

**BEGINNER TEACHERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:
DISSERTATIONS AND THESES PUBLISHED IN BRAZIL IN THE PERIOD 1996-
2018**

***PROFESSORES INICIANTE NA EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL: DISSERTAÇÕES E TESES
PUBLICADAS NO BRASIL NO PERÍODO 1996-2018***

***MAESTROS PRINCIPIANTES EN EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL: DISERTACIONES Y
TESIS PUBLICADAS EN BRASIL EN EL PERÍODO 1996-2018***

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ABSTRACT: Studies suggest that, in Brazil, we have, in Early Childhood Education, the largest number of young teachers, which may indicate that in this stage most teachers are at the beginning of their careers (VIEIRA, 2013; MARCELO GARCIA, 2010). Through this bibliographic research, it was intended to map studies produced in Brazil that deal with the theme of beginning teachers in Early Childhood Education. As data sources, dissertations and theses defended in the period 1996-2018 were used, available in the CAPES Thesis and Dissertations Catalog and in the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations. It was found that there are few productions that focus on the early years of teaching in day-care centers and preschools and the need for research to support programs for the reception and training of beginning teachers in this stage of Basic Education.

KEYWORDS: Beginner teacher. Early Childhood Education. Bibliographic research.

RESUMO: Estudos sugerem que, no Brasil, temos, na Educação Infantil, o maior número de professorado jovem, o que pode indicar que nessa etapa se encontra a maior parte dos docentes em início de carreira (VIEIRA, 2013; MARCELO GARCIA, 2010). Por meio desta pesquisa, bibliográfica, pretendeu-se realizar um mapeamento de estudos produzidos no Brasil que tratam da temática dos professores iniciantes na Educação Infantil. Como fontes de dados foram utilizadas dissertações e teses defendidas no período 1996-2018, disponibilizadas no Catálogo de Teses e Dissertações da CAPES e na Biblioteca Digital Brasileira de Teses e Dissertações. Constatou-se a existência de poucas produções que focalizam os anos iniciais da docência nas creches e pré-escolas e a necessidade de pesquisas que fundamentem programas de acolhimento e formação dos professores iniciantes dessa etapa da Educação Básica.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Professor iniciante. Educação Infantil. Pesquisa bibliográfica.

RESUMEN: Los estudios sugieren que, en Brasil, tenemos, en Educación Infantil, el mayor número de maestros jóvenes, lo que puede indicar que en esta etapa la mayoría de los maestros se encuentran en el inicio de sus carreras (VIEIRA, 2013; MARCELO GARCIA, 2010). A través

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de esta investigación bibliográfica, se pretendió mapear los estudios producidos en Brasil que abordan el tema de los docentes a partir de la Educación Infantil. Como fuentes de datos, se utilizaron disertaciones y tesis defendidas en el período 1996-2018, disponibles en el Catálogo de Tesis y Disertaciones CAPES y en la Biblioteca Digital Brasileña de Tesis y Disertaciones. Se encontró que existen pocas producciones que se centren en los primeros años de la docencia en las guarderías y preescolares y la necesidad de investigación para apoyar programas de recepción y formación de maestros principiantes de esta etapa de Educación Básica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Maestro principiante. Educación Infantil. Investigación bibliográfica.*

Introduction

In Brazil, the norms for Early Childhood Education have undergone important changes since the Federal Constitution of 1988 (BRAZIL, 1988). Through this Law it was determined, in the chapter on Education, the State's duty to offer daycare and preschool for children from zero to six years of age. Later, Constitutional Amendment no. 53 changed the age of attendance to children up to five years of age, and Constitutional Amendment no. 59 made enrollment in pre-school education compulsory from age four on.

In 1996, the Law of Directives and Bases for Education (BRASIL, 1996) established Early Childhood Education as the first stage of Basic Education, its purpose being the full development of the child aged up to six years, in its physical, psychological, intellectual, and social aspects, complementing the action of the family and the community. In 2013, following the Constitutional Amendments, Law No. 12,796 (BRAZIL, 2013) changed the age of attendance at this stage to children up to five years of age and determined the mandatory enrollment in preschool for children four years of age.

