

THEMES, METHODOLOGIES, AND CORES OF MEANING:

a content analysis of the scientific production of the
Master's Degree in Social Sciences for Secondary Education

Temas, metodologias e núcleos de sentido: uma análise de conteúdo da produção científica do Mestrado em Ciências Sociais para o Ensino Médio

Temas, metodologías y núcleos de significado: un análisis de contenido de la producción científica del Máster Profesional en Ciencias Sociales en la Educación Secundaria

TATIANE OLIVEIRA DE CARVALHO MOURA^{1*}, PATRICIA BANDEIRA DE MELO², RODRIGO VIEIRA DE ASSIS³, ALEXANDRE ZARIAS²

¹Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife, PE, Brasil. ²Fundação Joaquim Nabuco, Recife, PE, Brasil.

³Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal. *Corresponding author. E-mail: tatioc.moura@gmail.com.

Abstract: The objective of this article is to analyze the scientific production of the Professional Master's Degree in Social Sciences for Secondary Education (MPCS), at the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation, based on the student's course completion works (TCCs). Considering Teaching Sociology a subfield of Social Sciences and Education, we consider that TCCs operate in this space as products and producers of discourse. The meanings and representations expressed in the texts were examined based on content analysis, using the MAXQDA software. Although the MPCS is a professional master's degree, the study revealed that the TCCs adopted the dissertation model, albeit with varied methodologies, and the most frequent keyword is "sociology", and not "teaching sociology". Among the themes, the most explored one was teaching methodology.

Keywords: Professional master's; Teaching; Social sciences; Content analysis.

Resumo: O objetivo deste artigo é analisar a produção científica do Mestrado Profissional em Ciências Sociais para o Ensino Médio (MPCS), da Fundação Joaquim Nabuco, a partir dos seus trabalhos de conclusão de curso (TCCs). Considerando o Ensino de Sociologia um subcampo das Ciências Sociais e da Educação, ponderamos que os TCCs operam neste espaço como produtos e produtores de discurso. Os sentidos e as representações expressos nos textos foram examinados a partir da análise de conteúdo, utilizando o *software* MAXQDA. Apesar de o MPCS ser um mestrado profissional, o estudo revelou que os TCCs adotaram o modelo dissertação, ainda que com metodologias variadas, e a palavra-chave mais frequente é "sociologia", e não "ensino de sociologia". Dentre os temas, o mais explorado foi metodologia de ensino.

Palavras-chave: mestrado profissional; ensino; ciências sociais; análise de conteúdo.

Resumen: El objetivo del artículo es analizar la producción científica del Máster Profesional en Ciencias Sociales en la Educación Secundaria (MPCS), de la Fundación Joaquim Nabuco, a partir de los trabajos de conclusión de curso (TCCs). Considerando la enseñanza de Sociología un subcampo de las Ciencias Sociales y de la Educación, creemos que los TCCs son productos y productores de discurso. Los sentidos y las representaciones fueron examinados a partir del análisis de contenido, usando el software MAXQDA. Mientras el MPCS sea un máster profesional, el estudio reveló que los TCCs adoptaran el modelo disertación, aunque con diferentes metodologías, e la palabra clave "sociología" es más frecuente que "enseñanza de sociología". Entre los temas, el más explorado fue metodología de enseñanza.

Palabras clave: máster profesional; docencia; ciencias sociales; análisis de contenido.

INTRODUCTION

The year 2023 marks ten years since the beginning of the Professional Master's Degree in Social Sciences for Secondary Education (MPCS), from the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation (Fundaj). The original idea for the course arose from a proposal for a specialization in Teaching Sociology, after the approval of the law¹ that made the Teaching of Sociology and Philosophy in secondary education mandatory. The specialization evolved into the conception of the MPCS, which was the first professional master's degree in Sociology focused on the teaching area (Oliveira, 2021a), and its closure, in 2019, simultaneous to a new stage in this area, with the beginning of activities of the Professional Master's Degree in Sociology in a National Network (ProfSocio), at Fundaj, integrated into a network of Brazilian public universities.

This process of inauguration and expansion of the offer of postgraduate training in Teaching Sociology is a sign of the search for the autonomy of this area in the country. However, in its current state in the history of education, it still maintains the status of a subfield within and at the intersection of the fields of Social Sciences and Education². Nevertheless, it is dynamic enough to acquire, in the future, the necessary properties for its consolidation as a field (Bourdieu, 1983, 2004a; Ferreira & Oliveira, 2015; Bodart, 2019; Mocelin, 2020b).

The result of the work of a group of researchers in the field of Social Sciences and the creation of the MPCS, launched in 2011, aimed to align Fundaj with the National Education Plan (PNE), which was being prepared at the time (Zarias et al., 2017). The MPCS was approved by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes) in 2012. Alongside the Professional Master's in Planning and Public Policies (PMPPP), from the State University of Ceará, it formed the pair of professional master's degrees in the area of Sociology of that period and paved the way for ProfSocio, at a national level. This was the result of a collective work of institutions and individuals focused on training teachers for Teaching Sociology in secondary education in Brazil.

Thus, the master's degree faced a scenario not yet explored by the field (Bourdieu, 1983, 2004a) of Sociology in the *stricto sensu* postgraduate studies: one that focused on the continued training of basic education professionals - and not on academics, in a classic way. Despite the idea of preparing teachers for teaching being foreseen in the country's public education policies, particularly in the PNE, the MPCS was constituted as a novelty and an alternative for postgraduate training, as the

¹ Law No. 11,684, of June 2nd, 2008.

² The concept of intersection between social fields emerges from the perception that, when one field absorbs the debates characteristic of another, a relationship of homology is established between them. This manifests itself when, within Sociology, the subfield dedicated to teaching this discipline emerges, creating a zone of interaction between Sociology and Education (Freitas et al., 2005; Freitas, 2008).

master's degrees obtained through of the course enabled their graduates to later pursue doctoral programs, if they so desired, just like graduated masters did for the academic master's degrees (Zarias et al., 2017).

Considering the contribution of the MPCs to the expansion of research and training areas for the subfield of Teaching Sociology in Brazil (Ferreira & Oliveira, 2015; Mocelin, 2020b), this article analyzes the scientific production of the course created at Fundaj, in 2013, with the aim of highlighting the characteristics of the set of works developed in the course that enabled its impact on the Brazilian sociological and educational fields. This was mainly represented, for example, by the substantive increase in course conclusion works (TCCs) dedicated specifically to the subfield of Teaching Sociology.

To this end, on the one hand, the results of an analysis of official information obtained from Fundaj will be presented, with the aim of characterizing the course with a focus on the processes of constitution, formation and completion of postgraduate classes in the area of Teaching Sociology. On the other hand, the elements resulting from a content analysis of the scientific production prepared by masters trained by the MPCs between 2015 and 2019 will be discussed.

