

Professional practice of pedagogy graduates: an analysis based on CAPES journals

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Abstract:

This study is an empirical, documentary analysis of the professional practice of education graduates in Brazil, grounded in a qualitative, exploratory approach and historical-dialectical materialism (HDM). It sought to identify insights into the professional practice of graduates from teacher education programs by reviewing articles on the CAPES Journal Portal. The results demonstrated the integration of educators into the labor market; however, they revealed discrepancies in employability among graduates from face-to-face, blended, and distance education programs, in addition to revealing a prevalence of low and medium incomes.

Keywords: pedagogy graduates, professional practice, teaching work.

Atuação profissional dos egressos dos cursos de pedagogia: uma análise a partir dos periódicos CAPES

Resumo

A pesquisa trata-se de uma análise empírica, documental sobre a atuação profissional dos egressos da Pedagogia no Brasil, ancorada na abordagem qualitativa, exploratória e no materialismo histórico-dialético (MHD). Buscou identificar o que estava sendo revelado sobre a atuação profissional dos egressos dos cursos de licenciatura em pedagogia, através do levantamento dos trabalhos no Portal de Periódico CAPES. Os resultados evidenciaram a inserção dos pedagogos no mercado de trabalho, porém revelaram discrepâncias na empregabilidade entre os egressos que se formaram nas modalidades presencial, semipresencial e a educação a distância, além de revelar a prevalência de rendimentos de baixos e médios salários.

Palavras-Chave: egressos de pedagogia, atuação profissional, trabalho docente.

La actuación profesional de los egresados de los cursos de pedagogía: un análisis a partir de las revistas CAPES

Resumen

La investigación consiste en un análisis empírico y documental sobre la práctica profesional de los titulados en Pedagogía en Brasil, basado en un enfoque cualitativo, exploratorio y en el materialismo histórico-dialético (MHD). Su objetivo fue identificar las conclusiones que se desprendían sobre la práctica profesional de los titulados de los cursos de licenciatura en pedagogía, mediante un análisis de los trabajos publicados en el Portal de Revistas de CAPES. Los resultados pusieron de manifiesto la inserción de los pedagogos en el mercado laboral, pero revelaron discrepancias en la empleabilidad entre los titulados que se formaron en las modalidades presencial, semipresencial y de educación a distancia, además de revelar la prevalencia de ingresos con salarios bajos y medios.

Palabras clave: graduados en pedagogía, desempeño profesional, trabajo docente.

Introduction

In Brazil, driven by Higher Education (HE) expansion, thousands of Pedagogy and other degree graduates are intended for the labor market every year. In this context, some researchers have dedicated themselves to comprehend the effects of this degree as well as the way those graduates have been practicing in the labor market.

According to Paul (2015), it was approximately between the 1970s and 1980s that emerged the first research studies about graduates, as a response to the worldwide expansion of HE enrollment. In this regard, Simões (1985) highlighted that, during the 1970s in Brazil, 83% of recent graduates were employed within the first year after completing their degrees, after all, in that period, some of the young adults (18 to 24 years old) did not study in HE institutions. Thus, those who were graduates of that level of education were easily absorbed by the labor market. However, Simões (1985) observed that there was a decrease in the absorption of higher education graduates in the following decades. By the early 1980s, 77% of recent graduates had obtained employment. Lima (2021) highlights that decreasing was extending, only one in four graduates (25,5%) were employed after their degree conclusion between 2014 and 2018.

In Brazil, with the neoliberal model adhesion, after the 1990s, occurs the HE expansion with prevalence of enrollments in the private sector. This increase occurred mainly through educational policies involving student financing programs and the increase of courses in Distance Education (DE) programs. A large share of these enrollment occurs in the Pedagogy Teacher Education programs (INEP, 2025), which justifies this type of research.

Given this scenario, the following questions arise: are the Pedagogy Teacher Education program graduates practicing in their field of training?

