

# BALANCE OF DISSERTATIONS AND THESES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DEVELOPED IN THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN EDUCATION IN BRAZIL<sup>1</sup>

## *BALANÇO DAS DISSERTAÇÕES E TESES EM EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL E EDUCAÇÃO INCLUSIVA DESENVOLVIDAS NOS PROGRAMAS DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM EDUCAÇÃO NO BRASIL*

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper aims to discuss succinctly the “*places*” of master’s theses and doctoral dissertations in Special Education in Brazil. It is sought to unveil its emergence and consolidation as an object of research within the Graduate Programs in Education (GPEs). Methodologically, the realization of this balance required the statistical update and the collection of general information (bibliographical data and summaries) about the theses and dissertations under analysis. This information has been organized and systematized into two databases, namely: 1) *Pro-Identi*; and 2) *Character*. The main results indicate that in the period from 1971 to 2016, 2,864 master’s theses and 711 doctoral dissertations were defended, making a total of 3,575 defenses in Special Education, within the framework of the Brazilian GPEs. These researches were developed in 134 programs, with emphasis on the Graduate Program in Special Education of the Federal University of São Carlos, and ten other GPEs that together concentrate 49.3% of the production in the field. When consubstantiating the authors consulted and the survey made, it was possible to identify and characterize three periods of this research in the country, namely: Pioneerism, Expansion and Consolidation. Finally, synthetically, it is reasonable to consider that 45 years after the defense of the first master’s thesis in Special Education in Brazil, research on this subject is consolidated in the country.

**KEYWORDS:** Special Education. Inclusive Education. Knowledge production. Theses and dissertations. Graduate studies.

**RESUMO:** Este artigo tem como objetivo discutir sucintamente os “*lugares*” das dissertações e das teses em Educação Especial no Brasil. Busca-se desvelar a sua emergência e consolidação como objeto de investigação no interior dos Programas de Pós-Graduação em Educação (PPGE). Metodologicamente, a realização desse balanço exigiu a atualização estatística e a coleta de informações gerais (bibliografias e resumos) sobre as dissertações e as teses em análise. Essas informações vêm sendo organizadas e sistematizadas em duas bases de dados, a saber: 1) *Pró-Identi*; e 2) *Caracter*. Os principais resultados indicam que, no período de 1971 a 2016, foram defendidas 2.864 dissertações e 711 teses, perfazendo um total de 3.575 defesas em Educação Especial, no âmbito dos PPGE brasileiros. Essas pesquisas foram desenvolvidas em 134 programas, com destaque para o Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação Especial da Universidade Federal de São Carlos, e outros dez PPGE que juntos concentram 49,3% da produção da área. Ao consubstanciar nos autores consultados e no levantamento realizado, foi possível identificar e caracterizar três períodos dessa pesquisa no país, a saber: Pioneirismo, Expansão e Consolidação. Por fim, sinteticamente, é razoável considerar que passados 45 anos da defesa da primeira dissertação de Mestrado em Educação Especial no Brasil, a pesquisa sobre esse tema no país encontra-se consolidada.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Educação Especial. Educação Inclusiva. Produção do conhecimento. Dissertações e teses. Pós-Graduação.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Research in Special Education in the form of master’s theses and doctoral dissertations has been developed in Brazil since the 1970s. However, since the 2000s it has been consolidated, especially in the Graduate Programs in Education (GPEs). In this sense, it is pertinent to observe the results of the studies developed by Nunes, Ferreira, Glat and Mendes (1998), Nunes, Ferreira and Mendes (2004), Silva (2006, 2013), Bueno (2014), among others.

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Thus, in response to the call of the *Revista Brasileira de Educação Especial* - Brazilian Journal of Special Education - for researchers to submit papers dedicated to the “Balance of Brazilian scientific production in Special Education in the last 25 years”, we present this paper whose objective is to discuss succinctly the “places” of the research in Special Education (or the educational problem of the person with disability<sup>3</sup>), and more precisely that developed in the form of theses and dissertations within the GPEs, seeking to unveil its emergency and consolidation as an object of research in this area of knowledge and within this academic space. Thus, the sense of balance assigned, in this text, approaches one of the types indicated by Saviani (2015, p. 80), which is: “the balance as a sequential register of the whole production of the area, aiming at evidencing the progressive constitution, development and consolidation of the field”.

We are aware of the limits of the analysis of the development of a field of knowledge such as Special Education, based on the balance of dissertations and theses. Nevertheless, due to the characteristics of the system of Science, Technology and Innovation in Brazil, and the constitution of the “research & graduate studies” binomial, especially in the area of education, we argue that the research developed in the form of theses and dissertations is presented as a good indicator for understanding the process of constitution and development of a field of knowledge. This is because the completion of a thesis or dissertation implies not only the possibility of disseminating research results in the form of papers, chapters of books or books, lectures, courses, but also the fact that the qualification of a graduate student at Master’s and Doctorate level automatically accredits him/her to act in Higher Education as a professor and/or researcher.

## 2 METHOD

According to our objective of identifying the “places” of Special Education research in Brazil, we worked with primary sources composed of general information (bibliographical data and abstracts) of the theses and dissertations under analysis and with secondary sources constituted by the analysis records of the works found (Database:1) *Pro-Identi*; e 2) *Caracter*).

Regarding the sources, it is worth mentioning that we work with the Manuals of Indicators of each GPE recognized and recommended by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) in September 2017, more precisely the files of theses and dissertations defended by the graduate programs. Another important source was the dissertation database of Capes with the abstracts themselves, as well as the libraries (digital of each Program) and the PRODISC<sup>4</sup> data, from which we identified where the studies were available. It is also important to note that, even with this set of sources, especially CAPES’S dissertation database, there is still the difficulty of recovering information

<sup>3</sup>The term Special Education was generically employed, although we recognize the process of redefinition of the Brazilian Special Education area, since the 1990s, due to the Inclusive Education movement.

