

School as both a social and educational path for incarcerated adolescents

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to verify how educators applying social/educative measures, working with adolescents who have broken the law, evaluate the performance of the school in a community context of social/educative care regarding prevention and reduction of recidivism in breaking the law. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews, conducted within the institution and analyzed making use of the discourse of collective subject. The results, after interviews were analyzed, highlight four major themes: the similarities and differences between that specific school and the other public schools; the role of the school while enforcing the social/educative measure of confinement (SEMC) and its preventative actions; the recommendation of preventative actions; and the causes of recidivism. In the collective discourse of educators, one may note that school plays a key role in preventing and reducing recidivism of offenses. However, there is a lack of connections with the social work network outside the institution. Security issues are the major difference, identified by research participants, in relation to schools external to the institution. Family, socioeconomic and personal factors are, according to educators, risk factors for adolescents, which make it difficult to discontinue the legal offenses. The importance of adolescents being able to build their own life project and the inability to follow up with the ex-inmates are emphasized in the narrative of these professionals, which demonstrates the urgency of articulated public policies for a better service to young people when they leave the (Brazilian) social/educative system.

Keywords

Social/educative measures – School – Recidivism – Educators applying measures.

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A escola como caminho socioeducativo para adolescentes privados de liberdade

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Resumo

Neste trabalho objetivou-se verificar como educadores de medida socioeducativa, que atuam junto a adolescentes autores de ato infracional, avaliam a atuação da escola em uma comunidade de atendimento socioeducativo quanto à prevenção e à diminuição da reincidência em atos infracionais. Os dados foram coletados por meio de entrevista semiestruturada, realizada na própria instituição, e analisados utilizando-se a técnica do discurso do sujeito coletivo. O resultado, após a análise das entrevistas, destaca quatro ideias centrais: as semelhanças e diferenças entre a escola da instituição e as demais escolas da rede escolar; o papel da escola na medida socioeducativa de internação e suas ações preventivas; a sugestão de ações preventivas; e as causas da reincidência. No discurso coletivo dos educadores, pode-se observar que a escola tem papel fundamental na prevenção e na diminuição da reincidência infracional. Contudo, faltam ações articuladas com a rede de apoio social externa à instituição. Problemas de segurança são as principais diferenças apontadas pelos participantes da pesquisa em relação às escolas externas. Fatores familiares, socioeconômicos e pessoais constituem, segundo os educadores, um risco para os adolescentes, dificultando a descontinuidade de atos infracionais. A importância da elaboração de um projeto de vida, pelos adolescentes, e a falta de acompanhamento ao egresso são enfatizadas no discurso desses profissionais, demonstrando a urgência de políticas públicas articuladas para um melhor atendimento aos jovens egressos do sistema socioeducativo.

Palavras-chave

Medidas socioeducativas – Escola – Reincidência – Educadores de medida.

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The legal definition of an adolescent by the Child and Adolescent Statute (CAE) (BRAZIL, 1990), in its second article, is: a person who is between 12 and 18 years of age. Adolescents are considered by some scholars (AYRES, 2006; MELO et al., 2007), as a segment of the population who face high vulnerability, due to the social structure found in countries like Brazil. Some aspects associated with such vulnerability include difficulty in accessing adequate information, the need to explore and experiment in risks and transgression, difficulty in making choices, undefined identity, the need to identify as one of the peer group, family disaggregation and access to drugs.

Currently, young people are faced with rapid technological development, a temporal instant gratification which brings superficiality in acquiring knowledge and a multiplicity of disposable needs, caused by the culture of consumption. All of these aspects enhance social exclusion, exacerbate individualism and lack of interest for what is public/collective and stimulate behaviors that generate conflicts, and trivialize violence and illegal conduct (ANTONI, KOLLER, 2002; ROCHA, 2002). These are the young people who, while victims, witnesses or agents within this context, are exposed to violence, reproducing it in their relationships, which may end up in legal offenses (RANÑA, 2005; TROMBETA, GUZZO, 2002; SANTOS, 2000).

For a better understanding of the adolescent in conflict with the law, according to Volpi (2002), we have to by-pass extremist conceptions, in which the teenager is seen either as a victim, a product of the environment and, therefore, holding no responsibility for his/her acts; or as the one who have been excluded from any responsibility of the ambience, which imposes onto the youth the sole and final responsibility.

