

# Training for teachers working in places of deprivation of liberty\*<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The training of teachers working in prison schools needs to consider the specificities of people deprived of liberty that go beyond the program content established by curriculum guidelines, and is a way to assist them in the process of resocialization. The objective of this study was to map scientific evidence on the content covered in the training process for teachers working in prison schools. The research was conducted through a Scope Review anchored in the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) framework, based on the guiding question: “How is the content covered in the training process for teachers working in prison units characterized?” There was no specific time frame, and the search was conducted in selected databases, as well as through a Google Scholar search, during June

\* English version by Amália Cury. The authors take full responsibility for the translation of the text, including titles of books/articles and the quotations originally published in Portuguese.

**1-** Data availability: The entire dataset supporting the results of this study was made available on Dataverse of the *Educação e Pesquisa* (Education and Research) and can be accessed at: <https://data.scielo.org/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.48331/scielodata.UJOR8L>

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and August 2023. The studies were selected based on the titles, abstracts, and full texts by two independent reviewers. The final sample consisted of twelve studies published between 1921 and 2022, of which eleven were published in English and only one in Portuguese. The content covered in the training process was categorized into three empirical cores: Safety Techniques, Pedagogical Processes, and Behavior Management. In this sense, it is concluded that the content is insufficient to support teachers in dealing with the nuances and complexity of the prison context, which requires the adoption of strategies focused on the continuous development of comprehensive and context-specific training curricula.

## Keywords

Teacher training – School teachers – Curriculum – Correctional facilities – Prisons.

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## Introduction

Brazil leads the *ranking of* Latin American countries with the largest prison population, and the increase in the number of people deprived of their liberty is not matched by the number of places created in the prison system (Jung; Rudnicki, 2022). As such, areas of deprivation of freedom are characterized by overcrowding and non-compliance with national and international legislation guaranteeing rights. They are places where crime and corruption among inmates and public officials prevail, and where education for prisoners is unsatisfactory and of poor quality (Duarte; Pereira, 2017).

Education in the prison system is essential for promoting and acquiring new knowledge that can aid in the conscious resocialization process of individuals seeking to become free and, above all, morally responsible (José; Torres, 2019). However, qualified teachers are needed, as the teaching-learning process in this setting should serve as a means for (re)cognition, (re)signification of the individual, and (re)learning (Borges; Santos, 2022).

A major challenge for education in prison schools is reconciling teacher training and the specific curriculum with the needs of educating, resocializing, and punishing (Duarte; Pereira, 2017). It is necessary to develop a training process that prepares teachers to act in an interdisciplinary, mediating, and collective manner in this scenario, requiring continuing education that is different from that offered to teachers in regular basic education, considering the curriculum of Youth and Adult Education (EJA) in prisons and the specificities of the school, the students, and the teaching resources that may be used (José; Torres, 2019).

The education system in prisons is different from that found in regular schools. Pedagogical and didactic assistance to teachers in prison schools is minimal, almost nonexistent, especially from those assigned to manage, coordinate, and supervise teaching activities in this setting (Pereira; Melo; Medina, 2020). Compliance with the curriculum in prison schools involves factors that go beyond the applicability of content. It is a curriculum that is far removed from that contained in teachers' manuals, which should be

developed in the context of everyday educational activities and often does not meet the needs of incarcerated students (Voigt; Xavier, 2021).

As for teacher training, undergraduate courses do not provide specific training for education in prisons, nor are courses offered to acquire the skills and develop the abilities necessary to teach in a prison school (Borges; Santos, 2022).

To work in this environment, teachers need to feel confident in their skills and abilities so they can do their jobs in a unique setting. The training process for teachers working in prisons requires specialized training to address issues that extend beyond the program content outlined in the curriculum guidelines. Given the above, this study is justified by the need to map, through scientific evidence, the training process for these teachers.

The scientific evidence identified in this study may assist teachers, school principals, coordinators, and other professionals working in penal institutions in providing continuing education on cross-cutting themes to strengthen the teaching-learning process. Given the above, this study aims to map the scientific evidence on the content covered in the training process of teachers working in prison schools.

## Method

This is a literature review of the scope review or “mapping review” type, based on the theoretical framework proposed and developed by the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) (Tricco *et al.*, 2018).