Content analysis made it possible to identify a typology to classify TCCs, in addition to mapping the themes and objects investigated. It also allowed us to examine the meanings and frameworks that influence the representations of Teaching Sociology present in the works, allowing us to outline the contribution of these TCCs to the subfield of Teaching Sociology, in the terms of Bodart (2019) and Mocelin (2019, 2020b). Additionally, the analysis revealed the methodologies used by those who participated in the first experience at professional master's level, aimed at training teachers to work in the school context, in Brazil.

Therefore, this study represents an effort to develop a sociological reflection aimed at reconstructing and recording the role of institutions and other actors whose actions within the fields of Sociology and Education (Bourdieu, 1983, 2004a) have contributed to the dynamics of the history, development and improvement of Teaching Sociology in Brazil, working in the struggles for its consolidation as a subfield. In this sense, the MPCs is taken as a particular case of postgraduate studies in Sociology/Social Sciences in the country, whose existence resulted from the intersections and correlations of forces that energized the fields of Sociology and Education in a context marked by the dispute over regulation and consolidation of the mandatory offer of Teaching Sociology in secondary education (Oliveira & Cigales, 2019).

To present this analysis, the article is divided into five parts, in addition to this introduction. The second part substantiates the importance of teaching Social Sciences in the training of young people in secondary school, highlighting the role of a professional master's degree, the MPCs. Next, we present the theoretical framework from which we developed the article, considering the interface of the fields of

Sociology and Education and, within it, the subfield of Teaching Sociology as a space for disputes. The following topic addresses the methodology applied in our study, describing the conduct of content analysis. The subsequent part recovers data from the production of the course master's for the analysis of the course conclusion works: the typologies of TCCs, the volume of production, the thematic plurality and the meanings and how the representations observed in these works express the result of the six years of existence of the MPCS. The last topic presents the final considerations, pointing, albeit in a rudimentary way, to the importance of the contemporary debate on the presence of Social Sciences in secondary education.

TEACHING SOCIOLOGY IN A PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE

The reason for a professional master's degree along the lines of the MPCS is its focus on training Sociology teachers in secondary education or those who wish to improve in the profession. In the words of Oliveira (2021a, p. 280)³: “[...] in Brazil, the professional master's degree in teaching has a continuing education character, which differs from the academic master's degree due to its emphasis on the professional qualification of teachers who are working in basic education”

In addition to focusing on the teaching staff, this type of master's program should promote a variety of TCCs in addition to dissertations, beyond traditional dissertations, as Oliveira (2021b) explains. According to the Capes ordinance⁴, the following may be presented as TCCs: teaching material, pedagogical interventions in formats ranging from the construction of blogs and websites, among other models. From the beginning, it was a challenging pedagogical endeavor for both the course teachers and their master's students to conceive creative forms of work that could not only have theoretical-methodological rigor, but also be useful for application in secondary schools.

The main difference between academic and professional master's programs lies in the target audience and the course outcomes. In the case of the MPCS, the program is designed for Sociology teachers or those wishing to pursue this profession at the secondary school level. Additionally, the final projects do not necessarily have to be traditional dissertations. The purpose of the MPCS has never been to dispense well-conducted theoretical and methodological research, but rather to combine it with outcomes that could include a mix of dissertation, educational materials, and/or pedagogical interventions related to the teaching of Sociology. This results in

³ TN: “[...] en Brasil, el máster profesional en enseñanza tiene un carácter de formación continuada, que difiere del máster en investigación debido a su énfasis en la calificación profesional de los profesores que están trabajando en la educación secundaria” (freely translated from Spanish).

⁴ §3 of Article 7, of Normative Ordinance No. 7, of June 22nd, 2009.

products that integrate teaching and research aimed at public education (Zarias et al., 2017). Furthermore, this experience highlights the relationship between theory and practice (Oliveira & Cigales, 2020), characteristic of a professional master's degree.

This constituted a challenge for master's teachers due to their own academic training, aimed at productions different from those expected for a professional master's degree. The preparation of MPCS teachers was based on the supervision of traditional academic postgraduate work, due to their university origins. The idea of academic *habitus* can be formulated based on the instrumentalization and systematization of practices and actions that are outlined in the scientific field by established methods, instruments, and techniques (Bourdieu, 2004b), of which master's professors tended to reproduce, and which will be verified in our analysis below.

As reported by Zarias et al. (2017), professional master's degrees carry the stigma of “improved specialization” or of being an “easier master's degree”, offering a master's degree corresponding to that of an academic program, in which results are measured through completion of some classic course works – that is, dissertations. Professional master's degrees are frowned upon because “[...] they opened the doors of universities to privatization, as they focus on training professionals for the market and because they do not have public sources of financing” (Zarias et al., 2017, p. 290). The authors highlight that these meanings attributed to professional master's degrees come from individuals both outside and within the subfield of Teaching Sociology, which signals disputes within the sociological and educational fields.

It is important to highlight that the MPCS emerged within the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation, in Pernambuco, therefore, outside the central Brazilian academic field. The idea began at the Fundaj and not in institutions on the Rio-São Paulo axis, therefore impacting the consolidation of Sociology for schools in the country. Its closure was planned based on the creation of ProfSocio, being a kind of matrix that led to the creation of a master's degree on a national network for the Teaching of Sociology. Both at MPCS and at ProfSocio there was an effort to encourage master's students to carry out well-structured theoretical and methodological investigations.

THEORETICAL REFERENCE

From a Bourdieusian perspective, we can think of Education and Sociology as social fields (Bourdieu, 1983, 2004a). The area of Sociology is a field intersected with that of Education and, within the field of Sociology, Teaching Sociology operates as a subfield, in which agents compete for the consolidation of their legitimacy, especially in view of its recognition as a grounded area training and knowledge. The debate about the inclusion of Teaching Sociology was in dispute within Brazilian secondary schools (Fernandes, 1980), with an intermittent presence throughout the history of education

in the country (Silva, 2007), which expresses the game of legitimation in the educational field (Bodart & Pereira, 2017; Mocelin, 2020a, 2020b; Pereira, 2022).

Social fields are symbolic spaces of struggle, spaces in which actors play to compete for strength and obtain profit or prestige. The actions that take place within the fields can be reflected as the actions of institutions, teachers and students, in a relationship of discursive dispute, with the idea of making one meaning prevail over other possible meanings (Bourdieu, 1983, 2004a). In other words, there is an internal dispute that persists in the argument that the Teaching of Sociology must remain a legitimate area of knowledge in the training process of Brazilian secondary education.

This dispute can be seen throughout Brazil, through the intermittences of Teaching Sociology in secondary education, already mentioned since Fernandes (1980), who reflected on the first removal of Sociology from the school curriculum. The struggle of researchers and teachers within the fields of Sociology and Education for the permanence of Sociology for schools is reinforced in the works of Sarandy (2004), Meucci (2000), and Silva (2007). From different perspectives, these authors point out the importance of Teaching Sociology for the awareness of students, at the same time as they tell the story of its intermittence in school curricula. The methodological perspectives of Teaching Sociology in secondary education are linked to the concepts of education, curriculum, and the role of the school.