<sup>4</sup>Project entitled *A Pós-graduação em Educação Especial: caracterização e perspectivas dos programas e análise crítica da produção discente* - Graduate studies in Special Education: characterization and perspectives of the programs and critical analysis of the student production, coordinated by Leila Regina D’Oliveira de Paula Nunes, Júlio Romero Ferreira, Enicéia Gonçalves Mendes and Rosana Glat. The project was funded by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) and São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP). The project was developed in the period from 1995 to 2004 in four stages, namely: PRODISC 1 - CNPq proc. 523960/94; PRODISC 2 - CNPq proc. 524226/96; PRODISC 3 - CNPq 524226/96-2; and PRODISC 4 - CNPq proc. 524226/96-2 and FAPESP proc. 2000/07485-0. The results of this project were published in the form of books, chapters of books and papers, of which we highlight: Nunes et al. (1998) and Nunes et al. (2004).

about GPE production before 1987. Thus, from the cited sources, the data were collected by means of a record/script (Abstract collection record), which was elaborated from the analysis tools developed by Silva (2013).

Then, from the data collected in this record/script, the information was organized and systematized in the two databases mentioned above. These databases are not yet available for public access, although we have tried to systematize and organize some information from the “Pro-Identi and Character” databases in the Table 1 attached.

Therefore, the “Pro-Identi” database made it possible to identify the number of defenses in Special Education carried out in the GPEs, per year of defense and level (M or D) and their respective institutions/programs. On the other hand, the “Character” database allowed to identify some characteristics of the research under analysis, such as: subject; goals; declared theoretical reference; methodology adopted; geographical scope; main sources; main results; and conclusions. However, for the purpose of this paper, we have decided not to present this data in full because of the objectives defined for this publication (discuss succinctly the “places” of the research).

In order to identify the theses and dissertations that had their information collected in the aforementioned databases, we selected those related to the educational issues of people with special educational needs (students with disabilities, global developmental disorders, high skills/giftedness and specific functional disorders). Thus, we included research focused on issues of fundamentals, policies, teaching-learning process, teacher education, orientation and organization of support networks, identification of resources, services and development of collaborative practices (specialized pedagogical support, pedagogical home care, hospital class and early stimulation). Theses and dissertations regarding other populations were not selected, for example: elders, children and adolescents in conflict with the law or sexually abused, ethnic minorities and discussion about gender.

This survey allowed us to understand a little more about the process of constitution of the research in Special Education, and, later, Special Education in the inclusive perspective, in the form of theses and dissertations within the Graduate Studies in Education in Brazil.

### 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the period from 1971<sup>5</sup> to 2016, a total of 3,575 dissertations and theses in Special Education were defended in GPEs in Brazil<sup>6</sup>. As can be seen in Table 2 presented at the end of this text, these studies (2,864 master’s theses and 711 doctoral dissertations) were developed in 134 programs, with emphasis on the Special Education Graduate Program of the Federal University of São Carlos (known as PPGEs/UFSCar), with 563 defenses<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Year of defense of the first Master’s thesis on Special Education in Brazil, which was developed at the GPE of the Federal University of Santa Maria.

<sup>6</sup> In the analyzed period, there are records of master’s theses in Special Education defended in the Program of Communication Disorders in PUC/São Paulo, as well as in other GPEs that migrated to the Multidisciplinary area (Teaching). Thus, we have decided, in this paper, to present only the GPE data recognized and recommended by CAPES in September 2017 and the Master’s course of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Education of *Getúlio Vargas* Foundation (IESAE/FGV), which ended in June 1990.

<sup>7</sup> The number of works identified as being in the Special Education area in the PPGEs/UFSCar is less than the number of defenses of the Program, since there are theses and dissertations that are not necessarily related to the area and/or the target population of Special Education in the perspective of inclusive education.

We can observe in Table 2 that, in addition to the PPGEs/UFSCar, another ten GPEs concentrate 49.3% of the production of theses and dissertations in Special Education in Brazil, which are: UERJ; UFRGS; USP; UNESP/Mar; UFES; UFSM; Unicamp; UFBA; Unimep and UFRN.<sup>8</sup> And the other 22 programs concentrate 25.2% of the production, so that 33 GPEs are responsible for 74.46% of the defenses of theses and dissertations in the area. The other 101 GPEs with production in the area are responsible for only 25.5% of the research in Special Education in the period investigated, indicating great dispersion.

Also based on the data presented in Table 2, it was possible to elaborate the following summary table:

Location and type of production	Master's theses in Special Education	Doctoral dissertations in Special Education
Brazil	2,864	711
São Paulo	999	408
PGEEs-UFSCar	434	129
São Paulo/Brazil <sup>1</sup>	34.88%	57.38%
PGEEs-UFSCar/Brazil <sup>2</sup>	15.15%	18.14%

**Table 1.** Location and type of production defended in the GPEs

1 The data in this row refer to the percentage of defenses of the state of São Paulo in the total of defenses in Brazil.

2 The data in this row refer to the percentage of defenses at the PPGEs/UFSCar in the total of defenses in Brazil.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

We can observe that the dissertations and theses in Special Education have been showing good presence in the GPEs of the state of São Paulo, in such a way that the programs of this state are fundamental for this type of production in the country, especially regarding doctoral dissertations, because every ten Doctorate defenses in Special Education in the GPEs, approximately six (5,7) are developed by programs from São Paulo. Another important observation is the role played by the PPGEs/UFSCar, especially in relation to the number of doctoral dissertations defended on Special Education in Brazil.

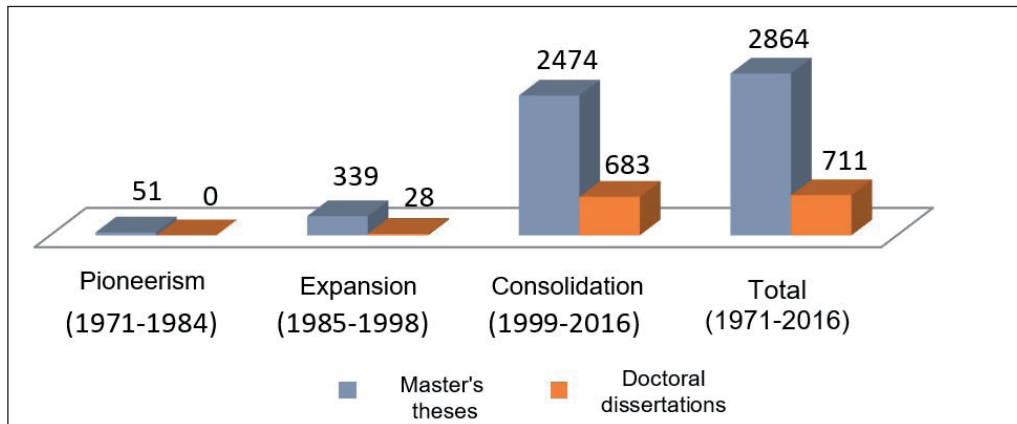
Also based on the authors consulted and the survey carried out, we identified and characterized three periods of research in Special Education, within the Graduate Studies in Education in Brazil, namely: Pioneerism, Expansion and Consolidation.