In 1999, the National Curricular Guidelines for Early Childhood Education were established, mandatory in nature, revised in 2009 (BRAZIL, 2009). The current Guidelines define the socio-political and pedagogical function of the institutions of Early Childhood Education, indicate the conception of child that should underpin the work done in daycare centers and preschools, establish principles that should be respected in the preparation of pedagogical proposals and goals that should guide this document, point out the meaning and possible ways of monitoring the pedagogical work and evaluation of child development of children from zero to five years. Such Guidelines characterize daycare centers and preschools as institutional spaces for education and care of children from zero to five years of age and, according to Oliveira (2010), "[...] highlight the need to structure and organize educational

actions with quality, articulated with the appreciation of the role of teachers who work with children from 0 to 5 years of age" (p. 1).

More recently, still considering the legal framework surrounding Early Childhood Education, the National Common Curricular Base (BRAZIL, 2017) was instituted, also of mandatory character. Based on a curricular organization structured in fields of experience, under which learning and development goals are defined for children enrolled in daycare centers and preschools, the Base emphasizes the need for educational intentionality in pedagogical practices in Early Childhood Education, determines the rights of children to socialize, play, participate, explore, express, and get to know themselves, and deals with the role of the teacher in this stage of Basic Education.

Teaching in Early Childhood Education, within this legal context, involves establishing pedagogical practices that have interaction and play as their guiding principles, and that offer children a variety of experiences that ensure their knowledge of themselves, of others, and of the world. Involved in a series of challenges related to the specificities of Early Childhood Education, this teaching is being built at the same time that its identity is being discussed, what working conditions and knowledge are necessary for it to be effective with quality, what is the appropriate training for a performance that promotes the full development of babies and very young and young children (OLIVEIRA, 2013), what is the appropriate profile of a teacher for institutions that receive young children (CAMPOS, 2008).

Still in this context, data suggest that "[...] in Early Childhood Education, and especially in day care centers, we have a greater presence of younger teachers, which may also indicate that they are professionals at the beginning of their careers: 58% aged between 24 and 40 years" (VIEIRA, 2013, p. 21). Data presented in the Statistical Synopsis of Basic Education 2018 (BRAZIL, 2019) indicate that, in that year, of the 589,191 teachers in Brazilian daycare centers, 18.36% were up to 29 years old. In preschool, 16.11% of the 329,051 teachers were in this same age group. In the Southern region of the country, the percentage of teachers up to 29 years old reached 25.06% in day-care centers and 22% in pre-school. Although the data do not refer to years of career, the fact that they are young teachers suggests that they are in the initial years of teaching.

In Early Childhood Education, a considerable number of teachers experience the years of entry into the career, which are considered fundamental in the formation of the type of teacher that the beginner will become, representing a period of intense learning about the profession, and influencing their permanence or not in teaching (MARCELO GARCIA, 2010). Given the relevance of the period of entry into the teaching career in teacher training and in their

professional constitution, and based on previous mappings that show that studies on beginning teachers are scarce among Brazilian researchers (MARIANO, 2006; PAPI; MARTINS, 2010; CORRÊA; PORTELLA, 2012; ALMEIDA *et al.*, 2020), the research reported here was conducted by means of which we sought to map studies on beginning teachers of Early Childhood Education published in Brazil in the period from 1996 to 2018.

Entering the teaching career

Huberman (1992), when analyzing the professional life cycle of teachers, highlights the phase of entry into the career as a period of survival and discovery. The initial struggle with the complexity and unpredictability that characterize teaching and with the discrepancy between ideals and daily life in schools characterizes survival. Discovery is related to the enthusiasm of the beginner and the pride of entering the profession. For some teachers, according to Huberman (1992), the initial enthusiasm makes the beginning in teaching easy; for others, the difficulties make the period very difficult.