Although some authors argue that there is already an accumulation of investigations and other academic and pedagogical products that allow for defining school Sociology as a field due to its trajectory of gaining space (Mocelin, 2019, 2020a; Pereira, 2022), we consider that there are weaknesses that still require struggle at the heart of the microcosm in order to compete and guarantee its permanence in the school curriculum. With the recent reform of Secondary Education⁵, there was a reduction in the teaching load and even the removal of the mandatory teaching of Sociology in secondary education, putting the existence of the subject at risk in the Brazilian educational scenario.

Thus, although this struggle for the consolidation of Teaching Sociology is historically documented – including in more recent literature such as Bodart and Souza (2017), Bodart and Tavares (2018), Bodart (2019), Mocelin (2019, 2020a, 2020b), Pereira (2022), among others –, we consider that school Sociology is still in the process of dispute and foundation, which is why we chose to characterize it as a subfield within the field of Sociology, at its intersection with the field of Education. The mappings that justify this understanding appear, for example, in Ferreira and Oliveira (2015), Bodart and Cigales (2017), Bodart and Pereira (2017), Bodart (2019), and Mocelin (2020b).

These subfield guiding schemes point to the work groups created in the Brazilian Society of Sociology (*Sociedade Brasileira de Sociologia*, SBS), in the Brazilian

⁵ Federal law No. 13,415/2017.

Association for Teaching Social Sciences (*Associação Brasileira de Ensino de Ciências Sociais*, ABECS), in the Institutional Program for Teaching Initiation Scholarships (*Programa Institucional de Bolsas de Iniciação à Docência*, Pibid) and in the National Textbook Program (*Programa Nacional do Livro Didático*, PNLD)⁶ in addition to research groups and postgraduate programs focused on teaching Sociology at school. Among these programs, the MPCS and its successor on a national network, ProfSocio – a dispositional arrangement of agents fighting to strengthen Teaching Sociology in secondary schools.

The space for struggles in Pernambuco was reinforced with the introduction of mandatory teaching of Sociology in secondary educations in 1989. In 1990, the Department of Education commissioned the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE) to develop a project to support Teaching of Sociology. Throughout the 1990s, several meetings were held with teachers from the Pernambuco state network, which resulted in the document entitled *Subsidies for the organization of pedagogical practice in schools: sociology and OMT (Organization and Work Methods)*, published in 1992. From 2000 onwards, Sociology was integrated into the set of subjects at the Pernambuco middle school, but without an official curricular proposal (MPCS, 2013).

Building a bridge between the idea defended by Cigales and Oliveira (2019) that teaching manuals are discursive products and also producers of discourse and, consequently, of meaning and representations in the social world, we understand that dissertations and other TCC models operate in the same perspective in the subfield of Teaching Sociology. From a micro perspective, they are part of an academic culture and have a logic of production linked to the rules of the scientific fields. From a macro perspective, course completion works express meanings relating to what is expected or what Teaching Sociology can offer in secondary education in the country. In this sense, the material analyzed in this article is part of the productions of the subfield of Teaching Sociology as a contribution to the fight for its autonomy.

The idea of a subfield linked to another social field and in the process of consolidation can be confirmed when we realize that: i) It is possible to point out a semi-autonomy of the space by identifying actors willing to work in Teaching Sociology, such as teachers and researchers involved in the production of academic material under the discursive aegis of school Sociology (books, book chapters, theses, dissertations, articles, specific school material for the area, working groups at congresses). Some of which, are already considered as reference in the field, such as Bordart (2019), Bodart and Cigales (2017), Brunetta and Cigales (2019), Ferreira and Oliveira (2015), Oliveira (2015, 2016), Mocelin (2019, 2020a, 2020b), Silva (2007) and Silva and Cigales (2021). ii) Legitimation rules defined by obtaining master's and doctoral degrees with research related to the Teaching of Sociology, in postgraduate

⁶ As of 2021, the PNLD preserves the acronym, but is called the National Book and Teaching Material Program.

programs exclusive to the topic or with specific lines of research, aimed at secondary education teachers, in which the MPCS and in then the ProfSocio become spaces of consecration. Iii) Discursive disputes between agents, whether over the forms of legitimization of school Sociology, or over the power to speak for the (still) subfield of Teaching Sociology. Some authors point to school textbooks as cultural capital that contributes to the legitimization of the field (Engerroff & Oliveira, 2018). This indicates the issue we face in this article, when analyzing the formats of course completion works, the methodologies and keywords related to the productions of masters trained by the MPCS.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this article is divided into two distinct moments. Firstly, official information regarding the MPCS was collected with the aim of characterizing it about occupancy and course completion rates for the period in which the master's degree was in operation. To this end, the authors asked Fundaj for access to this information. Then, so that it was possible to observe the meanings and representations brought in the course's final works, a content analysis was carried out of the TCCs developed and defended in the master's degree between 2015 and 2019, the years of the first and last defenses of the TCCs consecutively.

Content analysis has a descriptive dimension, which aims to characterize the meaning units of texts, and an interpretative dimension, oriented to the scientific translation of unsystematic meanings that permeate the studied material (Bardin, 2009). It is therefore based on a two-dimensional analysis for the construction of typologies, identification of categories to verify their associations and organization of qualitative data into factors necessary to make the systematized information intelligible. Content analysis thus enables the structuring of indicators (quantitative and qualitative) that allow the inference of knowledge regarding the conditions of production and reception of the observed texts (Bardin, 2009).

The content analysis was developed using the MAXQDA software (2022), version 22.7.0, a computer program specialized in processing qualitative information for the application of intensive and mixed methods of data analysis. This type of resource allows the classification and exploration of large volumes of texts, optimizing data management for carrying out univariate and bivariate examinations of multiple dimensions in the context of qualitative research.

Given the nature of the empirical material object of this article – scientific works prepared to obtain a master's degree –, it was necessary to adopt some logical procedures to subject the documents to a systematic observation of their content. Thus, in MAXQDA, the works were introduced into an architecture structured by

characterization variables necessary for the constitution of classes or sets of documents, identified by common aspects, such as the sex of the authors, the year in which training began to obtain the degree master's degree, the TCC modality and the year of its presentation/defense.

The investigation demonstrated that the sets of documents that presented the most interesting differences for the proposed analysis were structured by two variables, the year of entry into the MPCS and the format of the TCC. The year of entry into the course enabled a qualitative treatment of the information, considering the differences between the classes formed by the MPCS between 2013 and 2017. The format of the TCCs, in turn, allowed us to establish a typology of the work carried out, which is important for understanding the themes and the way in which the objects were analyzed depending on the variation in the modality of the TCC itself.