The first period began in 1971 with the defense of the first Master's thesis in Special Education in the GPE of the *Universidade Federal de Santa Maria* (UFSM) and extended until the defense of the first doctoral dissertation of the area defended in 1985, at the GPE of Unicamp. The second period occurred from 1985 to 1999, year of creation of the doctoral course at the PPGEs/UFSCar. And, finally, the third and last period began with the creation of this course and extended until 2016, the year in which the Special Education research within

<sup>8</sup> UERJ - *Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro*; UFRGS - *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul*; USP - *Universidade de São Paulo*; UNESP/Mar - *Universidade Estadual Paulista /campus Marília*; UFES - *Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo*; UFSM - *Universidade Federal de Santa Maria*; Unicamp - *Universidade Estadual de Campinas*; UFBA - *Universidade Federal da Bahia*; Unimep - *Universidade Metodista de Piracicaba*; UFRN - *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte*.

the scope of the GPEs celebrated 45 years of existence<sup>9</sup>. Next, we will deal briefly with each one of them.

In Graph 1, we can visualize the number of dissertations and theses defended in each period of constitution of Special Education as research and investigation object of the GPEs in Brazil.



**Graph 1.** Number of theses and dissertations in Special Education defended in the Brazilian GPEs, by periods, between 1971 and 2016

Source: Elaborated by the author.

### 3.1 FIRST PERIOD - PIONEERISM (FROM 1971 TO 1984)

The first period, which covers the 1970s and the mid-1980s, began with the defense of the first master's thesis in Special Education in the Master's course of UFSCar<sup>10</sup>. This period is characterized by the creation of the first Master's in Education courses that dealt with the Special Education research in Brazil, especially the Master's programs in Special Education at UFSCar (PMEEs/UFSCar), created in 1978, and the Master's in Education at UERJ (PME/ UERJ), created in 1979, both have already started their activities with Concentration Area and/or lines of Research in Special Education.

During this period, of the 26 existing GPEs, 51 special education theses had been defended in 14 programs, namely: UFSCar-EE (15 or 29.41%); UERJ (8 or 15.69%); PUC-RIO (5 or 9.80%); PUC/SP (Educational Psychology) and UFRJ (4 or 7.84% each); UFF and

<sup>9</sup> Regarding these three periods of Special Education research within the GPEs, it is important to emphasize that the chronological frameworks used for its elaboration are neither "straitjackets" nor unanimous, but rather a way established here to deal with the issues. For example, we decided to work with important "milestones" in each period (defense of the first master's thesis, then defense of the first doctoral dissertation, and, finally, the creation of the first specific doctoral course in the area), but we could have observed the very number of theses and/or dissertations defended over time. Finally, we opted for the definition of milestones that indicate the beginning of a new moment of this type of research within the graduate studies in education in Brazil.

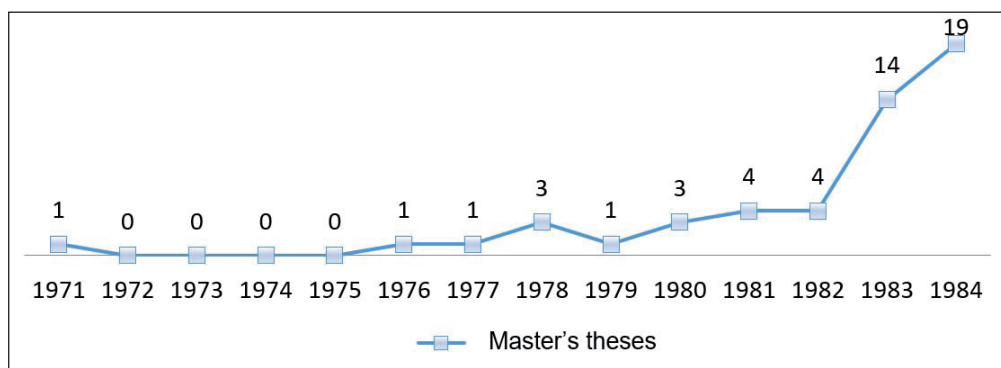
<sup>10</sup> The author of this thesis was Marilene Machado Toaldo and the title of the work is *A educação do excepcional no Rio Grande do Sul: novas perspectivas para a educação do deficiente da audição e da fala* - The education of the exceptional in Rio Grande do Sul: new perspectives for the education of the hearing and speech impaired.

UFPR (3 or 5.88% each); USP and UFRGS (2 or 3.92% each); Unicamp, Unimep, UFSM, PUC/RS and UnB (1 or 1.96% each).<sup>11</sup>

In a period in which the *stricto sensu* Graduate studies in Education in Brazil is beginning its activities in the Brazilian Universities, the research in Special Education is present at that moment in a very concentrated form in the South-Southeast region, with emphasis on the axis Rio-São Paulo. It is worth noting that, of these pioneering programs, seven of them today are the programs that most defend theses and dissertations in Special Education in Brazil, namely: four from the state of São Paulo - UFSCar-EE, USP, Unicamp and Unimep; two from Rio Grande do Sul - UFRGS and UFSM; and one from Rio de Janeiro - UERJ.

Among the pioneering programs, the negative highlight is for PUC-Rio, which, although it has developed other theses and dissertations on Special Education in its realm, in the following periods it did not keep pace with the production of the other GPEs, as is the case, for example of PUC/SP (Educational Psychology). UFRJ, UFF, UFPR, PUC/RS and UnB that, however, are not among the 11 programs that most defended this theme, are currently among the 33 GPEs that concentrate  $\frac{3}{4}$  on the production of the area.

Next, in Graph 2, we can see the evolution of Special Education theses defended in the GPEs, per year of defense, from 1971 to 1984.