André (2012, p. 12) states that:

Recognizing that training for teaching does not end at the end of undergraduate courses, but should continue throughout the career, is an important step for beginners not to be discouraged by difficulties and to be able to seek the necessary tools and support, whether they are more experienced colleagues, former teachers at the university, actions offered at school or in other training spaces. But these initiatives cannot depend on personal will or be limited to the individual sphere. [It is up to the educational management agencies to design programs that are especially designed for professional insertion, a moment that differs from initial and continued training due to its peculiarities, as a transition phase, of integration into the teaching culture, of insertion into the school culture, of learning the codes and rules of the profession.

The need for programs aimed at welcoming beginning teachers is commonly pointed out in research that focuses on the beginning of teaching. Machado (2018) also highlights the importance that such programs, in addition to offering support to teachers, can ensure the stimulus for them to remain in teaching. The need for improvement in initial training courses is also pointed out as fundamental for teachers to build knowledge about teaching and about the performance in everyday school life that can guide them in the period of entry into the career, avoiding improvisations (MOURA; GUARNIERI, 2019).

Mappings carried out on Brazilian researches that focus on beginning teachers point out several aspects about the beginning of teaching as evidenced in such studies. Mariano (2006)

mapped works presented in the annals of the Annual Meetings of ANPEd (National Association of Graduate Studies in Education) and of ENDIPEs (National Didactics and Teaching Practice Meetings) in the period 1995-2004, searching for those that presented as central focus of discussion the beginning teacher and his/her professional learning process, regardless of the teaching level where he/she works. The author highlights:

The analysis of the data also allows us to point out as the most emphasized aspects in the researches analyzed: professional socialization, teaching knowledge, and feelings of survival and discovery that strongly mark this beginning of career, among others. Little emphasized aspects are: the relationship between initial training and the moment of professional insertion, and the forms of learning developed by novice teachers. Finally, the silenced aspects include: the policies of continued education and professional development, issues of diversity/difference, cultural plurality and multiculturalism, the analysis of the pedagogical practice of teachers of young and adult education, and the relationship between the beginning teacher and his/her professional performance models (MARIANO, 2006, p. 7).

Papi and Martins (2010) analyzed papers presented at ANPEd meetings in 2005, 2006 and 2007, and researches available in the Catálogo de Teses e Dissertações da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior defended between 2000 and 2007. According to the authors, the studies analyzed focus on issues related to the pedagogical practice of beginning teachers, the construction of their identity, their professional socialization and the difficulties encountered when entering the teaching career. They emphasize that the research shows the almost non-existence of training actions for these teachers and indicates the need for Brazilian research to be more dedicated to the theme, which is little explored, considering the relevance of this professional stage.

Corrêa and Portella (2012) continue the study carried out by Papi and Martins (2010), analyzing the papers published in the annals of the ANPEd Annual Meetings in the period 2008-2011 and in the CAPES Bank in the years 2008 to 2010, seeking to identify the issues that emerge from the research carried out in the country on beginning teachers, and establishing a dialogue with the previous syntheses. They conclude by highlighting the importance of conducting research on beginning teachers in different Brazilian regions, and that the research should consider teachers from private as well as public schools. They also emphasize the need for continued investment in research on the beginning of teaching.

Almeida *et al.* (2020) conducted a review of the literature on beginning teachers in the period 2000-2019 with the aim not only of analyzing the trends of these studies, but above all of identifying whether the productions have presented recommendations for policies to welcome elementary education teachers in their first years of profession. The researchers

conclude that the studies have offered few contributions to the establishment of actions and practices that favor entry into teaching, because they bring, in general, little in-depth analysis on this period of the career.

It is worth pointing out that the mappings described do not focus only on studies that deal with beginning teachers of Early Childhood Education, but rather provide a general panorama of productions about the beginning of teaching. Thus, the mapping described here is justified, which seeks to offer new elements to add to those brought by the surveys already conducted.

