



MILITARIZATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS – STATE-OF-THE-ART BRAZILIAN RESEARCH AND REFLECTIONS ON THE FIELD OF GEOGRAPHY (1990 TO 2022)

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ABSTRACT

The militarization of public schools is a phenomenon that has expanded in Brazilian territory in recent years, especially with the implementation of the National Program of Civic-Military Schools, in 2019, at the beginning of the Bolsonaro government. Despite this expansion and its pedagogical and socio-territorial effects, the topic seems insignificant to us in the debates and productions of Brazilian Geography. Driven by this concern, we carried out a survey of dissertations, theses, articles in journals and research groups in all areas of knowledge, with the aim of mapping trends in where, how (theoretical-methodological instrument) and volume (quantitative) of productions on the topic in Brazil. Four sources were consulted: the CNPq Research Group Directory, the CAPES Theses & Dissertations Catalog, the SciELO platform (Brazil) and Google Scholar. With the organization and systematization of the work obtained in our searches, we identified the exponential growth in the number of searches since 2019; we highlight the main products of this research, as well as the areas of knowledge in which they have mostly been carried out; and we launch some points of reflection about the timid presence of the topic in Geography.

Keywords: state of the art, militarized schools, Geography of Education.

MILITARIZAÇÃO DAS ESCOLAS PÚBLICAS – ESTADO DA ARTE DAS PESQUISAS NO BRASIL E REFLEXÕES SOBRE O CAMPO DA GEOGRAFIA (1990 A 2022)

RESUMO

A militarização das escolas públicas é um fenômeno que se expandiu no território brasileiro nos últimos anos, especialmente com a implementação do Programa Nacional de Escolas Cívico-Militares, em 2019, no início do governo Bolsonaro. A despeito dessa expansão e de seus efeitos pedagógicos e socioterritoriais, o tema nos parece inexpressivo nos debates e produções da Geografia brasileira. Movidos por tal inquietação, realizamos um levantamento de dissertações, teses, artigos em periódicos e grupos de pesquisa em todas as áreas do conhecimento, com o intuito de mapear as tendências de onde, do como (instrumental teórico-metodológico) e do volume (quantitativo) das produções acerca do tema no Brasil. Quatro fontes foram consultadas: o Diretório de Grupos de Pesquisa do CNPQ, o Catálogo de Teses & Dissertações da Capes, a plataforma SciELO (Brasil) e o Google Acadêmico. Com a organização e sistematização dos trabalhos obtidos em nossas buscas, identificamos o exponencial crescimento do número de pesquisas desde 2019; destacamos os principais produtos dessas pesquisas, assim como as áreas do conhecimento em que têm sido majoritariamente realizadas; e lançamos alguns pontos de reflexão acerca da tímida presença do tema na Geografia.

Palavras-chave: Estado da arte, Escolas militarizadas, Geografia da Educação.

INTRODUCTION

In this article, we intend to present an excerpt of academic productions on the theme of militarized schools (or militarization of schools) in Brazil. To do so, we approached “state of the art” research methodologies to identify the quantity, approaches, and other characteristics of these publications, in different fields. We defend that we “approached” because we limit ourselves to indicate the quantitative aspect of the production on this topic, as well as the fields that developed it and its temporality. We did not dwell on the contents of these productions, but on focus and objects. Our purpose is to identify the production on the militarization of schools, especially in the field of Geography, since we understand it as an educational phenomenon that also has a spatial and territorial dimension. For this reason, we are interested in observing whether (and to what extent) academic publications in Geography have been dedicated to the topic. For this, we will initially present the phenomenon of militarization of public schools in Brazil. Then, we will discuss the research carried out and provide some analyses of the information and data obtained.

MILITARIZATION OF SCHOOLS

The militarization of public schools is a phenomenon that has expanded in Brazil in recent years, especially with the implementation of the National Program of Civic-Military Schools (PECIM), by the Ministry of Education, in September 2019ⁱ, in the same year that the federal government created the Subdepartment for the

Promotion of Civic-Military Schools (SFECM)ⁱⁱ, linked to the Department of Basic Education (SEB) of the Ministry of Education. In the past, the participation of military personnel in regular school institutions was practicallyⁱⁱⁱ restricted to training schools for future military positions (Military Schools), or so-called military colleges, the creation of a Subdepartment and a promotion program at the federal level expanded the prospects for the insertion of military and security agents in civilian educational institutions. The justifications for such change are made by an alleged improvement in the administrative (management) and pedagogical (discipline) efficiency of schools. The entry of military personnel introduced new contradictions in school spaces; altered the arrangement of educational networks in large, medium, and small cities; accentuated inequalities between teachers and schools; promoted a policy of socioeconomic selection of students; operated restrictions on curricula, among other implications that caught researchers' attention.