What have been research studies revealing about these graduates' employability in Brazil? Therefore, our main objective is to identify how the professional practice of Pedagogy program graduates has been characterized in studies published in the Journal Portal of the Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (CAPES). Specifically and considering the research data published on the CAPES platform, we sought to verify what the data has been indicating about these graduates' practice and employability.

This research is grounded in Historical-Dialectical Materialism (HDM), and has a qualitative and documental approach, with an empirical analysis of secondary scientific data available in CAPES Journal.

Further, this research is organized into an introduction, in which we present the objectives and the problem of the research; followed by the methodology, in which we detail the procedures and the path taken to the selection of research studies in which were extracted the data for analysis; subsequently, the findings are presented, that is, the empirical analysis of the scientific data available in the CAPES Journal; and, finally, the final considerations.

Paths taken: the methodological trajectory of the analysis data

Grounded in the Historical-Dialectical Materialism (HDM), this research is characterized as a documentary research with a qualitative approach, and an empirical analysis of secondary scientific data available on CAPES Journal.

About the HDM, it is a dynamic method that seeks to explain the investigated phenomenon as it is truthly is, constituted by a concrete and historical practice of human life in society, which allows us an attitude of critical reflection, since this "research method [...] provides the theoretical

knowledge, and starting from the appearance, it aims to achieve the essence of the object" (Netto, 2011, p.22).

The data collected was carried out through searches in the scientific databases available on the Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (CAPES), specifically the national production of scientific articles, theses and dissertations related to the professional practice of graduates of Pedagogy teacher education programs. The analysis started from three descriptors to the achievement of searches and selection of theses and dissertations: I) Pedagogue's employability; II) Professional practice of Pedagogy graduates; III) Labor market for Pedagogy graduates.

It was also necessary to take the path of searches in the Journal CAPES portal, once the descriptors were defined. Therefore, we established four stages for the search: 1st stage: identification of quantitative works; 2nd stage: reading of all of the titles and abstracts of the research studies; 3rd stage: analysis and interpretation of the material collected in full; 4th stage: writing of the article.

We thus began the 1st stage: identification of quantitative works. We made the search for studies in the Journal CAPES database. At this first point, no restrictions were used for the temporality of the descriptors, nor was used definition of type of research studies (articles, dissertations or theses). In this way, we obtained a total of 114 studies, which were published between 2011 and 2023, as shown in the table below.

TABLE 1 – Number of theses and dissertations found in the CAPES search

Descriptors	Studies found	Publication period
1. Profile of pedagogue employability	08 – articles	2017–2022
2. Professional practice of Pedagogy graduates	48 – articles 17 – dissertations 01 – book chapter	2011–2024
3. Labor market for Pedagogy graduates	34 – articles 6 – dissertations	2008–2024
Total studies	114	

Source: table prepared by the authors.

The search revealed a considerable number of theses and dissertations according to the three descriptors researched. In descriptor 1: “Profile of pedagogue employability”, we had 8 research studies between 2017 and 2022. Descriptor 2: “Professional practice of Pedagogy graduates”, reached 66 results (48 articles, 17 dissertations and 1 book chapter), between 2001 and 2024. In descriptor 3: “Labor market for Pedagogy graduates”, we had 40 results from 2008 to 2024.

We note that, although we limited Pedagogy programs in the descriptors, the numbers of the descriptors 1, 2 and 3 reveal different research studies that included areas of teacher education, such as pedagogy, biology, chemistry, physics, history and language and literature. At this first stage, we opted to use this descriptor to identify the quantity of works without a specific selection by area, it means, all of the studies we had found were counted and catalogued in a table to an investigation in the following stages.

2nd stage: reading of all of the titles and abstracts of the studies. For the second stage, we chose some selection criteria of the works. In this stage, we carried out an exploratory reading of the titles and abstracts of the research studies. The main objective of this stage was to identify the studies that could in fact contribute with our study and, consequently, reduce the number of works to be analyzed. Specifically, in this stage we excluded papers that: a) were research studies dedicated only to graduates of high school, graduate degree, or other programs that were not Pedagogy teacher

education programs; b) presented other discussions on graduates that are distanced from the pre-established descriptors "professional practice, employability or pedagogy labor market".