To describe the procedure for identifying and mapping the evidence, we used the PRISMA recommendation (Key Elements for Reporting Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses with Extension for Scope Reviews) under the protocol of the JBI Evidence Synthesis Manual (Peters *et al.*, 2020; Tricco *et al.*, 2018) and registered with the *Open Science Framework* (OSF) (Rodrigues; Linhares; Dantas, 2023). In defining the guiding question, the PCC strategy (population (P), concept (C), context (C)) was used, where (P) is represented by the population of teachers working in prison schools, (C) for the concept of content covered in the teacher training process, and (C) for the context of prison units. So, the answer was, how is the content covered in the training process for teachers working in prison units characterized?

The search strategy was developed based on research questions to relate the theme of the content addressed in teacher training to the context of schools in prison units. For the content discussed in teacher training, the descriptors used were teacher education, school teachers, curriculum, and faculty. In the context of prison units, the terms correctional facilities, prisons, jails, resocialization, and reintegration were considered. The descriptors were consulted in the Health Sciences Descriptors (DeCS) and Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). For possible synonyms or alternative terms, the controlled vocabulary ERIC *Thesaurus* (<https://eric.ed.gov/?ti=all>) was consulted. In combining the terms, Boolean operators AND and OR were used, and the strategy was adapted according to the particularities of each database searched, as shown in Chart 1.

The inclusion criteria were studies that met the objective proposed by this research, considering qualitative and quantitative approaches, without time or population



restrictions, published in journals, including preprint repositories, primary and secondary studies of the integrative review, scope review, and systematic review types, dissertations and theses, books, and guidelines published in indexed sources or the gray literature. The exclusion criteria were letters and incomplete articles.

The searches were conducted from June to August 2023 by two independent researchers working independently in all the included databases, with cases of disagreement mediated by a third, more experienced researcher. The following databases were utilized: Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, CAPES acronym in Portuguese for Thesis and Dissertations Catalog, Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD, acronym in Portuguese), and ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global, as well as a Google Scholar search.

**Chart 1** - Search strategy for document retrieval. Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil, 2023

| Database  | Search Strategy*  |
|---|---|
| Scopus  | ("teacher education" OR "teacher preparation" OR "teacher training" OR "teacher education curriculum" OR curriculum OR "school teacher" OR "high school teachers" OR "high school teacher" OR "middle school teachers" OR "middle school teacher" OR teachers OR teacher OR faculty) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY(("correctional facilities" OR "correctional facility" OR "penal institutions" OR "penal institution" OR "correctional institutions" OR "correctional institution" OR "corrective institutions" OR "correctional" OR prisons OR prison OR penitentiaries OR penitentiary OR jails OR jail OR "detention centers" OR "detention center" OR gaols OR gaol OR re-socialization OR reintegration) |
| Web of Science                                    | ("teacher education" OR "teacher preparation" OR "teacher training" OR "teacher education curriculum" OR curriculum OR "school teacher" OR "high school teachers" OR "high school teacher" OR "middle school teachers" OR "middle school teacher" OR teachers OR teacher OR faculty) AND TS=("correctional facilities" OR "correctional facility" OR "penal institutions" OR "penal institution" OR "correctional institutions" OR "correctional institution" OR "corrective institutions" OR "correctional" OR prisons OR prison OR penitentiaries OR penitentiary OR jails OR jail OR "detention centers" OR "detention center" OR gaols OR gaol OR re-socialization OR reintegration)            |
| ERIC  | ("teacher education" OR "teacher preparation" OR "teacher training" OR "teacher education curriculum" OR curriculum OR "school teacher" OR "high school teachers" OR "high school teacher" OR "middle school teachers" OR "middle school teacher" OR teachers OR teacher OR faculty) AND ("correctional facilities" OR "correctional facility" OR "penal institutions" OR "penal institution" OR "correctional institutions" OR "correctional institution" OR "corrective institutions" OR "correctional" OR prisons OR prison OR penitentiaries OR penitentiary OR jails OR jail OR "detention centers" OR "detention center" OR gaols OR gaol OR re-socialization OR reintegration)               |
| CAPES Thesis and Dissertations catalog            | Teachers AND "Prison Education"   |
| Biblioteca Digital de Teses e Dissertações (BDTD) | Teachers AND "Prison Education"   |
| ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global             | ("teacher education" OR "teacher preparation" OR "teacher training" OR "teacher education curriculum" OR curriculum OR "school teacher" OR "high school teachers" OR "high school teacher" OR "middle school teachers" OR "middle school teacher" OR teachers OR teacher OR faculty) AND NOT(("correctional facilities" OR "correctional facility" OR "penal institutions" OR "penal institution" OR "correctional institutions" OR "correctional institution" OR "corrective institutions" OR "correctional" OR prisons OR prison OR penitentiaries OR penitentiary OR jails OR jail OR "detention centers" OR "detention center" OR gaols OR gaol OR re-socialization OR reintegration)           |
| Google Scholar                                    | ("teacher education" OR "teacher training" OR curriculum OR teachers OR teacher OR faculty) AND ("correctional facilities" OR "correctional institutions" OR prisons OR prison OR penitentiaries OR penitentiary OR "detention center")   |