Therefore, a thematic analysis was carried out with the aim of discovering the cores of meaning that make up the course conclusion works, that is, we chose to explore the heuristic function of content analysis, which provides an analysis that “[...] enriches the exploratory attempt [...]”, increasing “[...] the propensity for discovery” (Bardin, 2009, p. 31). Furthermore, the content analysis performed here was conducted in a horizontal sense, that is, guided by “[...] a logic of generalist inference based on the typological representation of cases [...], sought or selected under the principle of individually applicants” (Conde, 1993, p. 47). Therefore, it is based on an inductive logic, in which the system of categories is not previously provided by a theory, but results from the progressive classification and by analogy of elements, whose analysis grid translates into a data matrix formed by recording units textual as units of meaning to be interpreted.

In short, it was possible to classify the themes covered in the TCCs, the types of materials produced, the methodological choices and the prominent meanings in the works, based on mixed and visual analyzes of the text extracted from the body of the TCCs, namely the titles, abstracts, keywords etc.

A HISTORICAL-SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS BASED ON THE DATA: THE MPCS CASE

THE ORIGIN AND INITIAL FIELD OF POSSIBILITIES OF THE PROFESSIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE

After a long period of planning carried out by a group of researchers from Fundaj, the Professional Master's Degree in Social Sciences for Teaching Medium was approved by the foundation's Board of Directors⁷, and recommended by Capes on

⁷ Resolution No. 52, on May 18th, 2012.

December 19, 2012, at a meeting of the Scientific Technical Council for Higher Education (CTC/ES). The MPCS focused on Society and Culture, with two lines of research: 1. State, social actors, and citizenship; and 2. Society, culture and development.

The course was expected to last 24 months, offering seven mandatory and four complementary subjects, two for each line of research. Classes took place on Mondays and Tuesdays, during the day, at the Apipucos campus of the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation. The MPCS target audience were graduates holding a higher education diploma recognized by the Ministry of Education (MEC) or a revalidated diploma (in the case of a candidate holding a diploma issued by a foreign institution), with people interested in deepening their scientific and technological training for teaching Sociology in secondary education. The objective of the course was to:

Qualify graduates in Sociology or Social Sciences or Sociology teachers who work in secondary education, consolidating the discipline as a critical tool based on the articulation of its classical theories with scientific practice and current results of social research (MPCS, 2013)⁸.

During the period from 2013 to 2017 (year of the last class of the course), the MPCS teaching staff was made up of 16 permanent professors and two collaborators. Among them, there were 15 doctors, with degrees obtained more than five years ago, and only one master. In relation to regions and areas of training, this teaching group had a diverse distribution. The teachers were representatives of the three main areas of Social Sciences: Anthropology, Political Science and Sociology. The geographical composition was balanced, with half of the teachers trained in Pernambuco and the other half in different regions of the country, with São Paulo being the most represented state.

The first MPCS selection took place in April 2013 and in 2017 the last master's class was admitted⁹. In 2018 and 2019, no selections were made. These two years were dedicated to closing the MPCS and preparing for the start of ProfSocio, which emerged as a network program in an attempt or symptom of the process of struggle for the autonomy of the subfield of Teaching Sociology. Table 1 below offers an overview of the course in terms of number of candidates, number of places offered, number of successful candidates and occupancy rates by year of selection.

⁸ T. N.: "Qualificar licenciados em Sociologia ou Ciências Sociais ou professores de Sociologia que atuam no ensino médio, consolidando a disciplina como uma ferramenta crítica a partir da articulação de suas teorias clássicas com a prática científica e os atuais resultados de pesquisas sociais (MPCS, 2013)".

⁹ The 2016 selection took place at the end of the year and the class only started in the first half of 2017, different from what happened in previous selections. Thus, there were four classes, starting in 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2017.

Table 1 – General MPCS statistics by year of selection processes (2013-2016)

Year of selection	Number of candidates	Number of vacancies	Approved numbers	Occupancy rate (%)
2013	97	15	16 ^a	106.6%
2014	12	17	06	35.3%
2015	32	17	08	47%
2016	15	17	06	35.3%

Source: Organized by the authors, based on data provided by ProfSocio¹⁰.

^a The candidate above the number of vacancies was approved due to a tie in the final access grades, resulting in an occupancy surcharge in the corresponding year.

Table 1 reveals that, over the years, the number of candidates for the course fluctuated substantially, with the first and third selections being those with the highest number of applications, but only the first had the total number of places offered filled. After the 2013 selection, the MPCS occupancy rate fell and remained below 50% in subsequent years, with the years 2014 and 2016 only accounting for 35.3% of the total available vacancies. It was in the selections carried out in these two years that there was the lowest participation of candidates, in a quantity below the number of vacancies available. This drop, verified in our analysis, was also highlighted in the Capes quadrennial evaluation (2017).

It is important to highlight that the causes of low demand for master's degrees may be related to some phenomena. One of them is that the course focused on a subfield in the process of affirmation. Another is associated with the requirements presented in the selection notice for the master's degree, such as, for example, that only graduates in Social Sciences or Sociology or, alternatively, teachers who were teaching the subject of Sociology in secondary education, could apply to MPCS. By leaving out people with bachelor's degrees, there may have been a constraint on demand for the course, which is difficult to measure. Furthermore, in 2013, the selection process included written tests and interviews, while in 2014 the requirement for a research project was added. This change may have influenced the significant drop in the number of applications, from 97 to 12, in particular because it reinforced the academic bias that should not be present in a professional master's degree, in which more work in different formats was expected, moving away from the research-oriented model for preparing a dissertation. In 2015, the removal of the research project requirement slightly increased demand, but it fell again in 2016, even though the project was withdrawn.

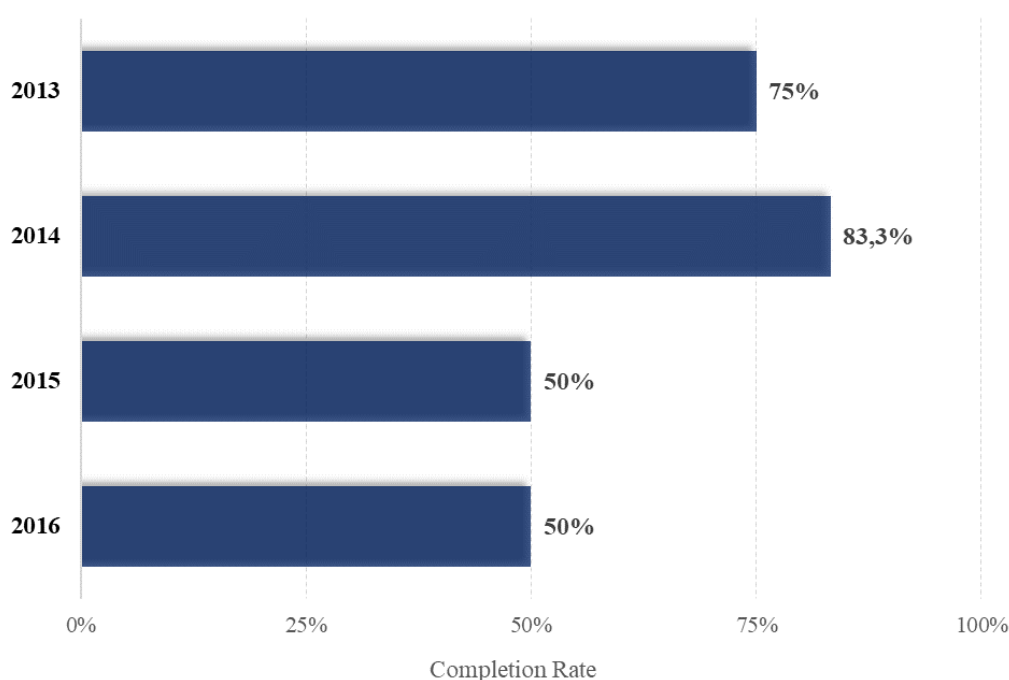
¹⁰ The data were collected from a consultation carried out by the authors directly to the Professional Master's Degree in Sociology on a National Network (ProfSocio) in 2023.

