once again reinforcing the relevance of debates on the recognition, maintenance, and investment in public higher education institutions as spaces of excellence for academic production and knowledge generation (Castro; Oliveira, 2021).

It should also be noted that, among the 107 higher education institutions identified in the bibliographic survey as having produced research related to the topic, 57 are not listed in the table due to the previously established readability criterion. Among these, 20 institutions have two publications each, while another 37 present only one study, considering both theses and dissertations associated with the selected descriptor (“*Licenciaturas*”).

The analysis of this category also allows for further inferences. Initially, it is evident that federal higher education institutions account for the largest share of academic production on teacher education programs in Brazil. Of the 107 institutions, 61 belong to the federal sphere—51 universities and 10 federal institutes of education, science, and technology. State institutions follow, with 23 universities, and are then followed by private institutions—22 institutions, both for-profit and non-profit—and municipal institutions, represented by one university. This distribution indicates that academic production on teacher education programs in Brazil is more strongly concentrated in federal higher education institutions, while also revealing diversification in the political-administrative dimensions of the institutions involved.

Another noteworthy aspect is that the presence of 107 institutions producing knowledge on teacher education programs in Brazil between 2015 and 2021 underscores the importance of the expansion of graduate education in recent decades. In this regard, attention is drawn to the participation of 10 federal institutes of education, science, and technology, with particular emphasis on the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Rio Grande do Norte, which produced 10 theses and dissertations.

From an analytical standpoint, as argued by Almeida (2021), public institutions are primarily responsible for the historical construction of academic knowledge developed by humanity. The academic production documented in this study aligns with this perspective, being predominantly situated within federal institutions and, to a significant extent, within state institutions.

Another category analyzed in this research concerns the fields of knowledge to which the graduate programs belong in which the theses and dissertations were developed. Table 2 presents this information.

Table 2 – Fields of Knowledge of Graduate Programs

Field of Knowledge	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Education	42	27	43	41	45	24	33	255
Teaching	7	10	3	8	7	8	4	47
Language Studies	2	3	7	2	3	5	4	26
Interdisciplinary Studies	2	3	2	-	2	4	6	19
Mathematics	-	1	5	6	-	1	-	13
Chemistry	2	2	2	3	-	1	2	12
Geography	-	1	1	2	2	1	1	8
Sociology	1	1	1	-	1	2	1	7
Architecture, Urbanism and Design	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	3
Biology	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Psychology	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Political Science	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Anthropology	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Environmental Sciences	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Economics	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Science, Technology and Society	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total per year	57	51	66	64	61	49	52	400

Source: research data (2024).

Based on the 400 doctoral and master's productions analyzed, we observed a strong concentration in the field of Education, totaling 255 studies. This concentration is not unexpected, given that the descriptor “*Licenciaturas*” is directly associated with the field of Education. Furthermore, although teacher education has historically been a topic of interest

across different segments, academic research has predominantly addressed it from an educational perspective.

André (2009, p. 52, our translation) reinforces this view by noting that the “[...] growing interest of researchers in the topic of teacher education, with a focus on teachers’ opinions, representations, knowledge, and practices” has contributed to the sustained investigation of *licenciaturas* within the field of Education.