Source: Own elaboration (2023).

\*The search strategies were carried out for each database using specific word combinations and truncations with the support of a librarian.



After applying the eligibility criteria, duplicate studies were removed using the EndNote® reference manager and counted only once. They were then exported to the Rayyan® reference manager to read the titles and abstracts, and subsequently, according to eligibility criteria, studies were selected for full-text reading. Some references were analyzed to identify additional studies.

The sample of studies was tabulated, and the studies were grouped in a table and identified by database, authors, title, research design, country, language, type of publication, objective, and main results. They were then tabulated by empirical categories that emerged from the studies, using the qualitative analysis technique proposed by Minayo (2001). The main content addressed in the training process for teachers working in prison units was identified, considering the pedagogical model used and the workload (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2025).

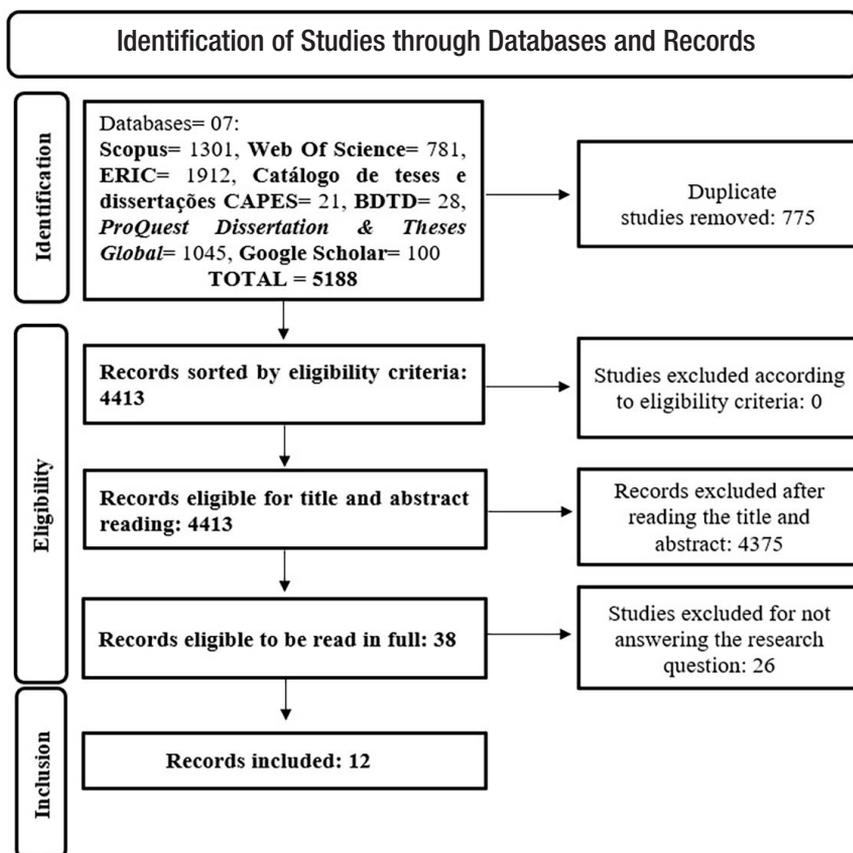
To enrich and strengthen the analysis of the included studies, we chose to evaluate the level of evidence according to the proposal by Melnyk and Fineout-Overholt (2011), which classifies them according to a hierarchical system of seven levels: I- Systematic review or meta-analysis; II- Randomized controlled trial; III- Controlled study without randomization; IV- Case-control or cohort study; V- Systematic review of descriptive and qualitative studies; VI- Qualitative or descriptive study; and VII- Opinion or consensus of authorities or report of expert committees. In addition to the classification of the level of evidence, 11 studies were assessed for methodological rigor based on the criteria established in the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) instruments (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme, 2023).