Showing the plurality of standpoints in regard to the origins of the legal offenses, Assis (1999) argued that studies identify the offense as either a structural byproduct, connected with social factors; relating it to the link between the youth and institutions, such as family,

school and religion; or highlighting the internal mechanisms of the individual, as biological or resulting from his/her personality. However, one cannot forget that the relationship between the individual and the ambience is a two-way road. Thus, perpetrating offences must be studied in the light of an interaction encompassing all three levels. From this perspective, the offense is seen as a product of complex factors, which permeate both the development and the family, social, cultural, and economic conditions faced by the youths (ASSIS, 1999; PADOVANI, 2006).

A study by Silva and Rosseti-Ferreira (2002) about criminality, besides examining the several specific aspects associated with the action linked to a crime, demonstrates the “existence of different trajectories of involvement, continuity and discontinuity” in perpetrating offences (SILVA ROSSETI-FERREIRA, 2002, p. 577).

In general, both the perpetration of offences and recidivism and violence imprinted in these acts have been debated by society and, mainly, by the media, both surrounded by prejudices which not only distort reality but also “feed indifference, stigmatization and the narrowing of analyses about the topic” (TEJADAS, 2005, p. 1). In the opposite direction of what has been done, we take the stand of looking for the meaning of recidivism, and of violence, “less within the actor’s subjectivity, and more grounded in the references of the social networks and the legitimate material coactions where the individual is placed” (MARTUCCELLI, 1999, p. 172).

Recidivism in offences, unlike what is said in the media, is not part of the repertoire of most teenagers. According to information disclosed by the Center of Social/Educative Service to Adolescents (CASA), institution in charge of taking care of adolescents deprived of freedom in the State of São Paulo, the recidivism rate in 2010 was lesser than 13%. Many teenagers say that Social/Educative Measure of Confinement (SEMC) was a brake, an imposition that withdrew them from the

continuity of committing offences. The reason is incarceration implies in a discontinuity that allows adolescents to rethink the path they took up to the moment they were taken in. As a result, this halt enables in most cases a rupture in the sequence of offences.

Data about recidivism of ex-inmates from the institution analyzed were checked through the contact of technical staff with adolescents and family members, after one year they had left the premises. Such data, obtained in a non-systematic way, shows that 52% did not become habitual offenders, 4% had died, 13% fell in recidivism, and it was not possible to get information about 31% of ex-inmates. Data is therefore inconclusive.

The causes of recidivism are difficult to identify and delimit, since they involve a multiplicity of interacting factors. This fact is aggravated by the scarce studies and precarious nature of data about recidivism among adolescents, due to failures in the follow-up of prior inmates who leave the social/educative process. Such follow-up remains in the hands of some professionals in the confinement units, who rely mostly on the testimony of the ex-inmate him/herself or his/her family members.

The social/educative measures

Dealing with adolescents who commit offences must consider not only the punitive sanctions, of coercive nature, but first of all the educative aspects. This is intended to ensure the integral protection of adolescents while maintaining their rights, through a set of actions that may insert them back into society, providing “formal education, professionalization, health, leisure and other rights legally ensured” (VOLPI, 2002, p. 14).

According to article 112 of CAE (BRAZIL, 1990), the adolescent offender shall be subject to social/educative measures, applied and operationalized in compliance with the severity of the offence. This ensures the possibility of overcoming the adolescent’s

condition of exclusion, providing him/her with an education based on positive values of participation in the social life, with the family and community involvement.

In this paper, the social/educative measure we focus is confinement, that is, deprivation of freedom in a specialized institution, in consonance with articles 121, 123, and 124 of CAE (BRAZIL, 1990), which highlight the peculiar condition of development, the exceptionality and the brevity of the measure, the compulsoriness of pedagogical and professionalizing activities, in addition to cultural, sport and leisure activities.

According to Volpi (2002), the confinement measure has coercive and educative connotation, thus, speaking of confinement means a reference to a program of deprivation which, by definition, implies the contention of the adolescent with an effective security system. However, says the author, contention is not a social/educative measure in itself, but solely the condition for putting it in practice, and means a limitation in exerting the right to come and go, but with the guarantee that the other rights will be complied with, including access to education.

The school in the community of social/educative service

CAE (BRAZIL, 1990) stresses the priority of the educative action in putting the measures in practice,

and should, therefore, be present even in the moment when its most severe modalities are applied – those restricting or depriving the adolescent’s right to freedom. Endowed inexorably with a social purpose, one understands its compulsory nature. (ROCHA, 2010, p. 207)

According to Facci (2010, p. 308), Vigotski, when devising his theory,

saw the clear importance of school in the individual development of that new

society, in the socialist transformation of man. He saw in the collectivity the the impelling education for the emancipation of men.