Another factor for this drop in demand may be the difficulty for master's students in obtaining permission to attend the course during the day, as they are also basic education teachers. Many reported challenges in reconciling academic activities with professional obligations, despite attempts to sensitize the Education departments regarding the importance of the master's degree for the improvement of teachers and the subsequent improvement in the quality of Teaching Sociology in secondary education.

Furthermore, the absence of scholarship quotas was an obstacle. Capes and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) only offered scholarships for academic master's degrees. The only three scholarships available for the MPCS were obtained from the Foundation for the Support of Science and Technology of the State of Pernambuco (Facepe) in 2014. However, the agency cut funding for professional master's degrees the following year. This made it difficult for master's students to leave schools to complete the course, and to reconcile studies with work in the classroom is not always viable. Once again, it was observed how Teaching Sociology still struggled for legitimacy in spaces of consecration. Even so, the dedication of teachers and students to the MPCS resulted in significant advances for the subfield of Teaching Sociology, which will be explored below.

VOLUME AND TYPOLOGY OF SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION

The MPCS had 36 students throughout its existence. Of these, 24 completed the course, 75% of whom were male students. None of the classes formed from the selections made between 2013 and 2016 presented a full success rate for students who enrolled in the master's degree. Graph 1 below presents the TCC defense rates per year of selection:

Graph 1 – TCC completion rate (%) by selection year (2013-2016)

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on data provided by ProfSocio¹¹.

The class selected in 2014, made up of just six students, had the best TCC completion rate (83%). In this class, 5 final works were produced and defended, that is, only one student was unable to complete the master's degree. Among the 16 students selected in 2013, 12 successfully defended their work, resulting in the second best TCC completion rate on the course (75%). The last two, coming from the 2015 and 2016 selections, which preceded the preparation of ProfSocio, are those with the lowest job completion rates (50%).

Although it appears, at first glance, that the MPCCS achieved incipient results in terms of the volume of course completion work produced by students, a contextualized look reveals that the course marks a cleavage point in the history of the formation, elaboration and production of final works, at postgraduate level, aimed at Teaching Sociology in Brazil. Handfas and Maçaira (2014) show, for example, that, from 1993 to 2012, of the 43 dissertations and theses with a Teaching Sociology theme in Brazil, 53 % were prepared in postgraduate programs located in the Education area. When analyzing the period between 2012 and 2016, Bodart and Cigales (2017) indicated that there was an increase in the amount of work dedicated to the Teaching of Sociology and highlighted the role of Fundaj, namely MPCCS, in this increase. According to the mapping conducted by the authors, the MPCCS was one of the main responsible for the growth in the number of dissertations in this field of Sociology, ranking first nationally in terms of the number of theses and dissertations defended

¹¹ The data were collected from a consultation made by the authors directly to the ProfSocio in 2023.

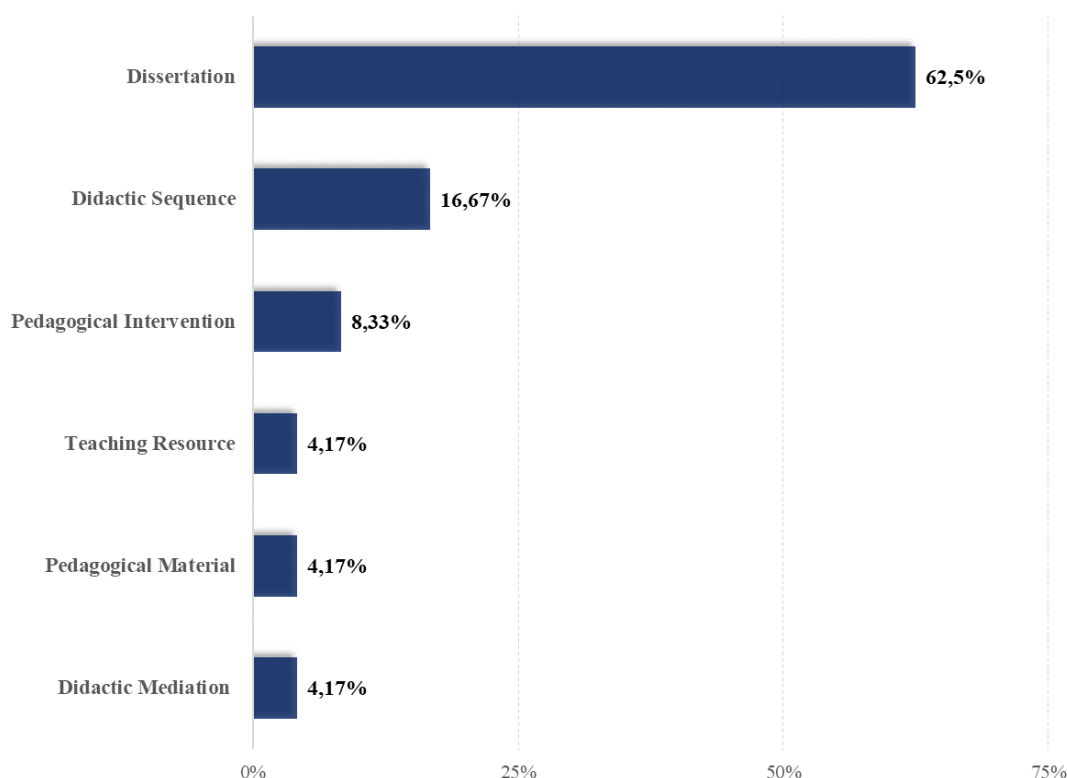
by a Higher Education institution between 1993 and 2016, having, in 2015 alone, ten works completed (Bodart & Cigales, 2017). In this way, the MPCCS represented an expansion of the subfield of studies of Teaching Sociology in the country.