## Results

The initial search identified 5,188 records, of which 1,301 were retrieved from Scopus, 781 from Web of Science, 1,912 from ÉRIC, 21 from the CAPES thesis and dissertation catalog, 28 from the Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD), 1,045 from *ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global*, and 100 from *Google Scholar*. With the support of EndNote® and Rayyan® reference management software, 775 duplicates were removed, resulting in 4,413 results to be screened. After applying the inclusion criteria, 4,413 remained for title and abstract screening. A total of 4,375 were excluded, resulting in 38 studies for full-text review. At this stage, 26 studies were excluded. The final sample consisted of 12 studies (Figure 1).



**Figure 1** - Flow diagram of the process of selecting studies for the scoping review based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil, 2023



Source: Research data (2023).

The time frame of the studies included in the final sample ranged from 1921 to 2022. Among them, one was published in 1921 (The Prison, 1921), another in 1969 (United States, 1969), two were published in the 1980s (Leone, 1986; Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986), four were published in the 1990s (Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998; Brooks; White, 1999; Bullock; McArthur, 1994; Hodges; Giuliani; Ii, 1994) and four in 2011 (United States, 2011), 2016 (Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016), 2021 (Gearhart, 2021) and 2022 (Clark, 2022).

As for the type of study, ten did not have their design explained (Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998; Brooks; White, 1999; Bullock; McArthur, 1994; Hodges; Giuliani; Ii, 1994; Leone, 1986; Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016; Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986; The Prison, 1921; United States, 1969; United States, 2011), however, one case study (Clark, 2022) and one narrative research study (Gearhart, 2021) were identified. Regarding the language in which they were published, eleven (Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998; Brooks; White, 1999; Bullock; McArthur, 1994; Clark, 2022; Gearhart, 2021; Hodges; Giuliani; Ii, 1994; Leone, 1986; Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986; The Prison, 1921; United States, 1969; United States, 2011) were in English and only one in Portuguese



(Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016). Regarding the type of publication, five are articles (Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998; Bullock; McArthur, 1994; Leone, 1986; Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016; The Prison, 1921), two are reports (Hodges; Giuliotti; li, 1994; United States, 2011), two are guides (Brooks; White, 1999; Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986), one is a manual (United States, 1969), and two are dissertations (Clark, 2022; Gearhart, 2021) (Chart 2).

**Chart 2** - Characterization of the publications retrieved in the search of electronic databases and the search for references. Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil, 2023 (n = 12)