In administrative terms, militarized schools are maintained, as a rule, under the tutelage of two departments (Education and Public Security), but without the objective of training military cadres, as in military colleges aimed at these purposes (Alves; Mocarzel; Moehlecke; Santos, 2019). On this point, there is a brief distinction. There are military schools or colleges that have the purpose of training cadres for the Armed Forces. These are the cases, for example, of the Naval College, in Angra dos Reis (RJ); the Preparatory School of Army Cadets (EsPCEX), in Campinas (SP); and the Preparatory School of Air Cadets (EPCAr), in Barbacena (MG). These secondary education schools, i.e., high schools, train students for the cadre of officer candidate of the Armed Forces. Students who complete their studies are sent to higher education institutions, in their respective careers: from the Naval College, for example, to the Naval School (Rio de Janeiro/RJ); from EsPCEX to the Academy of Agulhas Negras (Resende/RJ); from EPCAr to the Air Force Academy (São José dos Campos/SP).

There are also the so-called "military colleges" that do not train military cadres, but receive the children of military personnel and often make selection processes for vacancies intended for the external (or non-military) public. This is the case, for example, of the Colégio Brigadeiro Newton Braga, in Rio de Janeiro (RJ), administered by the Brazilian Air Force; and the Colégio Militar de Porto Alegre (RS), administered by the Army. These schools serve the children of military personnel, as explained in DECEX/C Ex Decree No. 220, of June 14, 2021, which approves the guideline that defines the Pedagogical Project of the Brazilian Military College System (2021–2025):

From the earliest times of Brazil as an independent nation, the military pleaded for the creation of an institution in charge of teaching the children of servants of the Army and Navy [...]. The Brazilian Military College System was designed to support the military family and has the following purpose: (...) to teach basic education, in the final years of middle school (from the 6th to

the 9th grade) and in high school” (art. 3º of R-69) (Brasil, 2021, free translation).

In short, then, these are the oldest, traditional, “classic” forms of administration of school units by military personnel in Brazil: schools to train military cadres or schools aimed at “supporting the military family.” However, what we witness today are developments of a process initiated in 1990, and that in recent years has gained an unprecedented dimension in the political and social life of Brazil: the expansion of the militarization of public schools, promoted by municipalities, states, and the federal government. In other words, the entry of military agents into regular schools, occupying administrative and pedagogical positions; the opening of public schools to the control of military and police institutions, that is, the expansion of the models of civic-military schools.

Several state and municipal governments have adopted the idea of militarization within the scope of education policies, meeting the demands of conservative segments of Brazilian society and politics. The fact is that the current juncture has been favorable both for the expansion and consolidation of this phenomenon, to the point that military schools have become the object of desire of municipalities, being placed at the center of negotiations by local authorities with the community (Alves; Toschi; Ferreira, 2018).

With the implementation of the National Program of Civic-Military Schools, in July 2019, the schools began to be managed by the state or municipal departments of education in partnership with the Ministry of Defense, under the mediation of the directorate of civic-military schools of the Ministry of Education (MEC, 2021). This office was dissolved in January 2023 (Decree No. 11,611, of July 19, 2023), by the federal government (Sinpro-DF, 2023). However, government officials have publicly expressed—such as the governor of the state of Mato Grosso—their disagreement with the dismantling of the militarization program of schools and reiterated their commitment to the continuity of the policy, at the state level.

According to Motta and Frigotto, in an article written in 2017, the militarization of schools converges to an urgent need of world capitalism—together with the Reform of Secondary Education, the Common National Base, the School Without a Party—the “administration of the social question” (Motta; Frigotto, 2017). The *modus operandi* of this movement—marked by illegality, ideological control, violation of human rights—has been denounced by several scholars (Oliveira, 2016; Tavares, 2016; Teixeira, 2016).

An important landmark of contemporary writings on the subject is the book *State of School Exception: a critical view of militarized schools* (2016), organized by the authors Ian Caetano de Oliveira and Victor Hugo Viegas de Freitas Silva. Focusing on the reality of Goiás—a Brazilian state that stands out in the number of militarized schools—the authors denounced what they understand as a deviation from the role of the Department of Public Security, when acting in the educational field: “There is a poorly discussed facet about the management of Military Colleges that

is closely related to the way in which police officers are socialized in the corporation: abuses and political persecution of students and employees.” (Silva, 2016, p. 94, free translation) “The militarization in Goiás has only two sides: that of law and that of illegality. The law does not allow militarization and, much less, the approval on the terms in which it has occurred.” (Tavares, 2016, p. 63, free translation).