School has, according to Saviani (2008), the role of socializing the knowledge produce by men ar. For such, the pedagogical work must create condition so that the student takes hold of knowledge, and this makes the school responsible for the process of humanizing the individuals. Such statement, according to the author, corroborates Vigotski's idea that man becomes human when he takes hold of culture, whereas "what has been learned is fundamental so that the superior psychological functions occur" (FACCI, 2010, p. 302). The teacher plays, therefore, a key role in this process.

School is then seen as a

[...] strategic place to develop a cultural policy intended for the exercise of citizenship, to redeem and affirm moral and ethical values and, essentially, for the practice of inclusiveness. (SARAIVA, 2006, p. 55)

Social/educative measures of incarceration raise great questioning, including: has the social/educative measure fulfilled the role of preventing recidivism? Can deprivation of freedom alone be an action to prevent recidivism? What is the role of the school in a confinement unit? What, in fact, affects the adolescents' recidivism in committing offences again? There are questions that require in-depth research and studies, so that one can take a distance from the common sense perspective and look for answers in the reality of the youths, the social institutions and the organisms that implement public policies intended for the young offenders.

In our research, the general purpose was to verify how educators who apply the measures, in a confinement unit for teenagers deprived of freedom, perceive and evaluate the actions performed by the school under such institution in terms of preventing the

recidivism of offences. Specifically, it was intended to investigate, in the perspective of those professionals: a) the specificities of the school as part of the social/educative measure; b) the school actions that are intended to prevent recidivism; c) the actions that should be implemented to prevent recidivism; and d) the possible causes of recidivism.

In our study, we started with the observation of the Social/educative Service Community (SESC), linked to the Foundation of Children and Adolescents, which has a capacity of sheltering 120 male teenagers, aged 12 through 21 years old. According to Volpi (2001, 2001, p. 66), the confinement units

[...] are entities where minor offenders are confined all the time... it is defined by the fact it occupies a given physical space and has a specific team.

In the unit's premises services are provided such as integral health, formal education, art-education and professional training, in addition administrative and general services. Staff includes 300 employees consisting of professionals who is work as doctor, dentist, nurse, nurse technician, psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker, guidance counselor, teacher, instructor of professionalizing and artistic workshops, measurement educator, counselor, asset security guard, administrative team, and cleaning, maintenance and food teams.

During the research, the unit served 68 adolescents, aged 14 through 19 years old, with prevalence of teenagers between 15 and 17 years old, which agrees with studies that highlight a greater incidence of offences in this age range (CRUZ NETO; MOREIRA; SUCENA, 2001; PADOVANI, 2006; VALLE, 2003; VOLPI, 2001, 2002). The offences committed were stealing, breaking into property, theft, drug dealing, armed robbery, and murder.

The work of SESC professionals is guided by the Pedagogy of Presence (COSTA,

1997), whose approach is closely followed by professionals who work in the unit. In such perspective, presence is understood as essential in social re-education. Each professional should be, before anything, an educator regardless of his/her position, being present in the life of the one being educated, being close to his/her everyday life, in search for an affective bond and mutual trust. The principles that guide the organization of the adolescents' daily life refer to a transdisciplinary team work, associating theory to the daily practice. Thus, the major goals are social life and conviviality (COSTA, 2006a; VOLPI, 2002).

The school occupies one of the unit's buildings, consisting of teachers, guidance counselor, principal and librarian. Students are registered in different grades of the high-school system, but the unit does not provide all the subjects that should be taught in junior through senior grades. To fill this gap in curriculum, either a partnership is attempted with external schools or adolescents are sent to those schools, so that they can sit for the exams conducted by the Permanent Committees of Evaluation (CPA). It is important to stress that the school worked in a non-regulated way but, in 2009, it was regularized and began to be ruled by the Department of Education.

In 2002, studies indicated that 51% of adolescents deprived of freedom, in Brazil were out of school at the time they had been arrested and 6% were illiterate; the gap between age and grade reached 89.6% inmates, since most of them were 16 to 18 years old and had not finished secondary schooling (ASSIS, CONSTANTINO, 2005).

Our data regarding the current reality of SESC shows that 49% of adolescents under social/educative measure are registered in primary school and 42% in secondary school. Considering the average age of adolescents, which is 17 years old, we see that this data reaffirm the age/grade gap, since in accordance with the parameters established by the Ministry of Education (MEC), these youths should be

taking the last grades of high-school, which is the case for only 9% of this population.