| Database/ Authors/Year   | Title/Research design  | Country/ Language                 | Type of publication            | Objective  |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Scopus/Anon/1921 (The Prison, 1921)  | The Prison Teacher/Not identified  | United States of America/ English | Article published in a journal | Not identified   |
| ERIC/Center for the Study of Crime, Delinquency and Corrections/1969 (United States, 1969) | Training for Corrections: Rationale and Techniques/ Not identified   | United States of America/ English | Manual                         | To suggest principles pertinent to the development of a curriculum likely to be effective in achieving the training selected by the agency.  |
| Scopus/Leone/1986 (Leone, 1986)  | Teacher Training in Corrections and Special Education/ Not identified  | United States of America/ English | Article published in a journal | Examining teacher training from different perspectives.  |
| ERIC/Posluszny; Ralston/1986 (Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986)                                    | Vocational Special Education. Teacher Training Module #8. Correctional/Special Education Training Project/ Not identified                                    | United States of America/ English | Guide                          | Presenting a module of the special vocational education program for incarcerated individuals.  |
| ERIC/Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney/1998 (Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998)                        | Special Training for Teachers in Alternative and Correctional Education/ Not identified  | United States of America/ English | Article published in a journal | Analyze the training of personnel to educate young people at risk and in alternative/ institutional settings.  |
| ERIC/Brooks; White/1999 (Brooks; White, 1999)  | National Training Curriculum for Educators of Youth in Confinement/ Not identified   | United States of America/ English | Guide                          | Training Youth Educators in Confinement Facilities based on a National Training Curriculum.  |
| ERIC/Bullock; McArthur/1994 (Bullock; McArthur, 1994)                                      | Correctional Special Education: Disability Prevalence Estimates and Teacher Preparation Programs/ Not identified   | United States of America/ English | Article published in a journal | Report data on state facilities for juveniles and report on preparation programs for teachers working in juvenile correctional institutions.   |
| ERIC/Hodges; Giuliotti; Porpottage II/ 1994 (Hodges; Giuliotti; li, 1994)                  | Improving Literacy Skills of Juvenile Detainees/ Not identified  | United States of America/ English | Report                         | Describe programs designed to teach illiterate young people to read and write, using a non-traditional motivational approach.  |
| ERIC/U.S. Department of Education/2011 (United States, 2011)                               | Community-Based Correctional Education/ Not identified   | United States of America/ English | Report                         | Describe the characteristics of correctional education programs.   |
| Scopus/Penna; Carvalho; Novaes/ 2016 (Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016)                       | A formação do pedagogo e a educação nas prisões: reflexões acerca de uma experiência/ Not identified   | Brazil/ Portuguese                | Article published in a journal | To problematize the training of educators to work in the new context of the National Curriculum Guidelines, concerning the guidelines that guide and organize the Pedagogy course and the provision of youth and adult education (EJA, acronym in Portuguese) in regular schools and penal establishments. |
| ProQuest/Gearhart/ 2021 (Gearhart, 2021)   | Learning to be Correctional Educators: A Narrative Inquiry/ Narrative research study.  | United States of America/ English | Dissertation                   | Reporting on experiences of being prison educators based on a narrative investigation.   |
| ProQuest/Clark/ 2022 (Clark, 2022)   | Exploring the Dialogues of Three Novice Correctional Educational Teachers and Their Experienced Coaches in a Juvenile Corrections Coaching Model/Study Case. | United States of America/ English | Dissertation                   | An experience report on the participation of teachers from prison schools.   |

Source: Research data (2023).



Regarding the level of evidence, most studies were classified at the lowest levels, specifically level VI, which covers proof from a single qualitative analysis, and level VII, which includes evidence from expert opinion, reports, and narrative reviews. Regarding methodological rigor, most studies had flaws in some areas, offering a reasonable level of evidence.

As a result of mapping the content covered in the training process for teachers working in prison schools, three empirical clusters emerged: content on security techniques, content on pedagogical methods, and content on behavior management (Chart 3).

**Chart 3 - Empirical categories on the training process of teachers working in prison schools that emerged from the studies included in the scoping review. Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil, 2023**

| Empirical category    | Content covered in the process of training teachers to work in places of deprivation of liberty   | Format/Hours   |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Security techniques   | In-service security or custody awareness orientation, policy, security and self-defense training (United States, 2011)  | In person/40 hours   |
|                       | Prison security (Gearhart, 2021)  | In person/two to three weeks   |
|                       | Fire safety, key control, tool control, security threat groups, inmate handling (Gearhart, 2021)  | Online/Annual  |
| Pedagogical processes | Student evaluation; Curriculum; Teaching and learning (Brooks; White, 1999)   | Hybrid/Not reported  |
|                       | Theoretical knowledge, evaluation process, instructional interventions, team skills, professional education (Bullock; McArthur, 1994)   | Not reported   |
|                       | Fundamentals and basic skills; maintaining student engagement, feedback and encouragement; creativity in lesson planning and flexibility in lesson presentation; juvenile correctional education and the beliefs about students' power to control their learning experiences (Clark, 2022). | Online, Online mentoring; In person (annual conference)/Not reported |
|                       | Direct instruction methods to rapidly improve students' comprehension, especially for those with reading difficulties (Hodges; Giuliotti; li, 1994)   | Not reported   |
|                       | Evaluation and identification courses, curriculum and instruction, special education (Leone, 1986)  | In person/18 credits   |
|                       | Programmed Pedagogical Practices" (PPP) on "education in places of deprivation of liberty" (Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016).   | In person/During the first 24 months of teacher training             |
|                       | Evaluation of Exceptional Individuals; Curriculum for Exceptional Individuals; Instructional Methods and Strategies; Vocational Special Education (Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986)  | Not reported   |
|                       | Rationale for Training; Conditions of the Learning Environment; Teaching Techniques; Training Tools; Evaluation (United States, 1969)   | Not reported   |
| Behavior Management   | Training in transition strategies; behavior management (Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998)   | Not reported   |
|                       | Behavior management; Social skills (Brooks; White, 1999)  | Available in a binder or on CD/ Not reported                         |
|                       | Behavior management (Bullock; McArthur, 1994)   | Not reported   |
|                       | Isolation and helplessness, technological restrictions, perception of students as human beings, emotional construction of students, and positive influence on students' mentality, working as a team (Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016)  | Online, Online mentoring; In person (annual conference)/Not reported |
|                       | Behavior management (Leone, 1986)   | Not reported   |