STATE OF THE ART

Therefore, a wide and historical range of relations can be traced between the field of education and of militarism in Brazil, materialized in school forms. Contrary to what may seem, the two are not antagonistic fields and the ways in which they articulate can produce different outcomes. Faced with all these processes that bring important marks not only in school spaces, but in educational networks and spaces of school communities, we seek to identify to what extent military schools, militarized schools, and the relationships between militarism and schools have been the object of research, investigation, and studies in Geography. Driven by this concern, we conducted a survey of publications, close to the research of the type “state of the art” or “state of knowledge,” with the initial intention of identifying the presence of the theme in the studies in this field. In this search, we accessed theses, dissertations, articles, and research groups in different field of knowledge, to map the trends of the where, how (theoretical and methodological instruments), and the volume (quantitative) of publications on the subject, in Brazil.

We publish here the first results of this mapping of research on the relationship between militarization and public schools in Brazil, to stress the presence of the theme in the geographical community. This study is part of a research process for the production of a master’s thesis, and we make public here the results and reflections accumulated in this initial phase of the research, from the survey of this state of the art.

A first [moment] is the one in which it interacts with academic production by the quantification and identification of bibliographic data, aiming to map this production in a delimited period, in years, locations, fields of production. In this case, researchers are quite comfortable, since they will deal with objective and concrete data found in the bibliographic indications that refer to the research. They can visualize, at this moment, a narrative of academic production that often reveals the history of the implementation and maturation of graduate studies, of certain entities, and of some research promotion agencies in our country. In this effort to order a certain production of knowledge, it is also possible to perceive that research grows and thickens over time; it expands in leaps or continuous movements; it multiplies, changing the subjects and the forces involved; it diversifies the places of production,

intersects and transforms; it disappears in some time or place (Ferreira, 2002, p. 265, free translation).

Notably, our research was carried out aiming at identifying more general aspects of the productions, since our interest is to reach the publications that are somehow related to Geography, either in the initial studies of the author or in the graduate program where the research was developed. Other “state-of-the-art” research can show us deeper aspects of the productions, for example the article by Edna M. C. Miranda & Francisco Thiago Silva, submitted for publication in June 2021 and published in July 2023.

In that article, authors sought to map the specific productions about militarized schools and focused on aspects such as chapter titles, keywords, and specific research problems. In our case, it is interesting to draw an overview of the fields of academic production related to the theme and the presence or absence of Geography in this scenario.

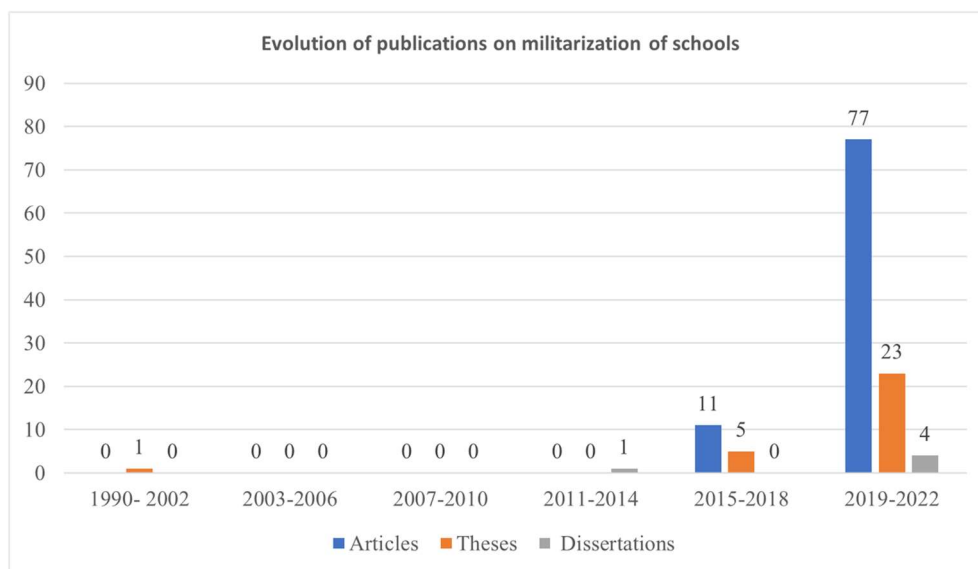
Here, the data and information were collected from four sources: CNPq Research Groups Directory; CAPES Thesis & Dissertations Catalog; SciELO (Brazil); and Google Scholar. For the search, we used the following terms and descriptors: “Escolas Militares [Military Schools]”; “Colégios Militares [Military Colleges]”; “Escolas Militarizadas [Militarized Schools]”; “Colégios Militarizados [Militarized Colleges]”; “Escolas Cívico-Militares [Civic-Military Schools]”; “Colégios Cívico-Militares [Civic-Military Colleges]”; “Militarização de Escolas [Militarization of Schools]”; “Militarização de Colégios [Militarization of Colleges].” We established as a time frame 1990 (year of the first militarized school) and as final, 2022.