**Graph 2.** Number of master's theses in Special Education defended in the Brazilian GPEs, by year of defense, in the period from 1971 to 1984

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Regarding the characteristics of this production, according to Nunes et al. (2004), in this period, studies focused on the different areas of exceptionality predominated, with an emphasis on intellectual disability, more specifically on teaching-learning issues in the family and school environment (working conditions of the special classes) and few researches focused on interactions or broader contexts. The studies of this period generally do not refer to the historical aspects of Special Education, nor do they relate the problem investigated with the context in which the general education of the country is inserted.

<sup>11</sup> UFRJ - Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro; UFF - Universidade Federal Fluminense; UFPR - Universidade Federal do Paraná; UnB - Universidade de Brasília.

In the educational scenario, particularly in the area of Special Education, this period is characterized by the dissemination of the principles of standardization (late 1970s and early 1980s) – integration/mainstreaming<sup>12</sup> principle.

### 3.2 SECOND PERIOD - EXPANSION (FROM 1985 TO 1998)

The second period, which covers the second half of the 1980s and extends to the end of the 1990s, began with the defense of the first doctoral dissertation in the area of Special Education in 1985, in the PhD course of the GPE of Unicamp<sup>13</sup>.

This period is characterized by the expansion of the Master's in Education courses that dealt with the research in Special Education in Brazil and mainly, by the expansion of these studies for the Doctoral courses.

Between 1985 and 1998, of the 53 existing GPEs, 339 theses and 28 dissertations in Special Education were defended, making a total of 367 defenses in 34 programs, namely: UFSCar-EE (128 or 34.88%); UERJ (70 or 19.07%); Unicamp (29 or 7.90%); USP (23 or 6.27%); PUC/SP - Educational Psychology (14 or 3.81%); Unimep and UFRGS (14 or 3.81% each); PUC/RS (12 or 3.27%); UFSC (6 or 1.63%); PUC/SP- History, Politics and Society and UFMS (5 or 1.36% each); UFRN, UNESP/Mar and UFRJ (4 or 1.09% each); UFF, UFPE and UFPR (3 or 0.82% each); IESAE/FGV, PUC/SP- Curriculum, PUC-RIO; UCP/RJ, PUCCAMP, UFES, UnB, UFC and UFPB/JP (2 or 0.54% each); UFSCar-PPGE, UFMG, UFSM, UNISINOS, UFU, UFG (Goiânia), UFBA and UFAM (1 or 0.27% each).<sup>14</sup>

In a period in which the *stricto sensu* Graduate studies in Education in Brazil itself is expanding in terms of geography and level of education, research in Special Education also expands in GPEs of universities outside the South-Southeast axis, such as the UnB, UFG (Goiânia), UFMS, UFBA, UFPE, UFRN, UFPB, UFC and UFAM.

Nevertheless, the highest concentration continues in the states of São Paulo and Rio Janeiro, mainly with UFSCar-EE and UERJ being responsible for the defense of 198 theses, or 53.95% of the defenses in the period from 1985 to 1998. It is worth noting that, in addition to these two pioneering programs, the following ones collaborated with the expansion of research in the area: from São Paulo - Unicamp, USP, PUC/SP - Educational Psychology and Unimep

<sup>12</sup> Normalization/integration and mainstreaming - Principle evoked in Brazil in the late 1970s and early 1980s, whose basic proposal was to offer to the exceptional life conditions identical to others, thus minimizing differences and enhancing similarities, recognizing their potential in the exceptional individuals. Therefore, the emphasis on the integration (mainstreaming) discourse, since the principle of standardization demanded the need for gradual integration of the exceptional with those considered normal, including in the schooling process, which required a political, administrative and pedagogical approximation between the common and special teaching (Jannuzzi, 2006, pp. 180-181).

<sup>13</sup> The author of this doctoral dissertation was Professor Gilberta Jannuzzi and the title of the work is *História da educação do "Deficiente Mental" no Brasil: 1876 a 1935* - History of Education of the "Mentally Deficient" in Brazil: 1876 to 1935. In the same year, two months later, it was defended, in the Educational Psychology Program of PUC/SP, Maria Cecília Bevilacqua's doctoral dissertation.

<sup>14</sup> UFSC - Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina; UEM - Universidade Estadual de Maringá; UEL - Universidade Estadual de Londrina; UTP - Universidade Tuiuti do Paraná; CUML - Centro Universitário Moura Lacerda; UFU - Universidade Federal de Uberlândia; UNICID - Universidade Cidade de São Paulo; UFPE - Universidade Federal de Pernambuco; IESAE/FGV - Instituto de Estudos Avançados em Educação/Fundação Getúlio Vargas; UCP/RJ - Universidade Católica de Petrópolis; PUCCAMP - Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas; UFC - Universidade Federal do Ceará; UFPB/J.P. - Universidade Federal da Paraíba/João Pessoa; UFMG - Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais; UNISINOS - Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos; UFU - Universidade Federal de Uberlândia; UFBA - Universidade Federal da Bahia; UFAM - Universidade Federal do Amazonas.

-; and from Rio Grande do Sul - UFRGS and PUC/RS. These institutions from São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul together were responsible for the defense of 83 theses and 23 dissertations, which corresponds to 28.87% of this type of production in the analyzed period.

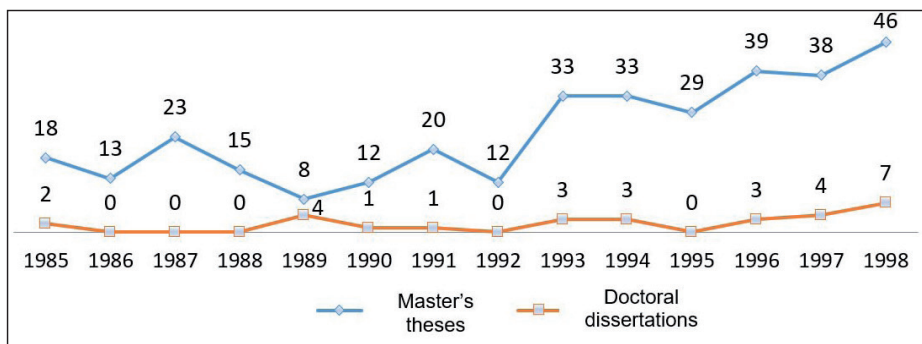
Of the other GPEs with defense in this period, we observed a dispersion process, in which 20 GPEs developed their first theses and dissertations in Special Education, and of these, the first defenses on the subject in the programs of Unesp/MAR, UFES, UFBA and UFRN, which today constitute the group of 11 GPEs with the highest number of theses and dissertations in Special Education in Brazil, indicating that the consolidation of research in the area currently owes much to those programs that began their research on the subject between 1985 and 1998.