Method

Participants in the research were the Social/Educative Measure Educators (SEME) who work at SESC: four female professionals and five male professionals aged 27 through 50 years old, who majored in different disciplines (law, pedagogy, management, plastic arts, philosophy, geography and sociology). The length of professional experience as measure educator, at the time, ranged from one year and three months to four years.

The educators perform recreational/pedagogical activities, focusing on rules of conviviality, citizenship, autonomy, otherness, and empathy and they work on themes such as the environment, violence, sexuality, etc. The choice for these professionals is justified because they act more systematically and closely with the adolescents, which suggests a better condition to assess the school performance in the life of the youths.

The function of these professionals is to work with

[...] adolescents on the issues of rights and duties, identity, self-esteem, life project, limits, solidarity, democracy, workability, respect, citizenship, the new world of labor and many other functions. (COSTA, 2006a, p. 56)

Data collection utilized a semi-structured interview whose script consisted of questions about personal and professional information, such as age, sex, academic background and length of work; and questions about the phenomenon being studied: perception of the school's specificities within the confinement, the school role in preventing recidivism, possibilities and limits of the school work and the causes of recidivism.

The interviews were conducted individually, at the person's workplace, after

participants had signed the informed and free consent form. In the average, interviews lasted 90 minutes.

For data analysis, we utilized the model of the Collective Subject Discourse (CSD), which assumes that the individual expresses in his/her speech the collective group which he/she is a part of. This model is understood as follows:

The thinking of a collectivity about a given subject may be seen as a set of discourses... or social representations existing in society and in culture about that subject, out of which, according to social science, the individuals utilize to communicate, interact, think (LEFÈVRE; LEFÈVRE, 2005, p. 16)

In CSD, one attempts to reconstruct, by means of fragments of individual discourses, syntheses that express a given way of thinking or the representation of a phenomenon (LEFÈVRE, 2005).

Results and discussion

Based on collected data, five major themes were raised, which convey specifications that we have called sub-themes: 1) differences and similarities between the institution's school and the other schools in the public education system, related to: a) the school's functioning, b) the students, c) the teacher, d) the specificities resulting from taking part in a social/educative measure of confinement; 2) the school role in the social/educative measure; 3) the school actions to prevent recidivism; 4) recommendations of preventative actions for recidivism in the development of Social/Educative Measures (EM) in relation to: a) the school, b) the ex-inmate, and c) other levels of the institution; and 5) causes of recidivism by nature: a) socioeconomic, b) family, c) individual, and d) institutional (associated with the application of SEM).

School against school

When requested to speak about where the specific school stands in regard to the other schools in the public education system, participants made comparisons that lead to both differences and similarities, as one can see in the frames related to discourses 1 through 4, but emphasis was stronger on differences.

A highlighted difference is the contents of disciplines, which has lesser importance in the unit's school, as the greatest goal is placed on moral education. Differences related to the characteristics of students and teachers are also part of the discourse of educators. For these professionals, specificities are marked with safety, required for a good progress of the activities in a confinement unit, with a highlight to the number of staff and the way of speaking to the adolescents. The speech regarding the similarities targets the teacher motivation as well as teaching and physical aspects of the school.

According to some authors (COSTA, 1997, VOLPI, 2002), the educational design of confinement units must be intended for full citizenship, with programs aimed at serving adolescents with certain specificities, and its pedagogical contents must have elements compliant with article 6 of CAE:

[...] the social ends it is aimed at, the requirements of common good, the individual and collective rights and duties and the peculiar condition of being a child or an adolescent as a developing person. (BRAZIL, 2000)

For Costa (2006a), education of social/educative nature get youths ready for social conviviality, in attempt of avoiding not recidivism in the practice of offences and assurance that fundamental rights will be met as well the safety of other citizens.

Chart 1 - Discourse 1

Major theme	Collective Subject Discourse
Specificities of school as it is part of SECM	A normal school is worried with contents as they need to report to the Education Department. In our school, contents are not so important, although they are passed on coherently, the relevance falls on moral education. In our school, subjects dealt with in the classroom are transmitted to students in partial or superficial manner and deficient in some subjects, due to limitations, and they do not favor external events. The difference for me is in the amount of adolescents which is lesser, and in flow of people (teachers and students). The internal school has bars and students undergo a search going in and out and there are many men capable of keeping order and refraining the conflicts. The way of speaking has to be carefully considered so our words will not be misunderstood, especially because out there one must be careful when verbalizing orders and rules to adolescents.

Source: Research data.