The search outcomes were classified according to the following criteria: year of publication or foundation (in the case of research groups); format or type of study (thesis, dissertation, article); region/state in which the program or group is based; education of the authors; and the areas of knowledge defined by CAPES. These data were organized, tabulated, and systematized in graphs, charts, and tables, as presented below. The first aspect analyzed was the period of publication of these studies.

Based on the graph, we observe that from 2019 to 2022 there was a substantial increase in publications compared to previous years. One piece of information is important about the period in question: 2019 is the year of the establishment of SFECM and the implementation of PECIM, which resulted in the escalation (in quantity) of militarized schools in Brazil. It is not possible to state that there is a cause and effect relationship regarding PECIM and the productions. It would be necessary to identify the months of publication of these articles and the Program implementation. The fact is that 2019 was the first year of the government of Jair Bolsonaro and also of state governors markedly conservative or linked to right-wing and even far-right ideologies. The previous years were marked by the expansion of the phenomenon of militarization of schools and, also, 2018 (year of federal and state elections) was marked by the effervescence of a neoconservatism^{iv}. All these

factors contributed for the militarization of schools to become a “concern” of researchers, by gaining visibility in the national political scenario.

Figure 1. Periods of publications of studies on the implementation of military schools from 1990 to 2022.



Sources: Catalog of Theses & Dissertations – Capes; SciELO-Brazil; Google Scholar.

Another important question about the numbers in this graph is what they show us the terms used in the search. By employing terms such as “Military Schools” and “Military Colleges,” a part of the productions concerns traditional military schools and not units of civic-military school projects or militarization of public schools. The insertion of these terms revealed to us that “traditional” military schools have been objects of study, to a lesser extent, for some time. There were five theses completed, from 2005 to 201; in 1995, the study entitled “A Militarização da Educação no Estado Novo” was concluded by Nelson Viana dos Santos, advised by Professor Nelson Piletti, in the Graduate Program in Education of the University of São Paulo (USP).

However, from 2016, the phenomenon of militarization of public schools became the theme of the completed dissertations^v. There were 27 theses, from 2016 to 2022, and four dissertations^{vi}, from 2020 to 2022. The other five dissertations, defended from 2001 to 2017, refer to military schools and not to militarized ones. The relationship between militarism and education, therefore, has been the subject of academic studies since the 1990s; what we have is a significant increase in this production, from the consolidation and expansion of school militarization policies, with a reconfiguration of objects and themes. That is, since 2016, militarized schools began to be the subject and object of research in different fields.

In addition to the dissertations, theses, and articles, we also researched the presence of the theme in the groups registered in the CNPq Research Groups Directory. Our research located only the Group of Studies and Research in Educational Policies and Youth (Gepej), of the Federal University of Goiás (UFG). Formed in 2020, the group's presentation text in the Directory says that it "arises from the concerns of researchers from different institutions and aims to constitute a privileged space for reflection on the field of educational policies and youth" (Gepej, 2023).

Outside the CNPq records, we also found the National Research Network on the Militarization of Education (REPME), which has a YouTube channel^{vii}. According to the description on the channel, the Network "brings together teachers from different networks and levels of education, researchers, and activists who are dedicated to researching the processes of militarization of education in Brazil." Therefore, it is not a research group with a production linked to it, but a network created to promote collaboration and dissemination of publications on the subject, as well as establishing ties for the political dispute to confront the process of expansion of the militarization of schools: "We understand that the current juncture is permeated by conservative and reactionary policies and programs that have caused setbacks in the civilizational process and have hindered the implementation of an emancipatory project of education^{viii}."