In this sense, it is worth noting that it was during this period that the Brazilian Association of Researchers in Special Education (known as ABPEE)<sup>15</sup> and several working groups (called GT – *grupo de trabalho*) were created in scientific and research institutions that are concerned with studying the problems of Special Education .

Among these institutions, we highlight the National Association of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Education (ANPEd) that created, in 1991, GT 15 - Special Education, with the objective of addressing the issues related to the education of people with special educational needs.

This GT was created ten years after the first ANPEd's GTs and after two years as a Study Group, according to the Association Statutes (Masini, 2011). In 2011, this GT completed its 20 years of existence and, as part of the commemorations of this achievement, the Brazilian Journal of Special Education published a Special Edition (v. 17/May-August 2011), in which texts were published by former coordinators of the GT and invited guests.

In Graph 3, we can visualize the evolution of theses and dissertations in Special Education, defended in the GPEs, per year of defense, from 1985 to 1998.



**Graph 3.** Number of theses and dissertations in Special Education defended in the Brazilian GPEs, per year of defense, in the period from 1985 to 1998

Source: Elaborated by the author.

<sup>15</sup> The ABPEE was created on August 13, 1993, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, during the III Education Seminar and, currently, has hundreds of associated members. Retrieved March 2, 2018 from <http://www.abpee.net>



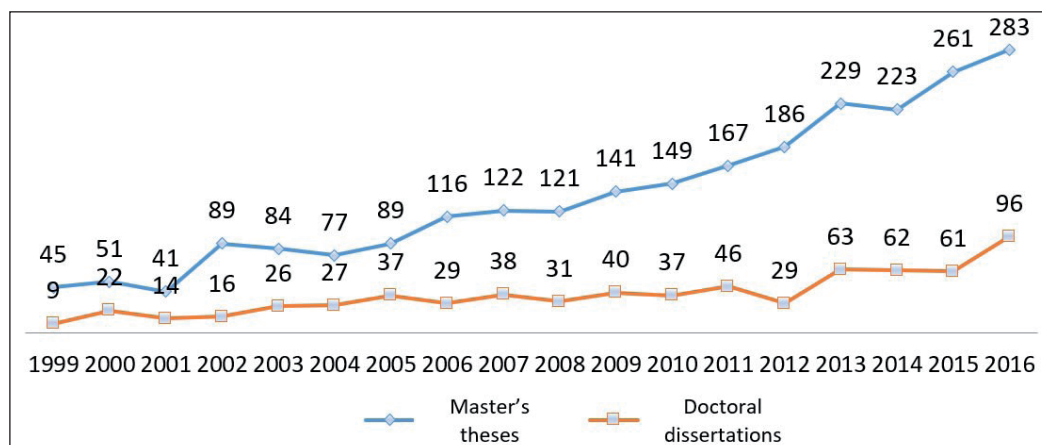
Regarding the characteristics of this production, according to Nunes et al. (2004), in this period, studies on teaching-learning procedures in institutions and private schools were also predominant. Although there is a trend towards a thematic dispersion, as it happened in research in education in general, studies on the attitudes and perceptions of family and professionals were carried out in Special Education research; training of human resources for Special Education; identification, characterization and diagnosis of the clientele; integration; professionalization; self-perception etc. According to Nunes et al. (1998), the “background” of the research carried out during this period was integration. The learning theories evoked were diverse: behavioral, Piagetian and, closer to the end of 1990, the socio-historical. Another trend observed in the research of this period is the increasing approximation of the problems present in common education, especially in the studies carried out in the second half of the 1990s.

In the educational scenario, this period is characterized by the integrationist policies and the beginning of the debate on the policies of inclusive education, from the beginning of the decade of 1990, mainly after the Declaration of Education for All, elaborated in 1990 and the Declaration of Salamanca, in 1994 (Jannuzzi, 2006).

### **3.3 THIRD PERIOD – CONSOLIDATION (FROM 1999 TO 2016)**

The third period began with the creation of the first PhD course, specifically in the area of Special Education, in the Graduate Program in Special Education of UFSCar, which has continued up to the present day. This period is characterized by the consolidation of research in Special Education in GPEs in Brazil, because, as Saviani (2007) affirms, the Doctorate is the locus of researchers’ education. Also, the creation of doctoral programs represents a process of consolidation of this education, indicating the level of scientific maturity reached by the area, which, consequently, enables the systematic, constant and continuous production of research involving the most significant aspects of the educational situation.

In this sense, the scientific maturity of the area, evidenced by the systematic and continuous production, can be observed in the chart below, from which we visualize the evolution of theses and dissertations in Special Education, defended in the GPEs, by year of defense, in the period from 1999 to 2016.



**Graph 4.** Number of theses and dissertations in Special Education defended in Brazilian GPEs, per year, from 1999 to 2016

Source: Elaborated by the author.

In a period in which the *stricto sensu* Graduate in Education itself in Brazil grows rapidly, expanding in geographic terms (regional and mesoregional) and with a new modality of education (professional master's degree), as well as CAPES evaluation policy, especially after the changes occurred in the late 1990s, when the organization began to be established by lines of research, new deadlines for the development of theses and dissertations, and the consequent decrease in the average time for the program titling, what we saw was an "explosion" in the number of master's and doctorates graduated each year. In the specific case of Special Education, in addition to these factors related to the GPEs, we have had changes in education policies, which, since the beginning of the 2000s under the assumptions of an inclusive perspective, present new demands for educators and researchers in Special Education in Brazil.

From the data available in Table 2, at the end of this paper, in Graph 4, we can observe that, in the period from 1999 to 2016, 2,474 master's theses and 683 doctoral dissertations were defended in Special Education in the Brazilian GPEs, making a total of 3,157 defenses in 133 programs, with emphasis on the PPGEs/UFSCar, with 291 theses and 129 dissertations developed, making a total of 420 defenses in the analyzed period.

Undoubtedly, from 1999 to 2016, UFSCar-EE became the main educational center and producer of theses and dissertations in Special Education in Brazil. This indicator reinforces the proposal to consider the creation of the PhD course within the PPGEs/UFSCar as the opening milestone of this period.