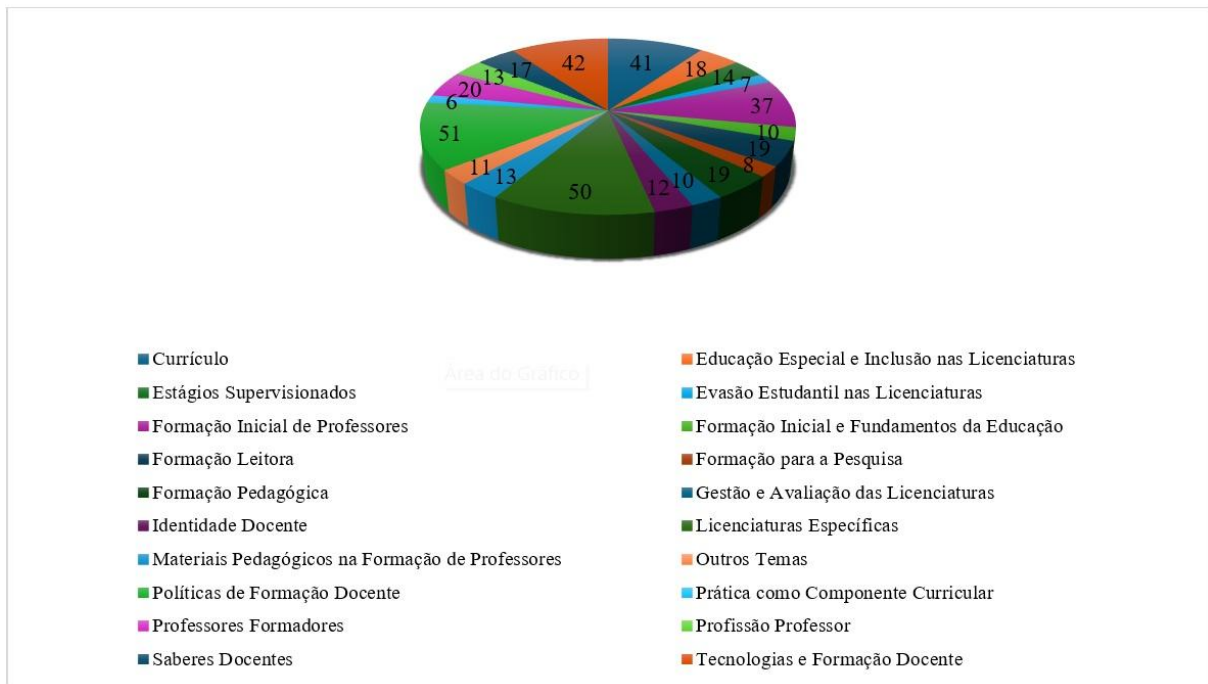
Nevertheless, other fields of knowledge have also engaged in academic production on *licenciaturas*, as shown above. These include Teaching (47 studies), Language Studies (26), Interdisciplinary Studies (19), Mathematics (13), Chemistry (12), Geography (8), Sociology (7), Architecture, Urbanism and Design (3), Biology (3), Psychology (2), Political Science (1), Anthropology (1), Economics (1), Environmental Sciences (1), and Science, Technology and Society (1).

In total, research was identified in graduate programs across 16 fields of knowledge, according to the CAPES classification of areas of evaluation. This scenario indicates that fields not directly linked to the initial education of basic education teachers—such as those associated with specific *licenciaturas*—have nonetheless demonstrated interest in examining teacher education. On the other hand, no studies were found in graduate programs within the health sciences, with the exception of Psychology, which is classified within the broader field of the human sciences according to the CAPES evaluation framework.

In summary, this category reveals that interest in *licenciaturas* as a research topic spans multiple fields of knowledge; however, there is a clear concentration in the field of Education, which accounts for 65% of the academic production inventoried. We therefore expect that this body of research may, in some way, contribute to improving the quality of teacher education in Brazil and serve as a reference point for the development of policies on initial teacher education in basic education.

The next category of analysis focuses on the investigative themes addressed in the doctoral and master’s studies. The data were organized in Graph 3, structured around 20 thematic groups. Each thematic group comprises at least five theses and dissertations.

Graph 3 – Research Themes of Theses and Dissertations (2015–2021)



Source: research data (2024).

Graph 3 shows that undergraduate teacher education programs are investigated from a wide range of perspectives. The most frequently researched theme concerns teacher education policies (51 studies). Within this scope, studies address initial teacher education programs, particularly the Institutional Teaching Initiation Scholarship Program (PIBID), the National Program for the Training of Basic Education Teachers (PARFOR), and the Pedagogical Residency Program (PRP). For instance, Tavares’s (2019) master’s dissertation evaluated PIBID as a teacher education policy that contributes to student retention in higher education. Similarly, Dantas’s (2018) doctoral study focused on PARFOR as an initial teacher education policy, analyzing its implementation in the states of Sergipe, Alagoas, and Amazonas between 2009 and 2016.

Next, a substantial number of studies address specific undergraduate teaching programs (50 studies). Examples include Luz’s (2018) doctoral research, which investigated the implementation of interdisciplinary teacher education programs at the national level, and Bar’s (2019) thesis, which examined bilingual teacher education programs. The third thematic group comprises technologies and teacher education (42 theses and dissertations), followed by curriculum studies (41 academic works) and initial teacher education with an emphasis on training processes (37 studies). These thematic groups—except for technologies and teacher

education—also appeared, coincidentally, in André's (2009) research as the most frequently investigated themes in basic education teacher training.