Source: Research data (2023).



## Discussion

In the category related to content on security techniques, it was pointed out that the content taught takes place in specific training sessions and is focused on safety on duty, guidelines on custody, self-defense, fire safety, key control, tool control, knowledge of security threat groups, and handling inmates (Gearhart, 2021; United States, 2011). In general, this content is part of the compulsory training offered to educators, along with other members of the correctional staff, such as prison guards (United States, 2011).

Regular refresher training on security techniques is considered valid, as teachers tend to disregard security concerns over time (United States, 2011). This is an example of a topic that, as provided for in the National Curriculum Guidelines for undergraduate courses in Education and the National Guidelines for the provision of education for young people and adults in situations of deprivation of liberty, needs to be consolidated in the exercise of the profession, based on an interdisciplinary approach (Brasil, 2006), with the participation of managers and technicians working in these areas, considering the specificities of criminal enforcement policy (Brasil, 2010).

The content of the security theme needs to be addressed because the profession of prison educator is seen as one of “treatment,” which implies that, in addition to providing security, educators must “treat” people deprived of their liberty, maintaining care, custody, and control. Prison educators are part of the prison staff responsible for maintaining the care, custody, and control of prisoners (Gearhart, 2021). In this context, it is worth noting that, in addition to providing knowledge, educators must be able to identify sociocultural and educational problems to contribute to overcoming the various types of exclusion present in society (Brasil, 2006).

Educators’ knowledge of safety maintenance is necessary to ensure that no objects, such as scissors and glue, are carried into and used outside the classroom environment. In addition, to ensure safety, the relationships built with students shouldn’t exceed the limits of good classroom behavior (Gearhart, 2021). Sometimes, restrictions on the use of specific teaching materials are necessary to ensure safety and discourage initiatives that could jeopardize safety and physical integrity (Vieira, 2013).

Building a school environment that promotes active student participation is one of the main challenges faced by educators in prison schools. This is due to the inherent restrictions of the prison system, which is primarily focused on security and control issues, making it challenging to create an engaging and dynamic educational space (Lourenço; Onofre, 2011). This makes it even more necessary for this topic to be debated, researched, and disseminated, and for training to cover issues of everyday prison life.

It is worth noting that studies (Gearhart, 2021; United States, 2011) that addressed safety techniques, characterized as gray literature, did not conduct a complete exploration of the object of study and were classified at the evidence levels. However, these studies are relevant because they identify characteristics of correctional education programs and the experiences of prison educators. These studies, published in the 2010s and 2020s, coincide with the period in which Lourenço and Onofre (2011) discussed the complexity of educational practices in prisons, emphasizing the need for specialized curricular approaches. They suggest that, in addition to mastery of content, training adapted to



the sociocultural reality of incarcerated individuals is essential training adapted to the sociocultural reality of incarcerated individuals is essential (Lorenço; Onofre, 2011). Souza and Santos (2020) emphasized the importance of practical educational approaches that meet the specific learning needs of inmates, highlighting the role of collaborative networks in the educational process. Therefore, although the studies identified have limitations in terms of the depth of the topic and the level of evidence, they provide essential contributions to understanding the challenges and the need for curricular adaptations in the prison education context.

In the empirical category related to content on Pedagogical Processes, content on teaching and learning stood out, including curriculum and assessment (Brooks; White, 1999; Bullock; McArthur, 1994; Leone, 1986; Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986; United States, 1969), instructional interventions, professional education (Bullock; McArthur, 1994; Leone, 1986; Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986; United States, 1969), basic skills, lesson planning, and flexibility in lesson presentation (Clark, 2022; Leone, 1986; United States, 1969), direct instruction methods (Hodges; Giuliotti; Ii, 1994) and pedagogical practices in the theme "education in places of deprivation of liberty" (Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016; Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986).