Methodological aspects of the research

This is a bibliographic research (FONSECA, 2002), of descriptive character (GIL, 2007), carried out in the period 2019-2020, which aimed to perform a mapping of studies produced in Brazil, in the period 1996-2018, dealing with the theme of beginning teachers in Early Childhood Education, identifying: number of dissertations and theses defended in the period, title, author, institution and its physical and digital location, year of publication, abstract, objectives and results. It is noteworthy that the research described here is part of a broader, bibliographic, descriptive and explanatory research (GIL, 2007), under development in the period 2019-2021, which aims, from the mapping of dissertations and theses described here, to examine the knowledge about entry into teaching in Early Childhood Education developed by means of the research described therein, identifying the themes addressed, the methodologies used, their contributions and limitations to subsidize policies for the reception of teachers in kindergartens and preschools.

As data sources, the study described here used dissertations and theses defended in Brazil in the period 1996-2018 available in the Catalog of Theses and Dissertations of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) and the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD). In 1996, the Law of Directives and Bases for Education (BRASIL, 1996) defined Early Childhood Education as the first stage of Basic Education. For this reason, it was decided to start the search for studies from that year on, continuing until the year prior to the beginning of the research.

As far as data collection is concerned, which took place in September 2009, it was done as described below:

1 - CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog - was accessed at <https://catalogodeteses.capes.gov.br>. In the search, the term beginners was entered and the Knowledge Area Education was selected, and 238 results were displayed.

2 - Biblioteca Digital Brasileira de Teses e Dissertações (BDTD) - was accessed at <http://bdtd.ibict.br/vufind/>. In the search, the term beginners was entered. The search filter Year of Defense (1996-2018) was used. Then, the filter Knowledge Area: Humanities Education was selected, and 490 results were displayed.

Both in the CAPES Catalog and in the BDTD, from the reading of the titles of the listed productions, we selected for this study productions that presented, in the title, the terms Early Childhood Education, daycare, or preschool. Or, even, productions that indicated the age group of children served by Early Childhood Education. Productions with the term Higher Education in their title, or that made reference to other stages of Basic Education - Elementary or Secondary Education - were disregarded. When there was no mention, in the title, of any stage of Basic Education or of Higher Education, the summary of the production was read, or, when necessary, the entire production was read, in order to decide whether or not to include it in the study. If the abstract or the full production was not available for reading, and if there were doubts about whether the study focused on teachers of Early Childhood Education or not, the author was contacted to find the copy.

The selected productions were systematized, initially, in two tables. The first table listed the productions available in CAPES's Theses and Dissertations Catalog. The second table organized the theses and dissertations found in the BDTD. The following data regarding the productions were systematized in the tables: title, author, academic level, institution and state, year of publication. Such data were organized in tables and graphs for better visualization of the map of theses and dissertations on entry into teaching in Early Childhood Education produced in Brazil in the period 1996-2018. The abstracts of the dissertations and theses were also organized in a table for better treatment of the data. Tables with the objectives and results of the productions were also organized.

Results and discussions

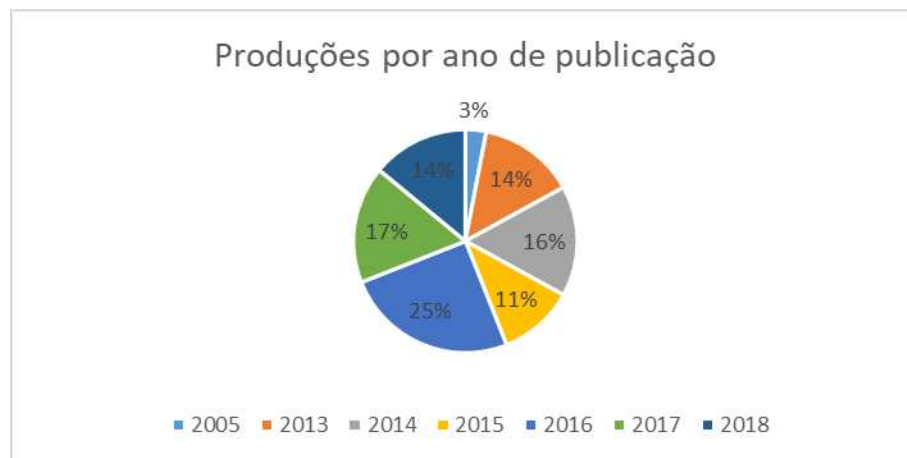
Observing the tables organized from the searches, it is possible to indicate that 39 productions were found, 35 of them in the CAPES Catalog and 4 in the BDTD, using the search term *beginners*, and that, in the title, made reference to Early Childhood Education. Three of

the productions appeared in both databases. Thus, we obtained a total of 36 productions that will be considered in the mapping presented here.