In this period, it draws attention to the number of theses and dissertations in Special Education defended in the GPEs of UFRGS (153 or 4.85%), UNESP/Mar (134 or 4.24%), UFES (132 or 4.18%), UFSM (128 or 4.05), USP (113 or 3.58%), UERJ (99 or 3.14%), UFBA (74 or 2.34%), Unicamp (65 or 2.06%), UFRN (64 or 2.03%) and Unimep (59 or 1.87%).

These 10 programs plus the PPGEs/UFSCar will constitute the group of 11 GPEs responsible for 45.64% of the defenses in Special Education in Brazil, from 1999 to 2016. It

is worth noting that among these 11 GPEs, seven pioneering programs in this type of research in the area and four programs that began to develop theses and dissertations on the subject at the time of the expansion of research in Special Education within the GPEs, are respectively: a) “*The Pioneers*”: UFSCar-EE, UERJ, USP, Unicamp, Unimep, UFRGS, UFESM; and b) “*The Expansionists*”: the GPEs of Unesp/Mar, UFES, UFBA and UFRN.

From the data provided by Silva (2013, pp. 165-168), we can affirm that the systematic and constant presence of these 11 GPEs among the main educational centers and developers of theses and dissertations in the area is due, among other reasons, to the fact that these programs have therein an Area of Concentration and/or Lines of Research<sup>16</sup> focused on research in Special Education.

Comparing the data, we observed that, in the period from 1999 to 2016, the Special Education research was also consolidated in some institutions outside the South-Southeast axis, such as UFBA and UFRN; and has an interesting expansion in UNB and UFC (49 or 1.55%), UFPB/JP (37 or 1.17%), UFMS (33 or 1.05%), UFMA (31 or 0.98%), UFAM (27 or 0.86%), UCB (25 or 0.79%), UEPA (23 or 0.73%), UFGD, FUFPI and FUFSE (20 or 0.63% each).<sup>17</sup>

It is also possible to observe that the research in the area is in the process of expansion and consolidation in other GPEs of the South-Southeast axis, namely: UNESP/Araraquara – School Education (57 or 1.81%); UFPR (52 or 1.65%); PUC/SP-History, Politics and Society (50 or 1.58%); UFSC (46 or 1.46%); UEM (44 or 1.39%); PUC/RS (43 or 1.36%); PUC/SP- Educational Psychology (38 or 1.20%); UFRJ, UEL and UTP (32 or 1.01%); CUML (31 or 0.98%); UFU (30 or 0.95%); UNICID and UFF (29 or 0.92); UNESP/PP (27 or 0.86%); UFPEL and UNISINOS (25 or 0.79%); UNIVALI (24 or 0.76%); PUC/SP-Curriculum (23 or 0.73%); FURB (22 or 0.70%); UNESA and PUC/MG (21 or 0.67%); and UNIJUÍ – Education in Sciences (20 or 0.63%).

In summary, it is possible to observe that, in the period from 1999 to 2016, the research in Special Education in Brazil, is consolidated mainly in the pioneer GPEs (UFSCar-EE, UERJ, USP, Unicamp, Unimep, UFRGS and UFESM) and expansionist (GPE of Unesp/ Mar, UFES, UFBA and UFRN). In this case, the presence of programs outside the South-Southeast axis (UFBA and UFRN) is highlighted. There is a strong process of dispersion of research in this period, since we have identified that 88 GPEs are responsible for only 19.92% of the defenses.

However, it is also possible to affirm that there has been a process of expansion of Special Education research in the form of master’s theses and doctoral dissertations in Brazil, in several GPEs located in different regions of the country. In this sense, it is worth observing that this phenomenon occurs with GPEs located in the capitals and mesoregions of the South-Southeast axis, for example, in the three programs of PUC/SP; in GPEs of UNICID; UFRJ; UFF; UNESA; PUC/MG; UFPR; UTP; UFSC; PUC/RS; UNESP/Araraquara; UNESP/PP; CUML; UFU; UEM; UEL; UNIVALI; FURB; UFPEL; UNIJUÍ – Education in Science; and

<sup>16</sup> We understand that the areas of concentration and the lines of research are the generating axes and articulators of the course plans, the pedagogical projects and the activities of research and production of knowledge in the Graduate programs.

<sup>17</sup> UCB - Universidade Católica de Brasília; UEPA - Universidade do Estado do Pará; UFGD - Universidade Federal da Grande Dourados; FUFPI - Fundação Universidade Federal do Piauí; FUFSE - Fundação Universidade Federal de Sergipe.

UNISINOS. And, also, in the capitals of the axis-Center-West, Northeast and North of Brazil, in the following GPEs: UNB, UCB, UFMS, UFAM, UEPA, UFMA, UFC, UFPB/JP and FUFPI; and FUFSE. The GPE of UFGD also presents a process of expansion of research in the area, but it is not located in a capital of the Axis-Center-West, Northeast and North of the country.

Regarding the participation of the Professional Masters, it is possible to observe that 64 master's theses were defended in 21 programs, among which the GPE of UFJF (Management and evaluation of public education) and UEMS, with 14 and 9 defenses respectively. In these programs, there is still great dispersion, since 19 defenses or 29.68% of the production were carried out in 14 GPEs or 66.67% of the programs of the professional modality.

Based on studies that turned to the analysis of the production of theses and dissertations in that period, Laplane, Lacerda and Kassar (2006), Bueno (2014) and Silva (2016), we can affirm that, in greater number, the studies that predominated are on procedures of teaching-learning, attitudes and perceptions of parents and professionals; teacher education; school integration and inclusion (special and common). Although the area continued a process of thematic dispersion, with themes such as gender, identity, relations with knowledge, education policy, culture and art, two aspects characterize the production in that period. One refers to the fact that the "background" of the research is Inclusive Education with strong influence of the education policies implemented in the period by the governments (federal, state and municipal), and the other is the descriptive character of the researches carried out. As for theoretical-methodological aspects, Laplane et al. (2006) observe a diversification of theoretical-methodological approaches (social psychology, mediated learning theory, oral history, discourse analysis, history and sociology).

Bueno (2014) observes that the theses and dissertations of the area defended in several graduate programs in Brazil in recent years tend to resort to qualitative and field research, "[...] to the detriment of the theoretical and historical [research], with strong indications that production ends in practical knowledge and does not advance in terms of theoretical knowledge" (Bueno, 2014, p. 237).