To ensure quality education, the process of learning assessment is as important as teaching, since it allows for verification of whether the expected results are being achieved. According to Luckesi (2002), for a humane and critical education, the process must be broad and have the power to transform society, especially when practiced in a punitive context, such as the prison setting (Luckesi, 2002).

The pedagogical processes carried out by teachers working in the prison environment need to involve building an emotional bond with students, in addition to adopting active listening practices and motivational strategies. It is essential that teaching be done with up-to-date content related to the students' daily lives, using diverse methodologies, such as group discussions, films, and practical projects, as well as PowerPoint and TV. However, several challenges arise in this context. The lack of material resources and limited physical space are constant difficulties, as is the demotivation of some students, which can be aggravated by the feeling of insecurity generated by the lack of more active participation by security agents in school activities (Pontes; Farias; Lucena, 2024). Additionally, the restrictions and rules imposed in the prison system, combined with the need to adapt the regular curriculum to the short teaching period, present significant obstacles (José, 2022). These factors further complicate the work of teachers, who must develop innovative strategies to overcome limitations and promote effective education that fosters the resocialization of inmates (Paixão; Magalhães; Sanches, 2023).

Considering the disparity in students' educational levels and the variability in educators' preparation, it is crucial to ensure the relevance of academic content. In this sense, the Center for Research and Professional Development (CRPD) of the National Association for the Detention of Juveniles has developed a National Training Curriculum for Educators of Youth Confinement Facilities. This curriculum is based on pedagogical processes, aiming to provide a solid foundation of content that is relevant and adaptable to the needs of students and teachers (Brooks; White, 1999), as advocated by Paulo Freire

when he states that education must be liberating and awakening individuals from their oppression to generate actions for social transformation (Freire, 2005).

The demand for comprehensive and in-depth training in pedagogical processes aligns with the emphasis of Bullock and McArthur in 1994. They emphasize that preparation for special education necessitates a solid foundation and knowledge that extends beyond what is typically covered in special education training programs (Bullock; McArthur, 1994).

Pedagogical processes need to be adapted to meet the specific needs of educators working in the context of juvenile correctional education (Clark, 2022). This implies not only preparing teachers to teach young people with disabilities who are deprived of their liberty, but also considering the unique demands associated with training educators to work in the prison system (Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016). Among the pedagogical processes, the role of activities aimed at strengthening inclusion (Posluszny; Jo'Lene, 1986) stands out, which has contributed to a more profound understanding of this phenomenon in special vocational education programs through the development of specific plans.

Although teachers may have acquired general skills for dealing with young people with learning and behavioral difficulties, there is a notable lack of attention to identifying the essential skills needed by those who teach young people with disabilities in incarceration (Leone, 1986). In addition, it is vital that the training offered to teachers be carefully selected according to the situation encountered, which may vary depending on the reality found and the priorities established in each context (Leone, 1986). This is given the large number of young offenders and the high percentage with disabilities (Bullock; McArthur, 1994).

Therefore, teacher training programs must place greater emphasis on preparing educators to work in prison environments, as this area is of great importance but is often neglected (Penna; Carvalho; Novaes, 2016). The limited sample size in the analyzed studies may restrict the generalizability of the results (Bullock & McArthur, 1994; Clark, 2022; Gearhart, 2021), highlighting the need for more research focused on the recruitment, training, and guidance of educators, particularly in the context of juvenile justice. Currently, existing research on the topic is scattered and fragmented. It focuses on other relevant but often peripheral issues, pointing to the urgent need for more in-depth and targeted research in this specific area (Clark, 2022).

Another empirical category related to the teacher training process was content on behavior management. In this category, the need for training in content on behavior management (Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998; Bullock; McArthur, 1994; Leone, 1986), social skills (Brooks; White, 1999), isolation and helplessness, attitudes toward computer use, perception of students as human beings, emotional development of students, and positive influence on students' mindsets (Clark, 2022).

During this training process, the use of role-playing activities is recommended to help teachers develop specific skills for addressing crises. Additionally, teachers must identify the competencies and skills necessary to prepare students for reintegration into their communities after their period of detention (Brooks; White, 1999).