As can be seen in Figure 1, before 2005 no dissertation/thesis was listed in the databases used. In 2005, 1 doctoral thesis appears and, after that, only productions from 2013 onwards were found, therefore, in the period 2006-2012 no work about beginning preschool teachers was found in the databases of Brazilian graduate programs. Of the 36 productions, 25 were written from research conducted at the academic master's level, 4 from the professional master's level and 7 from the doctoral level, as shown in Figure 2.

Dos trabalhos encontrados, 31 deles se concentram nas regiões Sudeste (19) e Centro-Oeste (12). Há 5 trabalhos nas regiões Sul (2) e Nordeste (3) e nenhuma produção na região Norte do país (Figura 3). Na Tabela 1 é possível observar a distribuição das produções por estado brasileiro, com uma concentração de 41,7% dos trabalhos (15) em São Paulo.

Figure 1 – Percentage of theses and dissertations by year of publication listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases with search term beginners and with mention of Early Childhood Education in the title, in the period 1996-2018²



Source: Prepared by the author

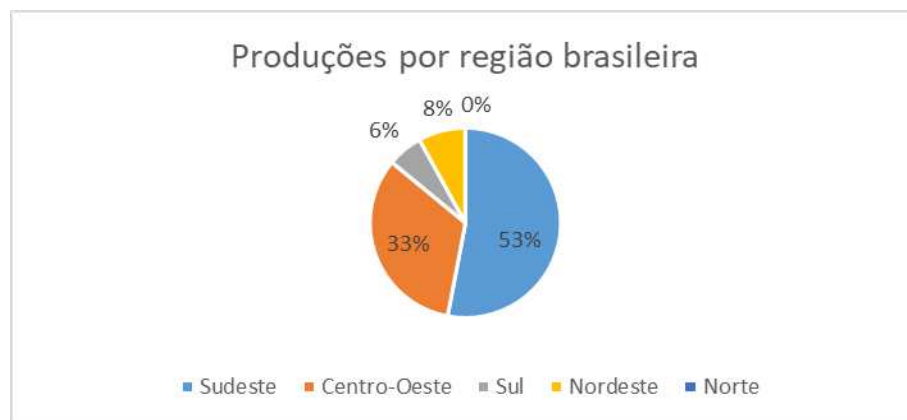
² Produções por ano de publicação = Productions by year of publication

Figure 2 - Percentage of productions by academic level listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases with search term *beginners* and with mention of Early Childhood Education in the title, in the period 1996-2018³



Source: Prepared by the author

Figure 3 – Percentage of productions by Brazilian region listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases with search term *beginners* and with mention of Early Childhood Education in the title, in the period 1996-2018⁴



Source: Prepared by the author

³ Produções por nível acadêmico = Productions by academic level; Mestrado acadêmico = Academic Masters Degree; Mestrado profissional = Professional Masters Degree; Doutorado = Doctorate

⁴ Produções por região brasileira = Productions per Brazilian region; Sudeste = South-East; Centro – Oeste = Midwest; Sul = South; Nordeste = North-East; Norte = North

Table 1 – Number and proportion of dissertations and theses listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases, search term *beginners*, mention of Early Childhood Education in the title, in the period 1996-2018, by Brazilian state

Estado	N	%
Paraná	1	2,8
Santa Catarina	1	2,8
Espírito Santo	1	2,8
Minas Gerais	1	2,8
Rio de Janeiro	2	5,5
São Paulo	15	41,7
Distrito Federal	2	5,5
Mato Grosso	4	11,1
Mato Grosso do Sul	6	16,7
Bahia	2	5,5
Ceará	1	2,8
Total	36	100

Fonte: Elaborado pela autora

By analyzing the 36 dissertations and theses listed in CAPES and BDTD, it was possible to verify that, although all researches had beginning teachers of Early Childhood Education as subjects, only 10 of them specifically focused on the beginning of teaching at this stage. This finding was based on reading the objectives of the studies and is in line with the findings of Almeida, Reis, Gomboeff, and André (2020), who state that "Research that presents analyses and/or a more in-depth discussion on what is specific to the beginning of teaching in certain areas and teaching segments is rare" (p. 18).