In the second stage, after the definition of criteria and analysis of research studies, we obtained a sample of 19 papers, as it is detailed in the table below:

Table 2 – Selected articles, theses, and dissertations

Category/Descriptor	Types of studies selected	Publication period
1. Employability of the Pedagogue	03 – articles	2018–2022
2. Professional practice of Pedagogy graduates	07 – articles 01 – dissertation 01 – thesi	2013–2023
3. Labor market for Pedagogy graduates	06 – articles 01 – dissertation	2002–2023
Total	19	

Source: table prepared by the authors.

In descriptor 1, "Employability of the Pedagogue", 3 research studies (3 articles) were selected between 2018 and 2022. In descriptor 2, "Professional practice of Pedagogy graduates", we obtained 9 results (7 articles, 1 dissertation and 1 theses), between 2013 and 2023; and descriptor 3, "Labor market for Pedagogy graduates", were selected 7 papers (6 articles and 1 dissertation). After this analysis, we considered 19 papers to be analyzed according to the following stages.

3rd stage: analysis and interpretation of the material collected in full. In this third stage, given the number of findings, it was possible for us to carry out a more careful reading in order to identify whether there is sufficient relevance to incorporate them into the research results. Thus, studies that did not contribute to this research were excluded.

The exclusion criteria for research studies were: not being empirical research studies; being research studies that do not examine graduates of the Pedagogy program; being merely research studies that seek to

categorize the profile of graduates, without raising any problematization based on the data collected regarding their practice in their field of training.

At this stage, five papers were selected, four articles and one thesis, published between 2016 and 2023, detailed in the next section. The selection of these papers rigorously followed the pre-established selection criteria from each previous stage of the research. The selected papers proceeded to the final stage, the fourth stage, which made up the corpus of the data analysis for the research.

Data analysis based on the CAPES Journal Database: the field of practice of Pedagogy program graduates

After we concluded the survey and selection phase of research studies, we began the analysis of the data and the presentation of the findings. We will present the analyzed data in light of our main question: what have research studies been revealing about the professional practice of Pedagogy program graduates in Brazil?

From this perspective, it becomes necessary to understand not only where these professionals work, but also the profile of their employability, considering indicators such as labor market integration rates, types of employment relationships, average income, and characteristics of the educational trajectories that preceded them.

The doctoral thesis by Vargas (2016), entitled “Training and professional integration of the pedagogue: the historical panorama of this career and the graduates of the face-to-face Pedagogy program at the Faculdade de Educação da UFMG,” examined the relationships between training and the professional integration of Pedagogy graduates between 2000 and 2011.

In that study, the author highlighted the historical period regarding the profile of the professional pedagogue, who, according to her, has at

times been treated as an education specialist, at times as a teacher, and at times as both. Some regulations shaped the configuration of the Pedagogy program, such as: Decree-Law No. 1,190/1939; Opinion No. 251/1962; Opinion No. 252/1969; CNE/CP Resolution No. 1/2006; and CNE/CP Resolution No. 2/2019, among others. Despite significant progress, these legal milestones also reveal that, since the program's creation, there has been uncertainty about the pedagogue's purpose and function, which influenced the program's development and caused it to occupy a peripheral place among teacher education programs (Vargas, 2016).

This oscillation in defining the pedagogue's function is not accidental; it reveals the expression of a historical dispute between training projects that respond to different class interests. From the perspective of HDM, we understand that each legal milestone reflects the economic, social, and political needs of its time, revealing how the pedagogue profession was shaped in line with the logic of capital reproduction, at times emphasizing technical training, at times scientific training, but always marked by ambiguities that reflect the very contradiction of the school's social function (Saviani, 2021).