Oliveira (2003) argues that one cannot call it a pedagogical project if classes are imposed, in which the educator is only the depositary of contents to be conveyed to the student and whose activities do not agree with the student's living situation. In addition, one cannot call it a pedagogical project if safety is prioritized to the detriment of educative actions, when reading is forbidden in the lodging and access to learning materials is prevented.

Considering the discourse of professional who work in this field, a specific pedagogy is required to deal with these adolescents, a different method to serve this public, as well as another way of treating them. However, according to Costa (2006a, p. 46), this attitude, which makes the education with these institutions different, is a way

[...] entirely distorted and inconsequent of tackling the situation, as it often is based on the assumption that it is coherent and necessary to treat the poor in a poor

manner... Everything that is good to work with adolescents is good to work with young offenders, because every educative action must be taken as a bet on the other person.

An attitude that seems to us to counterbalance that proposed by Costa (2006a) and by the educators we have interviewed was formulated as follows: if the school, at some point, was excluding in the life of these adolescents, either because their reality was not understood or because the school did not fit such reality, during the length of a social/educative measure,

[...] the schools that serve young offenders have to be special, not that they should an extra stigma, but to consider all peculiarities imposed to those who have to undergo the system. (PEMSEIS, 2002, p. 43)

Chart 2- Discourse 2

Major theme	CSD
Differences related to students	In the world out there, boys go to school because they feel they need to do so and their parents take them to school and lead them; here, they attend school as a result of measure that must be complied with, it is an obligation. In our school, adolescents are more anxious, unsettled because they are deprived of freedom and most of them has no bond with the school. It is different from the other schools in what concerns exclusively the public served, as only confined students who committed legal offences may attend it, here everyone is an offender.

Source: Research data.

In most studies (ASSIS, CONSTANTINO, 2005; PADOVANI, 2006; TEJADAS, 2005; VALLE, 2003; VOLPI, 2001, 2002) concerning adolescent offenders, it is noted that they show no interest for the school, which is caused by school that tends to generalize and take them as homogenous individuals, with no attention to the differences; students facing difficulties drop out, creating a continuous circle of exclusion.

Chart 3- Discourse 3

Major theme	CSD
Differences related to the teachers	Teachers are more tolerant and understanding and those who accept to work in this school do so because they believe adolescents can overcome their situation.

Source: Research data.

Some authors (ASSIS, CONSTANTINO, 2005; CELLA, CAMARGO, 2009) say that the lack of interest by educators about students and their specificities, such as learning difficulties and the student's context of life, as one of the causes of students getting apart from school. It is noted that the teacher's action regarding to adolescent offender's vulnerability is seen as something important for the work conducted in this type of institution. According to Saraiva (2006), like the parents, the teacher is an important figure in the child's education, not only as the one who transmits knowledge, but mainly as an active person.

A good way for a school that really intends to serve not only young offenders but, above all, all children and adolescents, is presented by Oliveira (2003, p. 92), when he stresses the respect for students as

[...] culture makers and assuming the basis of the pedagogical action the student's cultural world; conquering the autonomy of each individual as a horizon in the pedagogical process and the political nature of education, attempting ... to overcome all forms of oppression.

Although differences were more frequent and stressed out, some similarities were pointed out between CASA and the regular schools.

Chart 4- Discourse 4

Major theme	CSD
Similarities between schools	Similarities are visible in the teachers' wish to see the students' achievements, beyond the right to schooling, to culture and leisure. I see no difference, the classroom is the same, the audiovisual benefits, the teachers, the students, including the uniform. As well as the program contents, the methods, the assessment, the grades are no different from the other existing schools.

Source: research data.

The stronger perception of similarities reinforces the disquiet of some researchers and professionals in the area that going to a school within a confinement unit is worrying. The major concerns are: teaching quality, the methods utilized, unprepared teachers in the units, youths in special situations, and also the lack of encouragement in relation to the school so that students have a hard time trying to cope with their limited cognitive, emotional, and living skills (ASSIS; CONSTANTINO, 2005).

School as part of the social/educative measure

Discourse 5, as follows, shows that participants consider school something necessary and essential so that one can build a future away from an offending life.

Chart 5- Discourse 5

Major theme	CSD
Importance and role of school	School is extremely important and necessary, as it play a fundamental role in performing the social/educative measure, it is the center thereof, since the S/E measure is associated with schooling, because without it the student's life would stagnate while the S/E measure is in force. It is essential for the future of the adolescent who wants to abandon his/her crime career, as it is a possible way of social ascension and also a healthy occupation. It is important so that adolescents will leave with some education for their life project, as without one they may get back to their previous offending life.