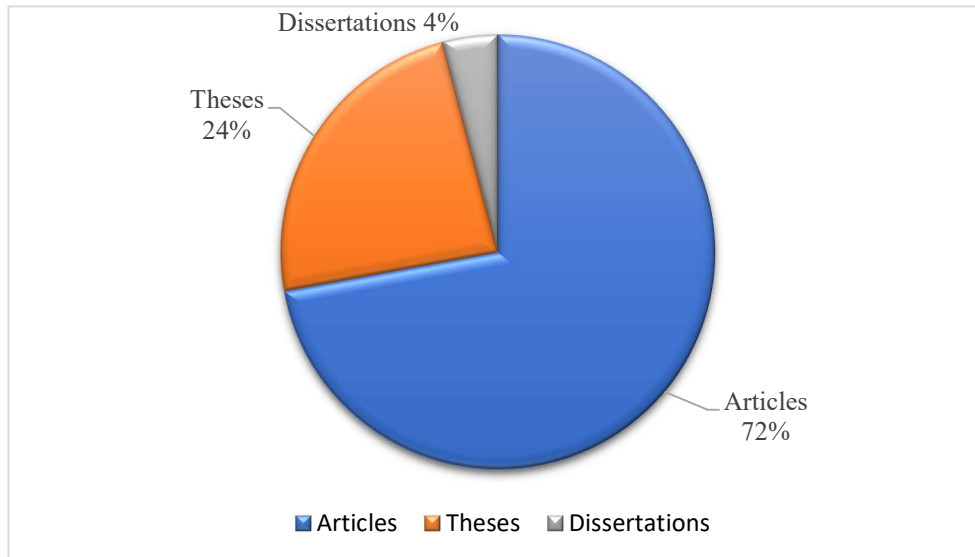
Therefore, on the one hand, we face a lack of a variety of research groups that address the subject comprehensively; on the other, a production that tensions academic programs and researchers (advisors), from a demand that emerges from the issues of the historical moment in which this phenomenon is presented. When we look at the programs where the theses and dissertations were produced, we notice a concentration on education programs^{ix}, with 16 of 27 theses and three of four dissertations on the topic of militarization of schools.

The other programs where we identified these productions were: Administration; Political Science; Human Development: Training, Social Policies and Practices; Constitutional Law; Public Management; History; Linguistics; Public Policies and Government; and Society, Culture, and Border. This diversity leads us to reflect on the demand for research and the scope of approaches on the subject.

When recently emerging as a theme of the "agenda," we note the predominance of articles published in journals in the period. The large volume of articles in the period follows the significant increase in the number of theses and dissertations. We cannot fail to mention that due to the nature of the articles (which can be essays, excerpts from larger research, partial results, etc.) and due to their format (size and structure of the text), their quantity is much higher than the volume of dissertations and theses, as expected.

When we identified the federal units where the studies were carried out, we realized that the themes have been investigated throughout the country, but with a greater concentration in units where the programs are consolidated and/or have been expanded.

Figure 2. Publications on the implementation of military schools, according to the nature of the study (1990-2022).



Source: Catalog of Theses & Dissertations – CAPES; SciELO-Brazil; Google Scholar.

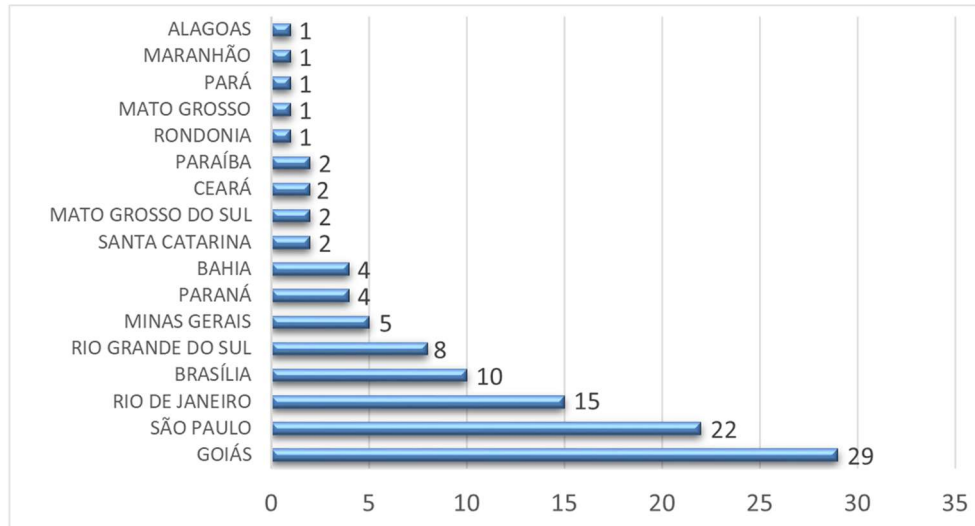
The state of Goiás stands out in the production of studies on this subject. Graph 4 shows that 26% of all Brazilian production in the period comes from Goiás. Our research revealed that the journals and graduate programs of the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) and University of Brasília (UnB), among the institutions of the Midwest, are the ones that bring together the most researchers on the subject. In the same Graph 4, we see that the set of states in the Southeast region (ES, MG, RJ, and SP) appears in second position. In this region, the journals and programs of the public universities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro stand out. The refinement of the data required us to discriminate the studies, in the case of dissertations and theses, by area of the graduate programs where they were developed.