Regarding the professional profile category of the Pedagogue, we identified in Vargas (2016) some elements. Her analysis included 59 graduates, in which she found that:

Unemployment among graduates was relatively low, given that of the 59 respondents, only 9 were unoccupied at the time of data collection, and of these, 4 were neither working nor seeking employment. Among those employed (51, or 86%), the main employment relationship was salaried work (43, or 84%). Six graduates held master's or doctoral scholarships, and two worked independently. The working week was 40 hours for most of those employed (55%), respectively followed by 20 and 30 hours weekly (32%) and up to 20 hours weekly (13%) (Vargas, 2016, p.243).

Regarding the sector of practice, Vargas (2016) found that, of the 51 graduates who were working, 37 (72%) worked in the field of education.

Respondents were distributed across all levels and modalities of education, with elementary education concentrating the largest number of them. Higher education was the second level of education that brought together the most pedagogues among the survey respondents. DE and Early Childhood education each accounted for eight graduates.

The analysis of the professional practice category allows for a clearer identification of where Pedagogy graduates are working, and reveals that they are predominantly placed in basic education, especially in early childhood education and the early years of elementary education. These data are corroborated by other research studies, such as those by Braga et al. (2022) and Nunes et al. (2021), which reinforce the centrality of teaching in the occupational destination of these professionals, as well as at this level of education. Although with variations regarding the type of program taken, the type of employment contract (temporary or through public competitive examination), and the nature of the institution (public or private).

When she analyzed graduates' income and socioeconomic situation, Vargas (2016) found that, of the 59 respondents, 5 (8.5%) earned 1 to 2 minimum wages (MW); 9 (15%) earned 2 to 3 MW; 23 (39%) earned 3 to 5 MW; 13 (22%) earned between 5 and 10 MW; 3 (5%) earned 10 to 20 MW; and 6 (10%) did not report how much they earned. Thus, it was found that a good portion of graduates have an average salary of 3 to 5 minimum wages.

These data reveal important aspects related to our categories of “professional practice” and “labor market,” which show a considerable rate of labor market integration and a predominance of salaried employment relationships. However, the significant concentration of contracts involving 40-hour work weeks and average incomes of three to five minimum wages point to an ambiguous reality: on one hand, there is employability; on the other, this employability occurs under conditions that reproduce the logic of precarious work, with trained teachers still receiving less or only slightly

above the minimum salary floor of R\$4,867.77 established by the Ministry of Education (MEC).

It should be noted that, in our analysis, we identified a gap in Vargas's (2016) work regarding the employability category data. In her research, it was not clear whether the salaried teachers had formal employment contracts, temporary contracts, or positions obtained through public competitive examinations — information we consider relevant for identifying the type of employability being exercised.

The study by Braga *et al.* (2022), characterized as a literature review and analysis of secondary empirical data, examined thirty academic papers and was entitled “Employability and occupational destination of higher education graduates: a literature review.” In that study, the authors report that, in general, studies addressing the professional integration of HE graduates, specifically in pedagogy, “showed that, in most cases, graduates enter the labor market through teaching and with relative ease” (Braga *et al.*, 2022, p. 9).

Braga *et al.* (2022) point out that, among the research studies analyzed, the oldest was produced in 1986 by Machado, who investigated Pedagogy graduates from a university in Paraná. In that study, the author found that, even at that time, a large proportion of graduates sought to work as teachers, with 75% of them were working in what was then called “first grade” (currently, the early years of elementary education) and 25% in preschools, and that they were employed with relative ease, although rarely in their field of training/qualification, and were poorly paid.

Considering the publication year of Machado's study, 1986, it is possible to note that there has been progress regarding the pay of pedagogy professionals, with the establishment of a minimum salary floor for teachers. However, Braga *et al.* (2022) conclude that this is still not satisfactory, since salaries remain inadequate today, and there are municipalities that do not comply with this standard, that is, they still do not

pay the minimum salary floor required for teachers, in addition to offering poor working conditions.