Source: Research data.

The greatest challenge faced by the confinement units, according to Gonzalez (2006), is to look for a way of contributing to change the youths' situation of vulnerability, by using pedagogical activities that allow them to experience the processes of not only learning but of socialization as well, so that these adolescents perceive such socialization as a tool to transform their reality. For the author, the main aspect of the social/educative is the

[...] construction of an education that tackles in the everyday life the individual and collective development, as a whole, in the processes of socialization and education of the adolescents... based on the integration of the affective, intellectual and collective aspects. (GONZALEZ, 2006, p. 44)

For Costa and Assis (2006), the activities, either of educational, of leisure or of professional nature, must enable the construction of the self, representing a new experience in the life of those adolescents. Accordingly, we may say that school has, at least potentially, the capacity of contributing to construct and reconstruct the individual, especially in a situation where the opportunities for development are limited.

Social/educative measure educators, as presented in discourse 6, do not perceive systematized actions aimed at preventing recidivism, so this remains in the hands of occasional actions conducted by the teachers, especially by means of the dialogue in the classroom, as we will see below.

huge evidence of the system's inefficiency, as the fate of youths when they leave the institution is a proof of.

In the opinion of Alves et al. (2007, p. 214), what professionals working in these units do is built "on the daily work and on the permanence on the workplace, deprived of any critical analysis". However, the authors point out the importance of implementing activities to promote professional training, as well as "promoting citizenship and setting life projects are possibilities so that adolescents will take less excluding trajectories" (ALVES et al., 2007, p. 214).

For Alves et al. (2007), Cella and Camargo (2009), Saraiva (2006), these possibilities include the school and the teacher's actions in the classroom as an effective practice in the school's everyday routine that may create a bond the student's everyday life, by having dialogues about the school, family relations, social and community situations and other contents aimed at social education.

If the actions implemented within these institutions are intended for social reintegration, by means of schooling, qualification for the labor market, thinking over actions and consequences, with the purpose of avowing recidivism of offences, such actions should reflect this goal.

At this time, in-depth reflection about social reintegration is necessary, as most of these young people have never been socially integrated, so it is urgent to rethink such actions, not only in the context of the confinement institutions but also society itself that receives them and forbids the access to such practices. What we have realized in the discourse of educators and what literature has shown us is a total absence of systematized actions that tackle the objectives of social education due to the lack of planning, resulting in isolated actions without a plan integrating the activities proposed (CAMPOS; FRANCISCHINI, 2005).

Chart 6- Discourse 6

Major theme	CSD
Actions to prevent recidivism	I do not see systematized actions, I never saw the school taking actions to prevent recidivism. But every time a teacher in the classroom touches in topics such as behavior and gives students an example, such example is always to reinforce the idea that they should not commit arbitrary attitudes. Through dialogue, even if isolated with some students, teachers talk about this issue. The teaching-learning process is an action, likewise the celebration events for special dates in which certain aspects of citizenship are dealt with, in addition to the trans-disciplinary nature and involvement with reality of the adolescent's everyday life.

Source: Research data.

According to Rocha (2010, p. 208),

the absence of effective educational actions in the social/educative centers results in a

The evidence that an educative project is possible is in the words of GONZALEZ (2006, p. 45), who says:

The bonds built on the speech, the dialogue, the practice of listening to and observing the world around and the individual, the affection and respect, are the most significant fact in the educational practice.

Therefore, one educates by means of participation, and through the dialogue with students, teachers attempt to inspire these young men with words and thoughts about their involvement and (dis)continuity of offences.

Preventing recidivism: actions and changes recommended by the S/E measure educators

In the answers about the actions and changes aimed at preventing recidivism, S/E measure educators refer in their speech to actions that might be performed at school, as linking formal schooling to professional training, including new citizenship contents,

forming values and critical awareness. Other actions related to S/E measures are also mentioned such as networking and the making of public policies.

Interaction with organizations external to the unit leads to the importance of making room so that the adolescent builds a bond with society, reducing isolation and distance towards his/her life outside CASE, since a confinement institution, “the more it becomes a closed system, cutting off the communication with other spheres of society... the more it tends to become inhuman and totalitarian” (OLIVEIRA, 2003, p. 89).

In the social/educative environment, participation of the community is of the essence, considering the institutional incompleteness. Thus, schools operating in this context

[...] may cooperate by developing actions of greater involvement with health, culture, citizenship, facing with seriousness the problem of cultural diversity and social vulnerability of the individuals it serves. (ROCHA, 2010, p. 209).