During the training process, topics such as cultural diversity, integration into the state structure, and family dynamics among the prison population should be addressed



(Ashcroft; Price; Sweeney, 1998). These topics align with the context of socio-educational work. Cultural diversity and family processes can be highlighted as essential elements in teacher training, since many individuals deprived of their liberty have family histories marked by weakened emotional ties. For this reason, they often seek the support of teachers to help them rebuild these family ties (Silva, 2017).

Recognition of the family's role in the social reintegration process of individuals deprived of their liberty is essential and widely considered a crucial support that strengthens, and nurtures hope for healthy resocialization upon release (State Secretariat of Penitentiary Administration—SEAP, 2021). For this process to be successful, the curriculum proposal for EJA must incorporate the culture and reality of students as a starting point for educational practice, considering their prior knowledge, life experiences, expectations, and knowledge in a dialogical environment (Laffin; Nakayama, 2013).

Guaranteeing access to school education and enabling sentence reduction through study are fundamental strategies for ensuring the rights of incarcerated people and reducing their social vulnerability (Souza; Maio, 2024). E-learning emerges as a promising tool for training the prison population, contributing to increased self-esteem among inmates, despite the operational and structural challenges that still need to be overcome to train prisoners and improve their self-esteem (Siqueira; Oliveira; Amado, 2024).

It should be noted that most studies addressing behavior management in the prison context were published in the 1980s and 1990s, a period when changes in educational approaches in this setting were still in their early stages.

Since then, political and social transformations in educational policy have reinforced the need for a reorientation of prison education towards an emancipatory perspective centered on human rights, rather than an approach focused exclusively on the development of technical skills (Silva; Freire, 2024). Changes in the understanding of the needs and rights of persons deprived of liberty have driven the development of more contextualized curricula based on everyday teaching practices that promote both learning and resocialization (Nunes; Faleiro, 2019; Santos; Santos, 2024). However, existing research on preparing teachers to work in prison education, particularly in the context of juvenile justice, still lacks a cohesive empirical foundation, and further research on this topic is warranted (Clark, 2022).

Furthermore, persistent challenges persist in hindering the implementation of quality education within the prison system. Among these are the gap between educational policies and practical implementation (Miranda; Alves; Faria, 2022), the tension between different conceptions of the purpose of education that includes human rights, emancipation, and an emphasis on resocialization (Nunes; Faleiro, 2019; Silva; Freire, 2024) and the unique environment of prison units as a barrier reinforcing the importance of the transition from exclusion to the guarantee of rights (Pereira, 2021). Given this scenario, the transition from an exclusionary model to one that effectively guarantees the educational rights of people deprived of liberty becomes even more urgent.



## Conclusion

This study allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the content covered in educational programs, including instructional materials and evidence in the training of teachers working in prison units. The programs tend to focus heavily on content related to security techniques, which can compromise the active participation of students in prison, hindering the teaching and learning process.

On the other hand, content related to pedagogical processes is widely explored, with an emphasis on topics such as curriculum, assessment, and instructional interventions, highlighting the importance of strengthening teaching strategies. Content related to behavior management is addressed as part of teacher training, but with a focus on changing student behavior during the transition from incarceration.

However, it is observed that the teacher training process highlighted in this review is insufficient to deal with the complexity of the prison context. There are weaknesses in the training of teachers working in prison schools, as well as a scarcity of data sources to facilitate qualification, and inconsistencies in the development of educational programs.

The shift towards critical awareness in emancipatory education, the implementation of contextualized curricula, the increased recognition of education as a fundamental right, and an understanding of the unique challenges in prison education should encourage the adoption of strategies aimed at the continuous development of emancipatory pedagogical practices. This includes the development of comprehensive and context-appropriate teacher training curricula, the enhancement of policies that ensure educational rights in the prison context, and the expansion of collaborative learning models for teacher professional development.

Future studies are recommended to determine the minimum content required for training teachers working in prison schools. It is in the social interest to train and empower teachers working in this environment so that they can perform their duties safely and meet the specific needs of the prison population, thereby contributing to the process of resocialization.

It is essential to acknowledge that the quality of the included studies may be a limitation, as they are all at the lowest levels of evidence and exhibit reasonable methodological rigor. Furthermore, it should be noted that among them, ten studies lacked an identified study design.

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