We also selected the work “Trajectories of Graduates from Face-to-Face, Blended, and Distance Pedagogy Programs: Employability and practice,” also authored by Braga *et al.* (2022). In this study, the authors sought to identify whether there was a discrepancy in the professional trajectory of Pedagogy graduates across face-to-face, blended, and distance education (DE) modalities in Belo Horizonte. They found that a large proportion of Pedagogy graduates were working in positions consistent with their field of training, and that the Pedagogy program showed a high employability rate; however, they found a relative difference between the different modalities.

In summary, Braga *et al.* (2022) found a difference in employability among graduates of the face-to-face, blended, and distance education modalities, revealing that: graduates from the face-to-face modality, after graduation, were the ones who found positions in the labor market most quickly. Likewise, they, together with graduates from blended programs, mostly tend to hold public sector positions; however, those who completed the teacher education program in the face-to-face modality had a higher pass rate in public competitive examinations. DE graduates, on the other hand, tend to hold private sector positions. Braga *et al.* (2022) also reveal:

[...] regarding the length of time graduates remained unemployed after graduation, that more than 64% of those who graduated from face-to-face programs were never unemployed, while this was true for only 44.8% of DE graduates and 37.5% of blended program graduates. One in four graduates of blended and DE programs never obtained employment after graduation. Only 6.7% of face-to-face graduates were in this situation (Braga *et al.*, 2022, p.15).

The data revealed that graduates from the face-to-face modality have a certain advantage compared to the other modalities. This may be linked to the fact that the face-to-face modality gives graduates greater

opportunities for contact with schools through internships, extension projects, or teaching residencies — something that, in distance education, aside from the mandatory internship, is reduced or does not occur at all.

The inequality in labor market integration between DE and face-to-face graduates, revealed by Braga *et al.* (2022), evidences a process of commodification of higher education, in which the expansion of access, promoted mainly through the DE modality, is accompanied by weakened training and lower labor market integration.

The authors Nunes *et al.* (2021) published an article entitled “The Pedagogy program in focus: the integration of graduates of the Federal University of Ouro Preto into the professional field.” The study characterized the integration and professional practice of 124 Pedagogy program graduates from a federal public higher education institution located in the municipality of Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais. Data were collected in different years, in 2016, with 70 graduates, and in 2019, with 54 graduate participants.

Nunes *et al.* (2021), contrasting the 2016 and 2019 data, found that the majority of Pedagogy graduates from the Federal University of Ouro Preto are female and are between 20 and 30 years old. Regarding the practice of these professionals, the research data showed that the labor market has absorbed a significant share of Pedagogy graduates. The authors concluded that:

from the undertaken analysis, it is possible to observe that a percentage above 74% of graduates obtained a position in the labor market, with more than 72% of them working in the educational field, and of these, more than 50% working in the public sector. This fact may be explained by two factors: the large number of public schools in Brazil, and the legislation governing the qualification of education professionals (Nunes *et al.*, 2021, p.294).

The study also revealed a predominance of female enrollment in the Pedagogy program. Regarding access to employment, several forms of access were identified, but selection by résumé and entry through public

competitive examinations stood out, along with the fact that the majority worked in the educational field, in early childhood education and the early years of elementary education.

Regarding social and financial satisfaction with the teaching profession, graduates showed a moderate level of dissatisfaction, which, according to Nunes *et al.* (2021, p. 295), “is a finding that is not surprising when one considers the amounts paid to male and female teachers in different regions of the country,” and the authors emphasize the necessity of monitoring the effectiveness of the teaching career plan. Despite the existence of legal regulations, including the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals (Fundeb), created in 2007, this remains insufficient to meet the educational demands of Brazilian states and municipalities. Legal regulations such as Fundeb represent important achievements, but within the structural limits of the capitalist order. Within this logic, wage precarity and inadequate working conditions are not isolated failures but strategies conceived and coordinated to sustain the logic of accumulation (Barbosa, 2011).

The study by Zulcowskii and Portelinha (2023), entitled “Initial training and professional integration of Pedagogy program graduates,” applied a questionnaire to 275 graduates, who answered questions about the positions, roles they held and their types of employment contracts.