The graphic representation indicates the concentration of master's and doctoral research in the graduate programs in Education. The theme is presented, however, in research in other areas of knowledge, especially on interdisciplinary programs. We noticed the absence of Geography in Graph 5, which testifies that, from 1990 to 2022, no thesis or dissertation on the militarization of schools was defended in graduate programs of this field.

We note, however, the possibility of a geographer having developed research in a program linked to a field other than their initial training. It was Nilson Bezerra Pereira's thesis, presented to the evaluation board in December 2017, entitled "Pact for education: compliance with the neoliberal commitment in Goiás and the militarization of public schools," by the University of Goiás (UEG), advised by

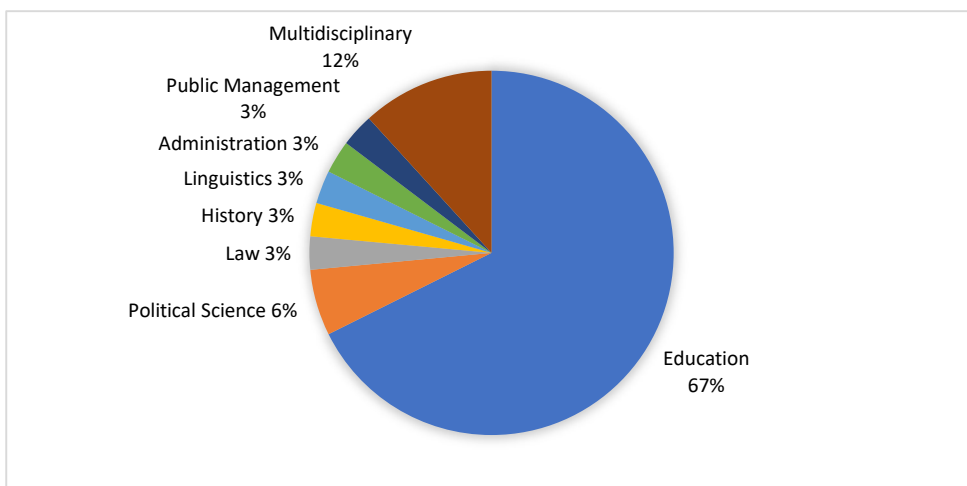
Professor Vera Lúcia Pinheiro. In this case, the thesis was developed in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Education, Language, and Technologies at UEG. In Graphs 6 and 7, we present the areas of initial training of the authors.

Figure 3. Publicações sobre a implementação de escolas militares, segundo a natureza do trabalho (1990-2022)



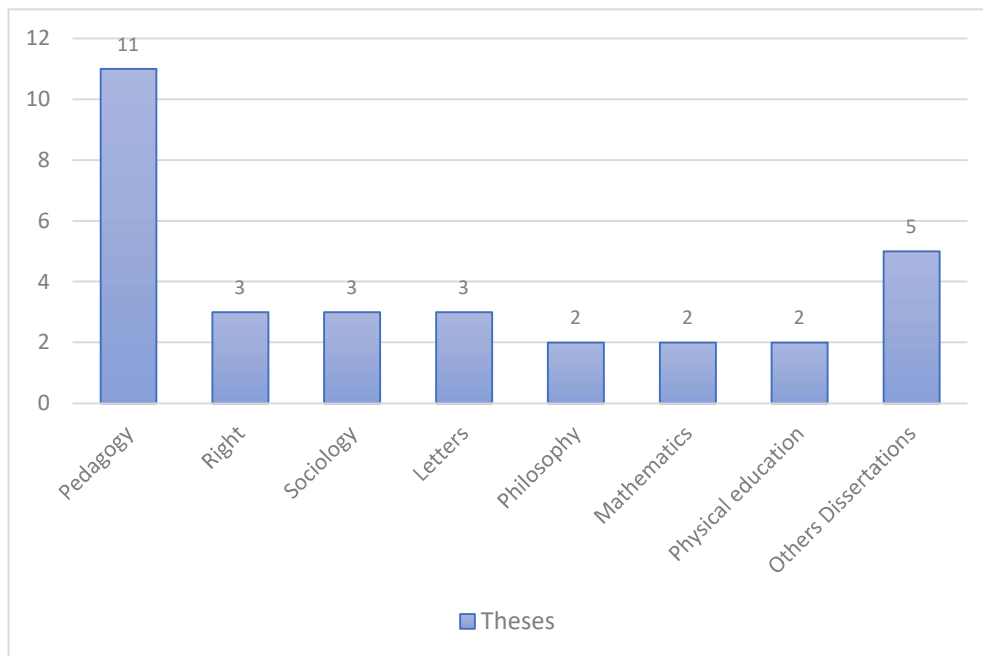
Fontes: Catálogo de Teses & Dissertações – CAPES; SciELO – Brazil; Google Acadêmico.