Finally, from the data provided in Table 2 and in the information presented in this paper, it is possible to collate data in order to develop other analyzes. Nevertheless, the brief characterization of the periods of research in Special Education in Brazil, particularly that developed under the GPEs, allows us to indicate "the places" of the research in three distinct periods, and thus to assist us in the development of future research, aiming to identify the challenges and perspectives for research in Special Education in Brazil.

#### **4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

After 45 years of the defense of the first Master's thesis in Special Education in Brazil, we can affirm that research on this subject within the country is consolidated. However, this consolidation process occurred first in GPEs with a tradition in research in the area, such as UFSCar-EE, UERJ, USP, Unicamp, Unimep, UFRGS and UFSM; currently, this consolidation is also verified in programs such as Unesp/Mar, UFES, UFBA and UFRN.

It is worth noting that in addition to a consolidation process that breaks with the concentration of the South-Southeast axis, in recent years, we have seen a process of expansion of research in different regions of the country. These two phenomena, combined with the dispersal process that we have also observed, it seems to be related to the recent phenomenon of GPE expansion in Brazil, strongly influenced by the growth of the *stricto sensu* graduate studies in Brazil, made feasible by the *Plano de Reestruturação e Expansão das Universidades Federais* (REUNI) - University Restructuring and Expansion Plan - and Special Education policies in an inclusive perspective.

In this sense, we can affirm that the process of democratization of Brazilian society and the advancement of the debate on the issue of school inclusion in the various municipal and state networks of the country – begun in the late 1990s, under the guidance of multilateral agencies and international organizations that formulated enrollment policies of people with disabilities and/or special needs in the common school – have created new demands for research and teacher education of Special Education in the inclusive perspective. Thus, the scientific production of several research groups in Brazil, taking into account the demand of the political-pedagogical context of the Brazilian educational system, has turned to the issue of Special Education in an inclusive perspective, with emphasis on school inclusion.

Finally, this brief characterization of the periods of research in Special Education within the scope of GPEs in Brazil allows us, in general terms, to indicate who, when and where the research was carried out, especially in Brazil, in the form of theses and dissertations, as well as some trends of this type of investigation in the three periods identified.

However, the knowledge of the area of Special Education obtained by the “balance” of defenses of theses and dissertations in the period from 1971 to 2016 needs continuity and greater depth in the face of the new challenges presented to Brazilian society, and in particular to the researchers of the area, regarding the critical understanding of what has been researched, how and on what theoretical-philosophical bases theses and dissertations have been developed.

As discussed by Bueno (2014) and Silva (2016), it is necessary to observe if the consolidation of the research in the area has also allowed a theoretical consolidation of research and education at the *stricto sensu* graduate level in Brazil, making the emergence of new ways of thinking about disability, the human being, education, school and society possible. Thus, in the expectation of identifying interested researchers, we hope, perhaps in future projects, to constitute collectives willing to characterize and analyze theses and dissertations in Special Education and Inclusive Education in Brazil, particularly those developed in Graduate Programs in Education and Graduate Programs in Special Education, on which we have an extensive survey and some information already systematized.

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APPENDIX

Institute of Higher Education/GPE	State	PIONEERISM (1971-1984)			EXPANSION (1985-1998)			CONSOLIDATION (1999-2016)			GENERAL (1971-2016)			Concentration and Dispersion
		N. T	N. D	N. T/D	N. T	N. D	N. T/D	N. T	N. D	N. T/D	N. T	N. D	N. T/D	
UFSCar (Special Education)	SP	15	----	15	128	----	128	291	129	420	434	129	563	15.75
UERJ	RJ	8	----	8	70	----	70	84	15	99	162	15	177	4.95
UFRGS	RS	2	0	2	13	1	14	100	53	153	115	54	169	4.73
USP	SP	2	0	2	18	5	23	53	60	113	73	65	138	3.86
UNESP/Mar	SP	----	----	3	3	1	4	76	58	134	79	59	138	3.86
UFES	ES	0	----	0	2	----	2	106	26	132	108	26	134	3.75
UFMS	RS	1	1	1	1	----	1	117	11	128	119	11	130	3.64
Unicamp	SP	1	0	1	16	13	29	33	32	65	50	45	95	2.66
UFBA	BA	0	0	0	1	0	1	46	28	74	47	28	75	2.10
Unimep	SP	1	1	1	13	1	14	40	19	59	54	20	74	2.07
UFRN	RN	0	0	0	3	1	4	47	17	64	50	18	68	1.90
UFPR	PR	3	3	3	3	3	3	43	9	52	49	9	58	1.62
UNESP/Arq (Schooling Education)	SP	----	----	----	----	----	0	35	22	57	35	22	57	1.59
PUC/SP (Educational Psychology)	SP	4	0	4	11	3	14	27	11	38	42	14	56	1.57
PUC/RS	RS	1	1	1	12	0	12	29	14	43	42	14	56	1.57
PUC/SP (History, Politics and Society)	SP	0	0	0	5	0	5	31	19	50	36	19	55	1.54
UFSC	SC	0	0	0	6	0	6	40	6	46	46	6	52	1.45
UNB	DF	1	1	1	2	----	2	44	5	49	47	5	52	1.45
UFC	CE	0	0	0	2	0	2	31	18	49	33	18	51	1.43
UEM	PR	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	8	44	36	8	44	1.23
UFRJ	RJ	4	0	4	2	2	4	26	6	32	32	8	40	1.12
UFPB/J.P.	PB	0	0	0	2	----	2	32	5	37	34	5	39	1.09
UFMS	MS	----	----	5	5	----	5	25	8	33	30	8	38	1.06
UFF	RJ	3	3	3	3	0	3	23	6	29	29	6	35	0.98
UEL	PR	----	----	0	0	0	0	32	0	32	32	0	32	0.90
UTP	PR	----	----	0	0	0	0	32	0	32	32	0	32	0.90
UFMA	MA	----	----	0	0	0	0	31	0	31	31	0	31	0.87
UFU	MG	----	----	1	1	1	1	23	7	30	24	7	31	0.87
CUMIL	SP	----	----	0	0	0	0	31	0	31	31	0	31	0.87
UNICID	SP	----	----	0	0	0	0	29	0	29	29	0	29	0.81
UFAM	AM	----	----	1	1	1	1	25	2	27	26	2	28	0.78
UNESP/pp	SP	----	----	1	1	1	1	24	3	27	24	3	27	0.76
UNISINOS	RS	----	----	1	1	1	1	18	7	25	19	7	26	0.73
PUC/SP (Curriculum)	SP	0	0	0	2	0	2	12	11	23	14	11	25	0.70