Concerning professional integration into the labor market, Zulcowskii and Portelinha (2023) found that, despite the difficulties imposed by the labor market, there is a large number of graduates working in educational sectors. Of the 275 Pedagogy graduates, 213 were working as teachers and 62 worked in other fields. Early Childhood (EC) education, with 86 graduates, was the field that concentrated the largest number of professionals, followed by the early years of elementary education (EE) with 53 graduates; pedagogical managers and coordinators with 12 professionals; and 20

graduates combining management, pedagogical coordination, or teaching roles in EC or EE. Regarding how these graduates were hired, the authors state that:

[...] of the 213 education workers trained at Unioeste, 135 were hired exclusively through public competitive examinations, just over 63.3%. Another 20 had a partial contract via public competitive examination, possibly for 20 hours a week, while the remaining hours were covered through temporary contracts. Finally, 27.1% were hired only through temporary contracts, meaning they had no job security. Nevertheless, the average income of Basic Education professionals falls short of the average income of any other profession requiring a completed higher education degree. (Zulcowskii e Portelinha, 2023, p.12 e 13).

It can be observed that employability among Pedagogy program graduates varies considerably, and not by chance, since it is in the interest of the capitalist system to keep not only teachers but the entire working class in temporary contracts with low wages in order to sustain the logic of expanded capital accumulation. On this point, Mészáros (2011) argues that if, for any reason, capital were to curb its expansionist drive by imposing restrictions on itself, that would amount to proposing the suicide of the system.

These data expose fundamental contradictions in the labor market for Pedagogy graduates. Despite their significant presence in the educational sector, the predominance of temporary contracts and average incomes below the national average for professionals with higher education demonstrate an integration marked by instability and undervaluation. These conditions, far from being accidental, reflect the structural logic of capital, which appropriates education as a means of reproducing the labor force at minimal cost.

Drawing on the work of Mészáros (2012), who argues that there is a structural crisis within capital, it is possible to observe the consequences of this scenario in workers' education. For this scholar, unlike previous cyclical

crises, the current crisis of capital has a structural character, meaning it acts in all social spheres in an attempt to reverse the falling rate of profit. To this end, it has been promoting productive restructuring, destabilizing labor functions through flexibilization, outsourcing of labor, and other measures. In an attempt to overcome the effects of this crisis, capitalism resorts to different strategies to reverse the situation, through the action of international bodies coordinated by the State. In this context, education becomes an important mechanism of operation, functioning as yet another commodity, in addition to contributing to the training of labor for the job market (Jimenez and Segundo, 2007).

On one hand, HE graduates, especially those from the Pedagogy program, experienced significant changes, such as some improvements in how the program is offered and its functions, with changes brought about through legislation, and the expansion of available places. On the other hand, these changes also produced training of questionable quality, relegating the program to secondary status, which contributed to the devaluation of the pedagogue's career (Vargas, 2016).

The strong presence of temporary contracts among graduates evidences what Marx (1857) called the “industrial reserve army,” that is, the maintenance of a mass of workers in a situation of instability and structural unemployment. Faced with the constant threat of losing their job to someone else willing to accept the conditions offered, the worker ends up submitting to low wages and precarious working conditions. In doing so, the system achieves two main objectives: reducing labor costs by offering lower wages, and weakening organization and demands for rights, given the pressure of becoming one more name on the list of the unemployed.

In the field of education, this reality is clearly apparent in teachers' lives. According to the 2024 Basic Education Census, conducted by the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep), the figures reveal a worrying scenario: in Brazil's state schools, only 331,440

teachers (49.96%) hold positions obtained through public competitive examination, while 331,971 (50.04%) have temporary contracts. This means that half of these professionals lack the security of job stability or the prospect of a career plan. This reality weakens teachers' professional autonomy and reinforces a relationship of dependency on both the State and the market, limiting the development of a more stable and critical teaching practice.

From this perspective, the practice of pedagogues cannot be seen merely as an individual choice, but as the product of a historical movement marked by class struggle, in which the teaching profession occupies a strategic place both for the maintenance and for the overcoming of the logic of capital.