These 10 productions are listed in Chart 1 below.

Chart 1 – Productions available in the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Catalog and in the BDTD that focus on the beginning of teaching in Early Childhood Education

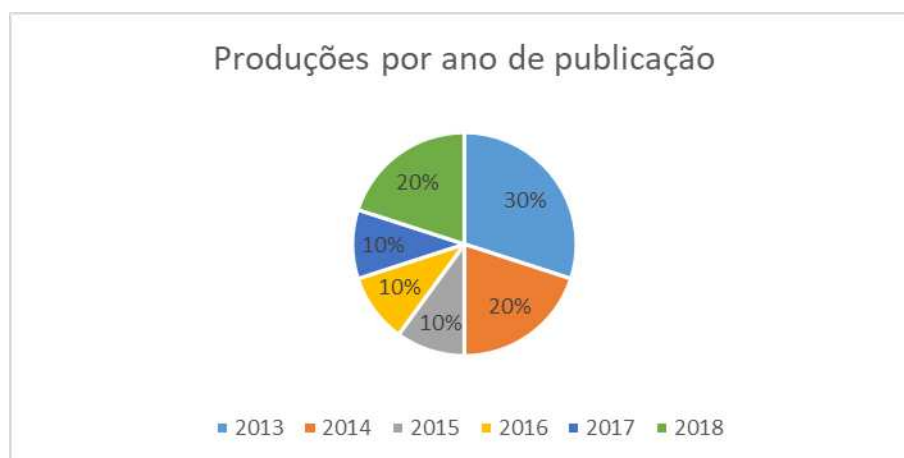
	Title	Author	Level	Institution	Year
1	The construction of professionalism in the process of professional insertion in Early Childhood Education	Leticia Marinho Eglem de Oliveira	Academic Master's Degree in Education	University of Brasilia	2017
2	Beginning Kindergarten teachers: learning paths for teaching	Alessandra Muzzi de Queiroz	Academic Master's Degree in Education	Catholic University Dom Bosco, Campo Grande	2013
3	Challenges of the first year teaching Kindergarten	Andreza Gessi Trova	Professional Master's Degree in Educational Management and Practices	Nove de Julho University, São Paulo	2014
4	Beginning Kindergarten teachers in the São José dos Campos municipal teaching network: professional entry, expectations, and possibilities	Andreia Dias Pires Ferreira	Professional Master's Degree in Education	University of Taubaté	2016

5	Beginning Kindergarten teachers: enchantments and disenchantments of teaching	Solange Cardoso	Academic Master's Degree in Education	Federal University of Ouro Preto	2013
6	Being a beginning Early Childhood Education teacher: learning and professional development in a context of facing and overcoming dilemmas	Bruna Cury de Barros	Academic Master's Degree in School Education	São Paulo State University, Araraquara campus	2015
7	The first years of the teaching career: dialogues with beginning kindergarten teachers	Valeria Menassa Zucolotto	Academic Master of Education	Federal University of Espírito Santo	2014
8	Professional insertion and teaching in Early Childhood Education	Midiã Olinto de Oliveira	Doctorate in Education: History, Politics, Society	Catholic Pontifical University of São Paulo	2018
9	Professional learning in teaching: what knowledge the teacher has to work in kindergartens	Monique Aparecida Voltarelli	Academic Master of Education	Federal University of São Carlos	2013
10	Beginning teaching: learning to be a teacher in Early Childhood Education	Ana Carla de Amorim	Academic Master's Degree in Education	Catholic University Dom Bosco, Campo Grande	2018