	RS	DF	SC	PA	MG	PE	RJ	RJ	PI	RS	MS	SE	PA	GO	MS	GO	MG	SP	PR	AL	PR	RS	BA	MG	SP	SC	RJ	MG	SP	SP	MG	SP	SP	MG	25,5% - Low concentration in 101 GPEs
UFPEL																																			0.70
UCB																																			0.70
UNIVALI																																			0.67
UEPA																																			0.64
FURB																																			0.62
PUC/MG																																			0.59
UFPE																																			0.59
PUC-RIO																																			0.59
UNESA																																			0.59
FUPPI																																			0.56
UNIUJ (Education in Science)																																			0.56
UFGD																																			0.56
FUFSE																																			0.56
UFPA																																			0.50
PUC-GOIAS																																			0.48
UCDB																																			0.48
UFG (Goiânia)																																			0.48
UFMG																																			0.48
PUCAMP																																			0.45
UNOESTE																																			0.45
UFAL																																			0.42
PUC/PR																																			0.42
FUPF																																			0.42
UNEB (Education and Contemporaneity)																																			0.42
UFJF																																			0.39
UMESP																																			0.39
UNIVILLE																																			0.39
UFRRJ (Agricultural Education)																																			0.39
UFJF (Management and evaluation...)																																			0.39
UNISO																																			0.39
UFSCar (São Carlos)																																			0.36
UNIUBE																																			0.36



UFRRJ (Education and contexts...)	RJ										12	0	12	12	12	12	12	12	0	12	0	12	0.34
UNISAL	SP										12			12	12	12	12	12		12		12	0.34
UEMS	MS										12			12	12	12	12	12		12		12	0.34
UFG (Catálogo)	GO										12			12	12	12	12	12		12		12	0.34
UNICENTRO	PR										11			11	11	11	11	11		11		11	0.31
UNOESTE	SP								0		10			10	10	10	10	10	0	10		10	0.28
UNIRIO	RJ										10		0	10	10	10	10	10	0	10		10	0.28
UNIPLAC/SC	SC										10			10	10	10	10	10		10		10	0.28
UNISC	SC										10		0	10	10	10	10	10	0	10		10	0.28
UCS	RS										9		0	9	9	9	9	9	0	9		9	0.25
UEMS - PM	MS										9			9	9	9	9	9		9		9	0.25
UECE	CE										9		0	9	9	9	9	9	0	9		9	0.25
UNISANTOS	SP										8		0	8	8	8	8	8	0	8		8	0.22
UNOESC	SC										8			8	8	8	8	8		8		8	0.22
USF	SP										5		2	7	5	5	5	5	2	7		7	0.20
UNINOVE	SP								0		7		0	7	7	7	7	7	0	7		7	0.20
UERN	RN										7			7	7	7	7	7		7		7	0.20
UFMS	MS										7			7	7	7	7	7		7		7	0.20
UNILASALLE	RS										7		0	7	7	7	7	7	0	7		7	0.20
UNIPAMPA - PM	RS										7			7	7	7	7	7		7		7	0.20
UCP/RJ	RJ								2		3		1	4	5	5	5	5	1	6		6	0.17
UFMT (Cuiabá)	MT								0		6		0	6	6	6	6	6	0	6		6	0.17
UNIR	RO										6			6	6	6	6	6		6		6	0.17
URI	RS										6			6	6	6	6	6	0	6		6	0.17
ULBRA	RS										6		0	6	6	6	6	6	0	6		6	0.17
UFSCar (Sorocaba)	SP										5			5	5	5	5	5		5		5	0.14
UNIT-SE	SE										5		0	5	5	5	5	5	0	5		5	0.14
UEPG	PR										4		1	5	4	5	4	5	1	5		5	0.14
UNINTER (Education and new technology) - PM	PR										5			5	5	5	5	5		5		5	0.14
UFPR (Theory and practice...) PM	PR										5			5	5	5	5	5		5		5	0.14
UNISUL	SC										5			5	5	5	5	5		5		5	0.14

UEFS	BA																	5	5	5	5	0.14
UERJ (Formative process...)	RJ																	4	4	4	4	0.11
FURG	RS																4	4	4	4	0.11	
UFOP	MG																3	3	3	3	0.08	
UNEB (Management and technologies...) PM	BA																3	3	3	3	0.08	
FURG (Environmental education)	RS						0										3	3	3	3	0.08	
UNESC	SC																3	3	3	3	0.08	
UNOCHAPECÓ	SC																3	3	3	3	0.08	
UFMT (Rondonópolis)	MT																3	3	3	3	0.08	
UFES (Socio-educational processes...)	MG																3	3	3	3	0.08	
IFSUL (Education and technology) PM	RS																2	2	2	2	0.06	
UFES	SC																2	2	2	2	0.06	
UNIVAS	MG																2	2	2	2	0.06	
UFVJM	MG																2	2	2	2	0.06	
IFTM (Education and technology) PM	MG																2	2	2	2	0.06	
UNEB (Education and diversity) PM	BA																2	2	2	2	0.06	
UNESP/RC	SP																2	2	2	2	0.06	
IESAE/FGV	RJ	0					2										2	0	2	0	0.06	
CEFET/MG (Technological education) PM	MG																2		2		0.06	
UFLA - PM	MG																2	2	2	2	0.06	
UFT	TO																2	2	2	2	0.06	
USP/RP	SP																1	1	1	1	0.03	
UNINOVE (Management and educational practices) PM	SP																1	1	1	1	0.03	
UNITAU - PM	SP																1	1	1	1	0.03	
UNESP/ARAR (Sexual Education) PM	SP																1	1	1	1	0.03	
UFMG (Education and teaching) PM	MG																1	1	1	1	0.03	
UDESC	SC																1	0	1	0	0.03	
UNB - MP	DF																1	0	1	0	0.03	
UFG (Jatá)	GO																1	1	1	1	0.03	
UNEMAT	MT																1	1	1	1	0.03	
UFRPE (Technology and management...) PM	PE																1	1	1	1	0.03	