Figure 4. Number of dissertations and theses by program/area according to Capes, published between 1990 and 2022.



Source: Catalog of Theses & Dissertations – Capes; SciELO-Brazil; Google Scholar.

Figure 5. Areas of training^x of the authors of theses^{xi} on schools and military^{xii}, between 1990 and 2022.

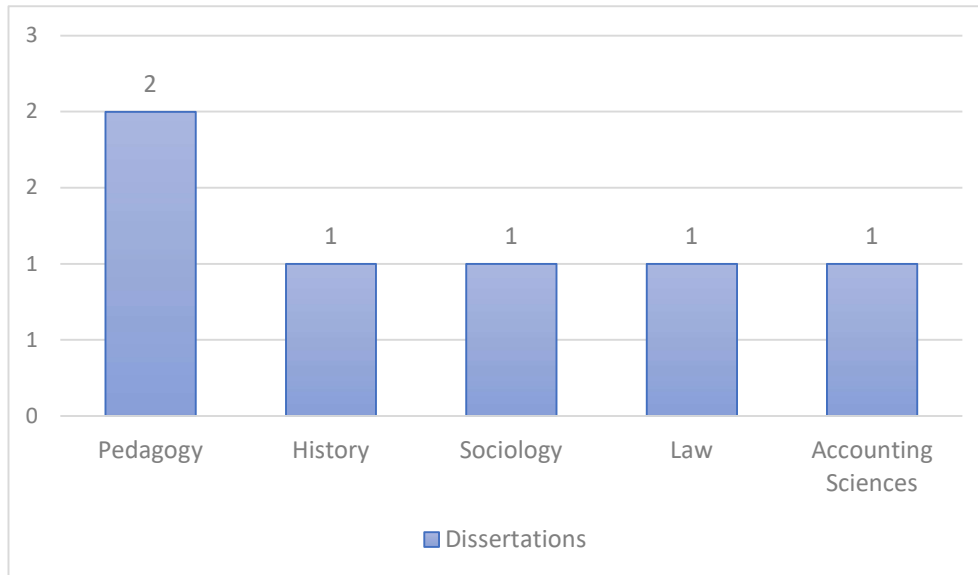


Source: Capes (2023).

We observed that most researchers have initial training in the area of Pedagogy. If we look at the other areas, we will see that most can be related to the field of Education, with corresponding degrees. Physical Education, Philosophy, Physics, History, Languages and Literature, and Sociology are also school subjects and have degree courses related to them. We cannot state that the authors are teachers of basic education, but we cannot deny the relationship, even if not direct, between these disciplinary fields and schools. In other words, according to the graphs, exception for Law and Accounting, all authors are likely to have some type of dialogue with basic education, regardless of whether they are teachers or not. What catches our attention is the fact that we have a single author with an initial degree in Geography.

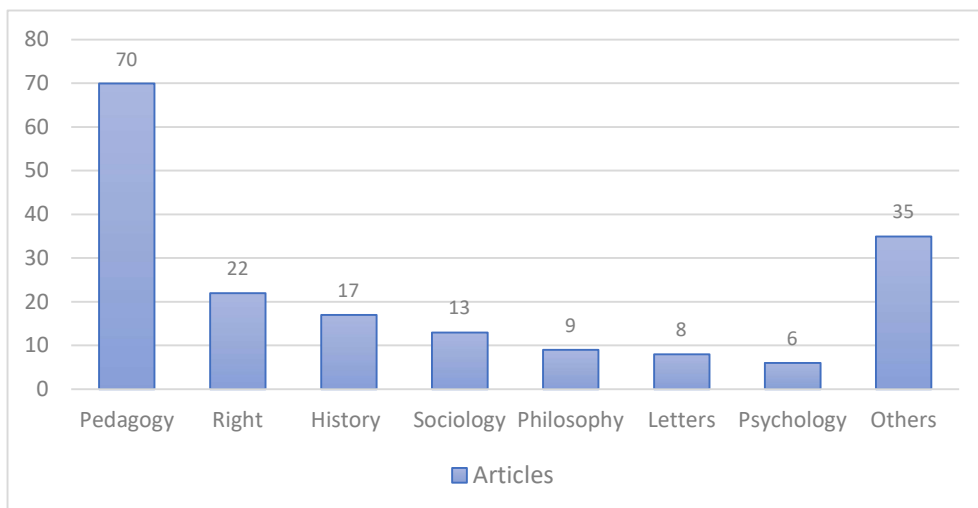
In the case of articles, as shown in Graph 7, we also identified six articles written by researchers in the field of Psychology. In this case, it is worth highlighting the high relative number of studies by researchers in the field of Law, as well as the variety of areas or fields of origin of the authors. This shows us that the relationship between schools and militarism has become an important issue in society and academia and has become the subject of research by researchers from various areas.