In addition to the amount of work completed, all TCCs defended at the MPCCS were done in the format of dissertations, despite being carried out within a professional master's degree, whose rule determined that course completion work should be in three types – dissertation, pedagogical intervention and teaching material. The content analysis of the TCCs revealed that all of them were formally dissertations, but with variations that allowed establishing a typology with six distinct categories of work: Dissertation, Didactic Sequence, Pedagogical Intervention, Didactic Resource, Pedagogical Material and Didactic Mediation.

In works defined solely as dissertations, a classical approach predominates, as frequently carried out in academic postgraduate programs, focusing on thematic analyzes and reflections on empirical or theoretical objects, in particular on teaching-learning processes, teaching materials, applications or receptions by students of pedagogical experiences lived in educational contexts. Didactic sequences were thus identified based on the designation of Zabala (1998, p. 18), for whom didactic sequences are “[...] sequences of structured activities to achieve certain determined educational objectives”.

The pedagogical intervention is understood, according to the current ProfSocio TCC Manual (2021), as a “[...] sequential set of activities for Sociology classes or a set of actions to be carried out within the school and its surroundings”. Didactic mediation “[...] has a simple idea: it is the way in which the teacher finds to ensure that his or her knowledge allows the student to develop their own knowledge” (Moura, 2015, p. 76). On the other hand, the pedagogical material “[...] consists of the development of resources that offer support for sociology teachers and/or students” (ProfSocio, 2021). The teaching resource consists of material that aims to facilitate the teaching-learning process of the content to be applied by the teacher in the classroom (Souza, 2007). Graph 2 below shows the relative frequency of works defended at the MPCCS, identifying them according to this typology.

Graph 2 – Relative distribution of TCCs (%) developed in the MPCs (2015-2019) according to the identified typology



Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on data provided by ProfSocio¹².

What can be seen in Graph 2 is that, despite the possibility of works taking different formats, the dissertation and the didactic sequence are the predominant types, representing, respectively, 62.5% and 17% of the TCCs produced by the course's students. In absolute terms, of the 24 TCCs defended, 15 were exclusively dissertations. The content analysis of the set of works that present themselves as dissertations indicates, however, that many of the works defined in this way can still be classified as hybrid formats, as in their methodologies the authors describe as dissertations and also as didactic sequences (n=4), as didactic mediation (n=1), as pedagogical intervention (n=2), as teaching resource (n=1) and as pedagogical material (n=1).

The tendency to produce more dissertations than other formats can be attributed to the fact that, at MPCs, teachers were trained in academic postgraduate courses. Therefore, the *habitus* of the scientific field (Bourdieu, 2004a) of teachers imprinted a set of dispositions and practices that valued the academic bias more than the academic one – this can be seen, for example, in the requirement for applicants to the first classes to present a research project, a common prerequisite in academic programs.

¹² The data were collected from a consultation made by the authors directly in the ProfSocio in 2023.

Furthermore, it is likely that, due to their training, teachers had insufficient qualifications, at the time, to guide educational products aimed at schools, different from the traditional model (the dissertation). The data reveal that, once the master's students established themselves in the dissertation format, the MPCS faculty was more prepared to guide this model than to supervise the preparation of works focused on basic education, such as textbooks or innovative methodologies of Teaching Sociology.

Even so, despite being in smaller quantities, some works classified as dissertations had internal variations that sought to advance both in form and results, exploring themes of sociological interest with a view to offering content and pedagogical experiences in the classroom.

THEMATIC PLURALITY

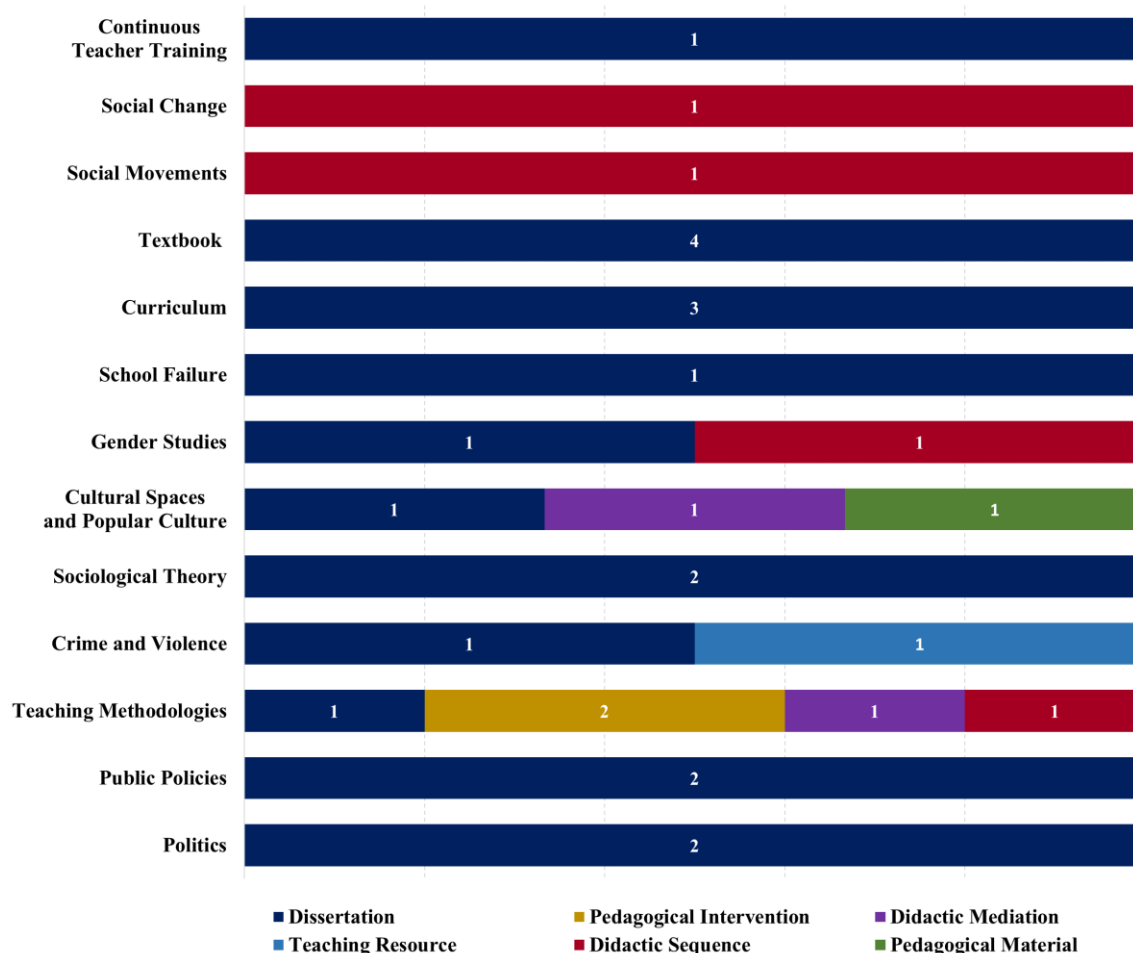
The MPCS's orientation towards Teaching Sociology did not limit the thematic range of master's students to objects evidently associated with the school. On the contrary, reflection on school reality and the transmission of sociological knowledge in secondary education produced conditions for a creative exploration of diverse sociological issues and problems. Thus, the research carried out by the students contributed both to the reflection on teaching practice, the uses and contents of textbooks and to the exploration of classic and contemporary problems in Sociology and the way in which these are – or could be – in the school curriculum. According to the Capes quadrennial assessment (2017, p. 3-4):

The program develops extension activities through its research projects that impact public policies and social projects, which exceed a dozen and involved topics such as the expansion of federal education institutes, the profile of students in federal public education, the problem of violence in secondary schools, the evaluation of FUNDEB's CACS in the Northeast region, the memory of education in Pernambuco, the academic performance of elementary public school students in Recife, teaching practices and the profile of sociology teachers, among others¹⁵.