With a smaller number of studies, ranging from 18 to 20, the following thematic groups emerged: teacher educators (20 theses and dissertations), reading education (19 studies), pedagogical training (19 studies), Special Education and Inclusion in teacher education programs (18 studies), and teacher knowledge (18 theses and dissertations). These groups encompass research that addresses issues of high contemporary relevance, such as studies focusing centrally on special education and the inclusion of people with disabilities in undergraduate teacher education programs.

Subsequently, other thematic groups emerged, all with fewer than 15 theses and dissertations: supervised internships (14 studies), the teaching profession (13 studies), pedagogical materials in teacher education (13 theses and dissertations), teacher identity (12 studies), initial teacher education and foundations of education (10 academic works), management and evaluation of teacher education programs (10 studies), research training (eight studies), student dropout in teacher education programs (seven studies), and practice as a curricular component (six academic works).

In this context, we identified investigations that we consider to be aligned with underexplored themes in initial teacher education. One example is Lacerda's (2019) doctoral thesis, which focused on the teaching of Educational Psychology in teacher education programs. Educational Psychology, as a curricular component within the foundations of education, has been part of the history of initial teacher education in Brazil since the establishment of the first teacher education programs in 1939. However, according to Lacerda (2019), few studies have focused on this particular dimension of initial teacher education.

Another example is Rocha's (2015) doctoral research, which focused on student dropout in undergraduate teacher education programs. According to the author, the social devaluation of the teaching profession and, consequently, of teacher education programs over time has resulted in dropout rates in initial teacher education courses that are higher when compared to bachelor's degree programs. However, studies that address this scenario remain scarce.

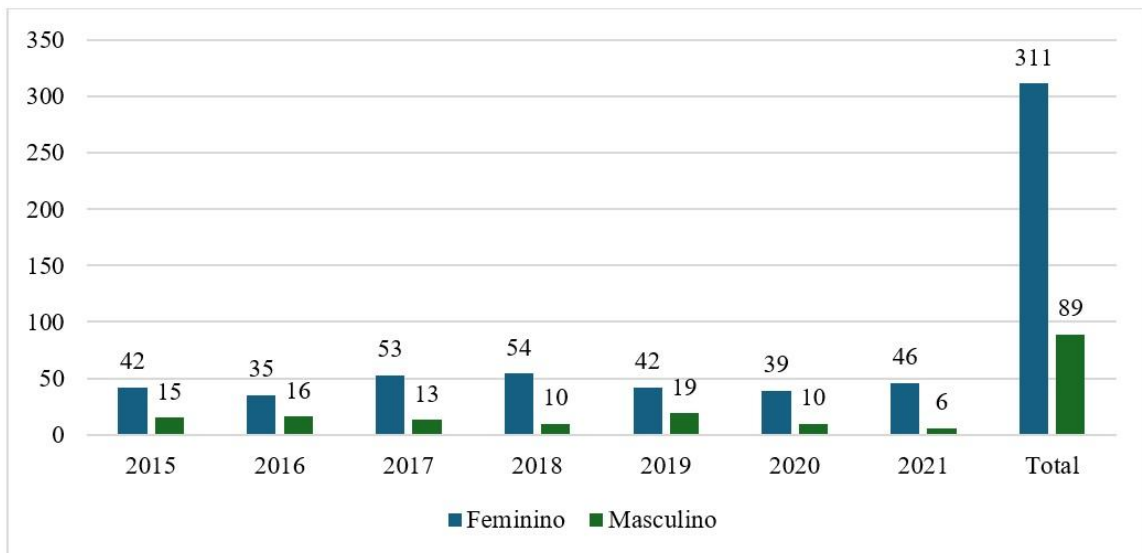
In the continuity of the analysis, we add that we organized a thematic group labeled *other themes* (11 academic productions). This group encompasses topics that did not appear in more than five doctoral and master's studies. Among them are human rights in teacher education and gender, sexuality, and teacher education.

We conclude the analysis of this category—investigative themes of doctoral and master's studies—by noting that the most prominent thematic groups identified in this study,

according to André (2009), have been present throughout the history of research on teacher education in Brazil, such as teacher education policies and curriculum. However, we observe that other themes have increasingly attracted interest within the field of initial teacher education, which is reflected in research on undergraduate teacher education programs. In this regard, we highlight studies included in the thematic groups technologies and teacher education and reading education.

The final category analyzed concerns the sex of the researchers who authored the theses and dissertations. The construction of this category is justified by the feminization of the teaching profession, which is an integral part of teacher education in Brazil. Thus, we sought to examine how this aspect is reflected in research on undergraduate teacher education programs. Graph 4 presents our findings.