Chart 7- Discourse 7

Major theme		CSD
Actions recom-mended to develop S/E measures	In relation to school	School should have a stronger articulation of systematic actions with a interdisciplinary proposal, linked to other internal sectors. It has to be more than a school, it has to be attractive, with more classes, extra-class tours (museums, theater etc.). Contents should join entertainment, games, turning it into a different school that is more attractive, dynamic and pleasant, where the student has access to other types of knowledge. In addition to working on moral values and citizenship, it should provide guidance about the life project, for the future, linked to the work that is performed by the educators, dealing with issues such as family planning, drugs, violence, racial, sexual and religious intolerance. There should be a committed faculty, concerned with the way adolescents are treated. Education should also be aimed at immediate professional training, working on aptitudes, with vocational tests, providing reintegration especially in the work field, offering options of businesses that they might do for themselves, encouraging entrepreneurship.
	In relation to ex-inmate	An adolescent needs follow-up, not only the adolescent but the whole family, provide students and their family members with good conditions of life, mainly in relation to accessing the labor market. Public action must be done through a network of governmental and non-governmental institutions, with the purpose of fostering public policies.
	In relation to other spheres within the institution	Ongoing capacity-building and training within the social/educative process for teachers and other collaborators.

Source: Research data.

Projects intended to serve adolescent offenders go wrong when they do not include the involvement of families and the community, as they are ruled by

[...] a fractioned vision. The concern with the adolescent's thinking is present, but there are no projects to prepare the family and community to receive this adolescent back home. (CELLA; CAMARGO, 2009, p. 292)

Ongoing training of professionals, so that they better serve the social/educative system by means of tangible institutional conditions through courses and updates, is fundamental in order to promote more effective actions within the confinement units. ALVES et al. (2007, p. 211) understand that

[...] changing such situation requires, among other things, the commitment of public policy makers, the guarantee of immediate investment in the training of professionals who work within the social/educative context providing them with not only a startup training but with ongoing education.

Also one must consider the entire staff participates, achieving a unique language that may promote in a more significant way the psychological and social development of such youths, beyond the current moment.

Causes of recidivism

The educators' discourse on the causes of recidivism leads to issues that are of social, family, and individual nature and that are basically related to the social/educative system itself, which is not effective in the follow-up of the adolescent ex-inmate, as show the discourses 08 through 11, presented as follows.

Chart 8- Discourse 8

Major theme	CSD
Socioeconomic	The social crisis, with social inequality and injustices, social blemishes. As well as the great appeal of the media towards consumerism, linked to discredit of people, in addition to scarce offer of jobs, makes adolescents go back to criminal life. They limit the development of a life project and push them towards their old track.

Source: Research data.

The participants' speech finds echo in the literature. Assis and Constantino (2005, p. 82), for example, say that the Brazilian economic and social reality, marked with inequality,

[...] makes it difficult for millions of adolescents to achieve full growth and development and they will find themselves confined to expropriated communities... severe restrictions in their access t goods and services... lack of quality in their schooling... and violence in all spheres of conviviality.

In the same direction, other authors consider that the socioeconomic context and the social interactions taking place within it configure a cultural, social and economic reality that permeates the life of these young people. It is within such reality that adolescents have to improve their skills for interaction, self-perception and perception of the others. By experimenting freedom of choice, they become vulnerable to the hazards such liberty entails, especially if they develop among material, affective and educational poverty, where civil rights are not respected (RANÑA, 2005; TROMBETA, GUZZO, 2002; SANTOS, 2000). Another set of causal factors identified by participants refers to the families of ex-inmates.

Chart 9- Discourse 9

Major theme	CSD
Family members	Scarce family support, unstructured families.

Source: Research data.

The family is identified by several studies as an element of risk to youths, due to their inadequate living conditions, to parents who are out of work, to the absence of authority, among other factors, and a central part is assigned to the family in the participation of youths in offences, as well as in recidivism and offending continuity (MELO et al., 2007; SILVA, ROSSETI-FERREIRA, 2002; TEJADAS, 2005). In addition to family relations, causes associated with personal conditions of an adolescent's life were also mentioned.

Chart 10- Discourse 10

Major theme	CSD
Personal conditions of life	The individual's vulnerability as well as his/her scarce schooling and the fact that he or she does not have a project for life, and that he or she turns back to the same community where they are at risk, make his/her life insecure, a moment of despair and the fear of recidivism.