Figure 6. Areas of training^{xiii} of the authors of dissertations on schools and military, between 1990 and 2022.



Fonte: Capes (2023).

Figure 7. Areas of training of the authors of articles on militarized schools, between 1990 and 2022.



Fonte: SciELO; Google Scholar; CNPQ, 2023.

CONSIDERAÇÕES FINAIS

The growth in the number of academic research on the theme of schools and militarism, especially since 2019, indicates the consolidation of this theme both in our society and in the academic environment. In other words, it is no coincidence that the conclusions of theses and dissertations on the topic, as of 2019, take place in a context of expansion of public school militarization projects. The growth in the number of militarized schools, as well as projects, whether at the municipal, state, or federal level, to promote the militarization of schools, has become a fact. From this fact, researchers began to focus on the theme and the object.

In this study, we sought to identify only this quantitative aspect and some more general characteristics of the researches, such as the graduate programs where they were developed, as well as the states and areas of origin of the researchers. This is because our intention was to map the publications carried out in Geography, since we understand that both military schools and militarized or civic-military schools are themes and potential objects of studies in the area. After all, we speak of networks of public schools, of the relationship between school institutions and communities in the territory, of the materialization of neoliberal policies in space, of control and daily production of school space, in short, of a series of possibilities of spatial and geographical issues, explicitly geographical.

Our surprise with the absence of studies coming from Geography about militarized schools led us to inquire about the reasons for this “silence”. Most of them do not fit in this article, as they are mere speculations and would deserve further investigation. Nevertheless, our research verifies the inexistence or incipience (in the case of some study that we have not identified) of the geographical approach on an educational, geographical, political, and social phenomenon.

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ⁱ Federal Decree No. 10,004, of September 5, 2019.

ⁱⁱ Federal Decree no 9,665 of January 2, 2019.

ⁱⁱⁱ There are other formal and institutional relationships between law enforcement and public schools, such as school rounds or school safety programs. In these cases, the roles are well defined, the functions of the two agents and institutions are clearly distinct. Regarding military colleges and civic-military schools, the boundaries between the functions and roles of the subjects are not clearly defined; there are overlaps, mixtures, exchanges, inversions in the relations between the institutions and the subjects.

^{iv} Although the prefix “neo” is apparently contradictory to be written with the word “conservatism,” we use the term to name a recent, or “new,” movement of rise and expansion of conservative groups and ideas in the country.

^v It is important to remember that the year of completion indicates that the study began at least two to one and a half years earlier.

^{vi} In the case of dissertations, it is two and a half to four years before completion, at least.

^{vii} <https://www.youtube.com/@redenacionaldemilitarizaca8381>.

^{viii} Description published on the REPME channel. Accessed on January 20, 2024, at 12:31 am.

^{ix} We consider as graduate programs in Education not only those strictly indicated as “Education,” but those that are presented as developments (e.g: “Education, Contemporary Contexts, and Popular Demands”) or interdisciplinary, related to the field of Education (e.g: “Education, Language, and Technologies”).

^x The highlighted information refers to those that reached at least two researchers in the same area and that had their publications located in the cited source. The others (Physics, Administration, Accounting Sciences, History, and Geography) were only part of the group indicated as “others”.

^{xi} The columns of numbers presented in Graphs 5, 6, and 7 do not total the number of articles, theses, and dissertations located on the platforms, because the information was collected in terms of multiple marking, that is, we considered the multiple backgrounds of the authors surveyed. Thus, there are studies counted in more than one training area, in cases where authors have two or more initial training areas.

^{xiii} This includes studies on military schools and civic-military schools.

^{xiii} In the same way as in the previous graphs, this one presents columns of numbers that do not total the amount of dissertations, since the information considered the multiple trainings of the researched authors. In this sense, we highlight one researcher who has two degrees: Law and Accounting, totaling one for each column.