Graph 4 – Sex of the Researchers of Theses and Dissertations (2015–2021)



Source: Research data (2024).

It is evident that academic production on undergraduate teacher education programs has been predominantly developed by women. This aspect is reaffirmed when we analyze the data for each year within the temporal scope of the study (2015–2021). A total of 311 theses and dissertations were authored by women, compared to 89 works produced by men. Within this total, the annual average corresponds to 44.4 studies produced by women each year. This finding reinforces the strong presence of women in academic production on teacher education programs and in educational research more broadly.

Fialho, Freire and Sousa (2023) add that, in the field of education, female presence is the result of a socio-historical and political construction permeated by power relations. The

scenario evidenced in the theses and dissertations aligns with this characteristic. It is also worth noting that, according to Ribeiro (2023), in 2021, based on the Brazilian higher education census, 54% of postgraduate students in Brazil were women. Thus, this research confirms a characteristic already present in the national postgraduate landscape.

In concluding terms, the present investigation reveals that academic production in *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs concerning undergraduate teacher education has been consistently consolidated. The mapping presented in this text invites us, as researchers, to further explore teacher education in Brazil. The previously outlined landscape proves to be fertile ground for future investigations.

Final Considerations

This study aimed to map academic production on undergraduate teacher education programs in Brazil, focusing on theses and dissertations produced and made available in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog between 2015 and 2021. Based on this objective, we present some reflections on the academic production identified in the field of basic education teacher training.

First, it is important to highlight that the inventoried academic production is quantitatively significant, given that a total of 400 studies within the seven-year period considered in the investigation represents a substantial volume. We assess that, although there is no concentration of studies in a specific period, there has been an increase in academic production on undergraduate teacher education programs when compared to other studies that have undertaken similar mapping efforts. In our view, this increase is associated with the expansion of higher education in recent decades, particularly the interiorization of *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs.

From a spatial perspective, we note that the Southeast Region, together with its states, emerged as hegemonic in terms of research production on undergraduate teacher education programs. It is worth recalling that this region hosts the largest number of *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs in the country. It is followed by the South and Northeast Regions. In the Northeast Region, the number of postgraduate programs has tripled over the past two decades. In contrast, the Central-West and North Regions present a modest volume of production when compared to the other three regions of Brazil. In this regard, the need for public policies that

promote an increase in studies on teacher education in higher education institutions located in these regions becomes evident.

We also clarify that among the higher education institutions that most produce research are those that offer postgraduate programs with areas of concentration in teacher education or research lines dedicated to this theme. The State University of Ceará (UECE) exemplifies this finding, as it was the institution with the highest concentration of studies on undergraduate teacher education programs between 2015 and 2021. Of the two postgraduate education programs in its institutional context, one has teacher education as its area of concentration—located in the city of Fortaleza, Ceará—and the other includes a research line focused on teacher education, operating on an intercampus basis in the interior of the state.

We further observed that the field of education accounts for the majority of academic production on undergraduate teacher education programs. Nevertheless, we identified theses and dissertations in other fields, such as teaching and linguistics, which demonstrate interest in this theme across different spaces and disciplinary fields within *stricto sensu* postgraduate education. In total, theses and dissertations were found in 17 areas of knowledge.

Regarding the investigative themes of the theses and dissertations, we assess that teacher education policies and curriculum constitute major thematic foci in research on undergraduate teacher education programs. These two themes, according to previous studies that inventoried academic production in Brazil on teacher education, consistently appear as objects of research interest—a trend reaffirmed in the present study. From another perspective, we identified themes that are still less explored in research on teacher education but show growing prominence, namely technologies and teacher education and reading education.

We also analyzed that academic production on undergraduate teacher education programs has been predominantly authored by women. This aspect likewise represents a historical characteristic of educational research. It should be recalled that, in national *stricto sensu* postgraduate education, the majority of students are also women, a factor that directly impacts the production inventoried in this study.

Finally, we emphasize that this bibliographic survey provides a panoramic overview of academic production related to undergraduate teacher education programs, based on the analysis of theses and dissertations available in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog for the period from 2015 to 2021. We hope that the analysis developed here contributes—albeit modestly—to the ongoing efforts of researchers dedicated to investigating knowledge production in the educational field, with an emphasis on teacher education and undergraduate teacher education programs.

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