Source: Research data.

According to Rocha (2010), most adolescents had already lost their link with school, making it

[...] necessary to build a pedagogical process (disciplines, themes, classes, activities), within or outside the social/educative units, which might get into the symbolic and conceptual system associated with the reality of these people. (ROCHA, 2010, p. 208-209)

These adolescents must

[...] comprehend the meaning found in problematizing situations and, especially, in their situation of offenders. The critical

appropriation of their trajectory, tuned with their aspirations and interests, enables a continuous process of negotiations and renegotiations. (ROCHA, 2010, p. 209)

Participants also pointed out causes related to the social/educative system itself, especially because there is scarce follow-up of ex-inmates, as well as the absence of public policies intended to serve this public.

Chart 11- Discourse 11

Major theme	CSD
Institutional, associated with the social/educative system	The ex-student does not count on a follow-up intended to improve his/her life and his/her family's, some financial support to the family, professional training that enables him/her to find a job, the search for another environment where he or she can live. The ex-inmate's role is deficient. There is a lack of effective public policies for adolescents after they served time of confinement through a social/educative measure, and there is no project prepared for them.

Source: Research data.

The adolescent offender is urged to build a project of life away from the offending path, however it is important that the government provides him/her some help, so that he or she can fully exercise his/her citizenship (OLIVEIRA, 2003). Such exercise involves professional training, schooling, finding a regular job, access to health services, not only for young ex-inmate leaving the system but for the whole family as they will be, from now on, the ones in charge of welcoming and taking care of the adolescent.

Closing comments

This study shows, in compliance with the collected data, that the school, within the sphere of social/educative measure of confinement, has been playing its role of providing knowledge and transmitting contents. However, the school has a scarce performance in preventing

recidivism, and in fact there are no systematic actions to achieve such goal.

Scattered actions conducted by teachers were identified, generally in the form of dialogues and counseling, making use of the closeness to adolescents as a result of the teacher/student relationship. It must be highlighted that the school is part of something bigger, which is the social/educative measure itself, whose ultimate objective is to avoid adolescent recidivism in new offences. But what we see is a school that contributes little to its major purpose: returning the adolescent to social conviviality.

In this context, school may become an opportunity of inclusion. It is important that its structure, actions and methods ensure a social education that strive to develop attitudes and skills, making adolescents ready to live and work together with other people, to become a real person and a future professional, so that they can be more proactive (COSTA, 2006b; VOLPI, 2002, 2006). According to Costa (2006b, p. 25), teaching should go further than transmitting knowledge, providing instead the youth with

[...] beliefs, values, attitudes and skills that enable him/her, in social conviviality, to evaluate situations and make, before them, decisions and taking attitudes based on human values.

Therefore, it is necessary to think about the precarious situation of the school within the social/educative systems, as it does not count on a political/pedagogical design that takes into consideration the specificities and the moment that the incarcerated youth is living. One cannot disregard the necessary interaction with the environment outside the institution, with a networking that may help these youths not only while incarcerated and under the custody of the state but especially when they leave the walls of the unit in search of making their projects of life come true.

Discontinuity in the involvement with offences takes place slowly, based on new

experiences and opportunities to explore new paths. Such discontinuity is related to a great number of situations resulting from the interaction of the youth with the environment around him or her. Thus, the school may perform effective actions. By deconstructing/constructing elements, it puts itself away from linearity and close to a trajectory that involves advancements and backlashes (SILVA, ROSSETI-FERREIRA, 2002).

The research also showed that little schooling has been pointed as a risky factor which makes a whole amount of youths vulnerable as they see the school routine as something away from their daily reality. In the case of offending adolescents, in which the offence has already become tangible, the institution has to welcome him/her and go beyond the academic achievement, since

[...] the great hindrances to a true transformation are to be found in his/her lived world, the one that awaits them after the social/educational measure is completed. If we wish to promote significant changes that imply less violence and more solidarity, a new structure of society will be necessary. (LENA, OLIVEIRA, 2007, p. 2)

Challenges, therefore, surpass the work of teachers and even the school, but they need

[...] to be accepted by society at large, otherwise we will still be writing the history of failure in the care of our generations under formation (ALVES et al., 2007, p. 214).

The state together with civil society are responsible for devising public policies and must ensure the rights as well as the effectiveness of actions that acknowledge the humanity of everyone, through programs based on reducing inequality, on work, on the police, on justice, on health and on the media (ASSIS, CONSTANTINO, 2005; TEJADAS, 2005).

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