Concluding Remarks

The data analyzed here reveal that the professional practice of graduates from teacher education programs involves numerous contradictions. Under the imperative of the structural crisis, as in other social spheres, education is also affected at any level, modality, or circumstance by this crisis. In particular, the case of the Pedagogy program, this process is expressed both in the redefinition of the legal regulations that altered its function, generating uncertainty about it, and in the relegation of the program to secondary status, which ultimately fosters the devaluation of the teacher education program and, consequently, of the pedagogue as a professional (Vargas, 2016; Nunes, 2021).

Regarding the professional practice of graduates from Pedagogy teacher education programs, the data analysis makes it possible to identify a predominant profile of female graduates, a large proportion of whom come from working-class backgrounds and see the career as an opportunity

to achieve better living conditions (Vargas, 2016; Braga et al., 2022; Nunes et al., 2021; Zulcowskii and Portelinha, 2023).

The studies by Braga et al. (2022), Nunes et al. (2021), and Zulcowskii and Portelinha (2023) agree by themselves that the school remains the main sector of practice, and teaching predominates, mainly in Early Childhood (EC) education, followed by the final years of elementary education (EE). This result was already expected, since EC education was established as the first stage of Basic Education by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), No. 9,394/1996. Given the mandatory nature established by this law, positions in this field needed to be filled urgently, which encouraged the opening of several programs and selection process to meet the need of the moment.

Regarding employability and the average salary of graduates of Pedagogy teacher education programs, the authors who were reviewed pointed to an advantage in obtaining employment for graduates who completed their training in the face-to-face modality, as well as a prevalence of low and medium incomes. In general, studies indicate that, like other teacher education programs, this career provides low average incomes compared to other fields requiring HE. Vargas (2016) indicates that the average salary for a good portion of graduates is 3 to 5 minimum wages.

In a research on Brazilian teachers' salaries, Barbosa (2011) reveals that teacher pay in Brazil can be considered low, especially when compared to the pay received in other occupations that also require higher education degrees, and that these low salaries negatively impact teaching work and, consequently, the quality of education.

As already noted, although the payment of a minimum salary floor for basic education teachers in Brazil has been established by law, several states still do not comply with it. The text of Law No. 11,738 of 2008 determines that teachers' minimum salary floor must be adjusted annually, following the percentage criteria established in Law No. 14,113 of December 25, 2020, of the

New Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals (Fundeb). However, there appears to be an enormous gap between what is written into law and what is actually implemented.

Specifically, the literature produced by Nunes *et al.* (2021) and Zulcowskii and Portelinha (2023) revealed that the form of employability of Pedagogy graduates varies, with integration through public competitive examinations, temporary contracts, and formal employment contracts standing out, in that order. In this regard, a large proportion of those who obtained positions through public competitive examination were appointed for only 20 hours rather than 40 hours a month, forcing teachers to complete their workload through temporary contracts, often in school units different from their original placement, and without the job security that a position obtained through public competitive examination provides.

Therefore, what has been revealed about the professional practice of Pedagogy graduates is a picture that remains contradictory, with low and medium incomes, a certain employability advantage for those who trained in the face-to-face modality, and also integration of graduates into the market through public competitive examinations, but also through numerous temporary contracts. Thus, this moment calls for a critical reflection on the circumstances imposed on a large share of Brazilian educators, who come from a less privileged class — the working class.

In summary, the analysis of the empirical data from the research studies made it possible to identify important patterns regarding the integration of Pedagogy graduates into the world of work. Considering our categories of analysis, a relatively high employability profile was observed, but with precarious employment relationships and a concentration in low-paying public sectors. Professional practice remains strongly linked to teaching in the early years of primary education and early childhood education, with low diversification and little valorization. The labor market,

although it offers opportunities, proves to be marked by deep contradictions, expressing the structural crisis of capital and the instrumentalization of education as a productive force for cheap labor.

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