¹⁵ T. N.: “O programa desenvolve atividades de extensão por meio de seus projetos de pesquisa que impactam políticas públicas e projetos sociais, os quais superam a dezena e envolvem temas como a expansão dos institutos federais de educação, o perfil dos discentes no ensino público federal, a problemática da violência nas escolas secundárias, a avaliação dos CACS do FUNDEB na região Nordeste, a memória da educação em Pernambuco, o desempenho escolar de estudantes do ensino público fundamental no Recife, práticas docentes e o perfil dos professores de sociologia, entre outras”.

The content analysis of the works defended revealed that 14 different themes were the subject of analysis of research carried out at the MPCs between 2015 and 2019. Graph 3, below, indicates what these themes were and shows how they are distributed according to the typology of TCCs.

Graph 3 – Distribution of themes by type of TCCs in the MPCs (2015-2019)



Source: Elaborated by the authors using MAXQDA and Excel, 2023, based on data provided by ProfSocio ¹⁴.

It can be seen, in Graph 3, that topics as diverse as continuing teacher training, school failure, public policies, politics, curriculum, textbooks and sociological theory topics were covered by works classified exclusively as dissertations. In this set, works dedicated to textbooks (n=4) approved by the PNLd in Sociology predominate, whose framing varies between analyzes of the content of the book itself (n=2) and the uses made of the book in the classroom (n=2). The authors of the dissertations consider that “[...] the textbook [...] is today seen as an important aid in teaching work” (Queiroz, 2016, p. 5) and that the book functions as a space “for circulation of different

¹⁴ The data were collected from a consultation made by the authors directly to the ProfSocio in 2023.

genres of discourse”, allowing, for example, “[...] to understand what political conceptions are present in school textbooks” (Silva, 2019, p. 5).

The curriculum theme also prevails in works developed in the dissertation format. In these TCCs, curriculum analysis is related to reflections on other topics, such as politics and public policies. Thus, while some works seek to comparatively examine the “official curricula”, defined by the Ministry of Education, and the “real curriculum”, applied in the classroom (Galdino, 2015), others seek to understand the process of including Sociology in the school curriculum from the perspective of teachers (Lefosse, 2016) or to verify ways in which certain themes can promote critical thinking if incorporated into the classroom, notably when they shed light on objects in the political field, such as the State and public policies (Vilar, 2016).

The TCCs produced as a didactic sequence do not feature the prominence of a single theme. Each of the four works prepared in this format was dedicated to different objects or thematic axes. In this case, there are didactic sequences that take social movements as a central axis of reflection (Lima, 2015), or are dedicated to teaching methodology (Tabosa, 2017), or explore the processes of social change to stimulate sociological reflection on the local reality in the classroom (Silva, 2015) and that stimulate analyzes of cultural and communicational phenomena that contribute to the (re)production of gender representations and stereotypes in society (Silva, 2016).

Graph 3 also reveals that the topic most explored by the MPCs students was teaching methodology, central in five TCCs prepared in four different formats: dissertation (Holanda, 2015), pedagogical intervention (Santiago, 2018; Pereira, 2016), didactic mediation (Ferreira, 2019) and didactic sequence (Tabosa, 2017). As an object of dissertation in its classic sense, the topic was studied in an analysis dedicated to the exploration of research strategies as a tool for teaching Sociology in secondary education, suggesting an emphasis on the teaching-learning process for the development of skills capable of promoting capabilities’ criticism and student protagonism (Holanda, 2015).

Santiago (2018) and Pereira (2016) addressed teaching methodologies in their TCCs that translate into pedagogical interventions. Both used unconventional teaching-learning processes, identifying the interdisciplinary dialogue between Sociology, Geography and Demography as the central teaching resource for an innovative didactic intervention, centered on the use of Social Cartography in the classroom. Object of a didactic sequence (Tabosa, 2017) and pedagogical mediation (Ferreira, 2019), the teaching methodology was, on the one hand, explored to create a collection of classes aimed at the appropriate use of social indicators in teaching classes. Sociology (Tabosa, 2017) was, on the other hand, to test the potential of cultural spaces, such as Museums as a catalyzing resource for the sociological imagination of students in primary school (Ferreira, 2019). The latter, in fact, is the

only work that presents pedagogical material of its own authorship, which can be used by other teachers who view the Museum as a learning resource in Teaching Sociology.

MEANING AND REPRESENTATION

With a relevant thematic diversity within different formats of course completion work, we found, in an analysis of the keywords of the 24 TCCs, the formation of a universe of 55 meaningful nuclei. Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of keywords in the total period of classes formed between 2013 and 2017, with works completed between 2015 and 2019.

Figure 1 – Keyword cloud of all TCCs in the MPCS (2015-2019)



Source: Own preparation based on content analysis using MAXQDA.

Figure 1 allows us to visualize the frequency of three cores of meaning as most relevant in the work carried out throughout the existence of the MPCS: Sociology (n=13), Secondary Education (n=12) and Teaching Sociology (n=10). Among the least frequent terms, we have Curriculum (n=3) and Social Cartography (n=2). The most frequent keywords identified in this cloud crossed the entire production of the course and remained significant in the analysis of TCCs by year of entry of students, as can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – Keyword cloud of TCCs in the MPCs by year of entry (2013-2017)



Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on content analysis using MAXQDA.

Figure 2 shows the keywords by year of entry into the MPCs. In works of the class that joined in 2013, with a minimum frequency of 1, we identified 32 keywords in their cloud made of meaningful nuclei. The most frequent term was Sociology ($n=7$), followed by Secondary Education ($n=6$) and Teaching Sociology ($n=5$). In the class created in 2014, the cloud indicates the existence of 13 keywords with a frequency of 1. Among them, the most relevant is Sociology ($n=4$), followed by Secondary Education ($n=3$). The other keywords had a frequency of 1. In the class of 2015, in a cloud with 12 meaningful nuclei, the terms Secondary Education ($n=3$) and Sociology ($n=2$) are the most frequent. In the last group of MPCs entries, 10 keywords were identified, with Teaching Sociology being relevant ($n=3$).

Even though there are small variations each year of the course, we see a tendency towards uniformity of meanings expressed by the recurrence of the same keywords. This regularity of meaningful nuclei evidently points to the object and objective of the MPCs. The lowest frequency terms gravitate towards expressions related to the same thematic universe: textbook, didactics and curriculum, for example.

The observation of keyword clouds, in addition to allowing the construction of term frequencies, helps to verify the representative trend of meanings that the MPCs managed to produce through the TCCs. This is important because it indicates the state of the struggle in the subfield of Teaching Sociology in secondary education during the MPCs's period of operation, thus demonstrating how the work was oriented to contribute to this space of recurring disputes about the presence of the discipline as a

locus of critical formation of secondary education students in the recent history of education.

Even so, what was evident was that the expression Teaching Sociology (n=10) was less frequent than Sociology (n=13) and Secondary Education (n=12) during the course's period of activity. Only in the last group of entries, the core of meaning Teaching Sociology was the most relevant, highlighting the reflection of the changes caused by the greater degrees of autonomy acquired by this subfield, even though there is still a dependence on the field of academic Sociology.

FINAL REMARKS

The Professional Master's Degree in Social Sciences for Secondary Education is a relevant part of the recent history of teaching Sociology in basic education, not only because it has contributed to the increase in the number of Master's TCCs in the area, but mainly because of its effort in continued training (Bodart & Cigales, 2017). With four classes between 2013 and its end, in 2019, we had 24 works completed, all in dissertation format with internal variations that led to the classification into six types of TCCs, a production that contributed to the dynamization of disputes for the consolidation of the teaching subfield of Sociology. In the content analysis of the works, the three cores of meaning structuring intellectual interests are revealed by the frequency of the expressions Sociology and Secondary Education, which were ahead of Teaching Sociology.

Despite having already been closed, the MPCs paved the way for the current ProfSocio, a master's degree on a national network that came to reinforce the subfield of school Sociology. The MPCs were considered the greatest responsible of scientific production in Teaching Sociology during the time it was in operation. However, there was no increase in works in formats other than the dissertation throughout the years of the master's degree, that is, this model prevailed. The observation that the TCC models defended in the MPCs end up reinforcing the academic profile, still far from specific formats for the Teaching of Sociology, leads us to conclude that, at least in the master's space, a peripheral view of Teaching still prevailed in Sociology at the heart of the research field of Social Sciences.

This reinforced the meaning of Teaching Sociology as a subfield within the field of Sociology and Education. It is inferred, therefore, that the supervisors' *habitus* ended up limiting the pedagogical experience of the course, which possibly induced the master's students to a certain academicism, with final works more suited to an academic master's profile than a professional master's degree (of practical nature). In any case, the works establish their relevance by trying to bring viable alternatives to teaching practice.

Despite this, based on the content analysis of the works defended, we realized that the masters trained by the MPCS were quite intertwined with the object and objective of the course. The acquisition of skills to pursue doctorates could not be discussed, although this occurred with some master's graduates. It is important to highlight this, since professional master's degrees still need to strengthen themselves as a space for training and construction of critical reflection which, although different from that which takes place in academic postgraduate courses, cannot be ignored.

It was noticed in the analysis that, after the first selection, there was a decline in the search and filling of vacancies, as well as in the percentage of works completed and defended. Future study is needed to substantiate what motivated the decrease in demand and which setbacks demobilized Sociology teachers in basic education and graduates in Social Sciences from continuing their training. What signals part of the response, at the time, was the possibility of approval of the New Secondary Education, which would reduce the workload and remove the mandatory teaching of Sociology from basic education, being confirmed in 2017. Even with the first ProfSocio selection in 2018, the number of candidates remained reduced in the first classes of the new master's degree at Fundaj.

Whether with the previous MPCS or the current ProfSocio, professional training for school Sociology has become increasingly restricted and restrictive, a phenomenon caused, for example, by the requirements of Capes, according to which only graduates/bachelors who are working in school teaching could occupy it, therefore not providing space to those who are outside the teaching space. With the changes resulted from the reform of secondary education, this may generate more disincentive to pursue postgraduate training. Even so, the current master's degree on a national network guaranteed an increase in the supply of subjects, which can be carried out remotely, bringing students and teachers from different regions together and favoring the formation of networks and academic exchanges in the present and in the future.

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TATIANE OLIVEIRA DE CARVALHO MOURA: Substitute Professor of Social Sciences Teaching at the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE). She is also a substitute professor of Sociology at the Federal Institute of Pernambuco. PhD in Social Sciences from the Federal University of Campina Grande (UFCG). Master's in social sciences from the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation (Fundaj). Graduated in Social Sciences from UFPE. She is a member of the Brazilian Association for Teaching Social Sciences (ABECS).

E-mail: tati.oc.moura@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2340-0352>

PATRICIA BANDEIRA DE MELO: Senior researcher at the Center for Social Studies and Statistics at the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation and professor at the Postgraduate Program in Sociology at the Federal University of Pernambuco. She collaborates with the Political Economy of Communication and Culture Group (EPCC), the Media and Public Sphere Studies Laboratory (LEMEP) and gePechH - Group for Studies and Research in Policies, Practices and Curricular Contents in Humanities at School. She has research interests in media studies, cultural industries, media literacy and qualitative analysis methods.

E-mail: patricia.bandeira.melo@hotmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4546-133X>

RODRIGO VIEIRA DE ASSIS: Assistant professor at the Department of Social Research Methods at the School of Sociology and Public Policies of Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, and researcher integrated into the Center for Research and Studies in Sociology (CIES- Iscte). He is dedicated to methodological innovation in social sciences, such as the areas of qualitative methods and quantitative methods, with special attention to multivariate methods of data analysis, factor analysis and content analysis.

E-mail: rodrigo.assis@iscte-iul.pt
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6244-4342>

ALEXANDRE ZARIAS: PhD in Sociology from the University of São Paulo (USP). Master's in social anthropology, specialist in scientific journalism and bachelor's in social sciences from the State University of Campinas (Unicamp). Researcher at the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation (Fundaj). He completed his postdoctoral studies at the Université de Strasbourg, France, under the supervision of David Le Breton, and was a collaborating researcher at the Institut Universitaire de Recherches Scientifiques (IURS) at Université Mohammed-V, Rabat, Morocco.

E-mail: alexandre.zarias@fundaj.gov.br
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1198-7328>

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RESPONSIBLE ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Amurabi Oliveira (UFSC)
E-mail: amurabi1986@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7856-1196>

Cristiano Bodart (UFAL)
E-mail: cristianobodart@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2195-2145>

Raquel Discini de Campos (UFU)
E-mail: raqueldiscini@uol.com.br
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8186-2144>

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