Source: Prepared by the author

These 10 productions were published between the years 2013 and 2018, 7 of them at the academic master's level, 2 professional master's and 1 doctoral. There was no production in graduate programs from the North, South, and Northeast regions. Of the 10 papers, 7 are from the Southeast region and 3 from the Midwest region of Brazil. These data are systematized in Figures 4, 5 and 6 and in Table 2 below:

Figure 4 - Percentage of theses and dissertations that focus on the beginning in teaching in Early Childhood Education, by year of publication, listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases with search term *beginners* in the period 1996-2018⁵



Fonte: Elaborado pela autora

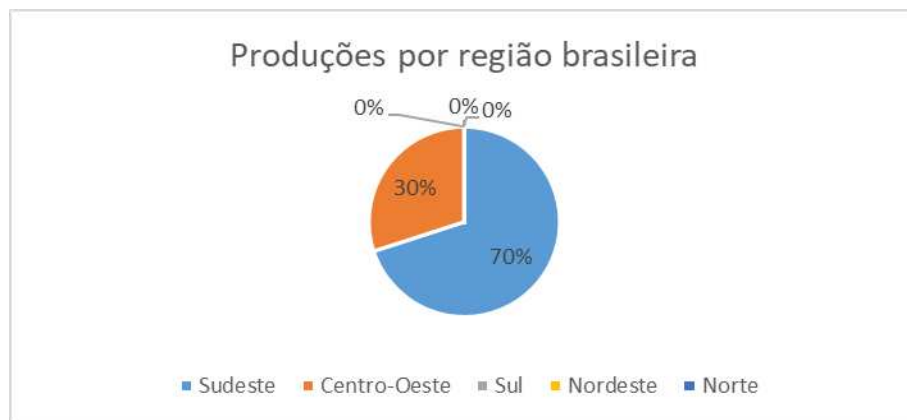
⁵ Produções por ano de publicação = Productions by year of publication

Figure 5 – Percentage of theses and dissertations that focus on the beginning in teaching in Early Childhood Education, by academic level, listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases with search term *beginners* in the period 1996-2018⁶



Source: Prepared by the author

Figure 6 – Percentage of theses and dissertations that focus on beginning teaching in Early Childhood Education, by Brazilian region, listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases with search term *beginners* in the period 1996-2018⁷



Source: Prepared by the author

Table 2 – Number and proportion of productions that focus on the beginning in teaching in Early Childhood Education, only, by Brazilian state, listed in the CAPES and BDTD databases with the search term *beginners*, in the period 1996-2018.

Estado	N	%
Espírito Santo	1	10
Minas Gerais	1	10
São Paulo	5	50
Distrito Federal	1	10

⁶ Produções por nível acadêmico = Productions by academic level; Mestrado acadêmico = Academic Masters Degree; Mestrado profissional = Professional Masters Degree; Doutorado = Doctorate

⁷ Produções por região brasileira = Productions per Brazilian region; Sudeste = South-East; Centro – Oeste = Midwest; Sul = South; Nordeste = North-East; Norte = North

Mato Grosso do Sul	2	20
Total	10	100

Source: Prepared by the author

Regarding the objectives of the productions found, it is possible to identify some research trends. It is noted that 70% of the studies focus on challenges, difficulties, tensions and dilemmas experienced by beginning preschool teachers, and that one of these studies also aims at highlighting the professional accomplishments of beginners and, in two of them, the ways of overcoming the problems faced at this moment in the career. Only one of the studies aims at analyzing actions of continued training, welcoming and integration of beginners developed by a Municipal Secretariat of Education, and the view of beginners on such actions. The learning process of teaching, the construction of teaching identity and the knowledge of beginning teachers in Early Childhood Education are also focused on in the research. Only one of the studies aims at investigating possible contributions of the initial training course for the experiences of the first years of teaching in Early Childhood Education.

With regards to the results found, the studies, in general, point to the need for the initial training courses to be rethought in order to guarantee a better preparation for work in day care centers and preschools, specifically; the importance that beginners receive support from the management of the schools and from their more experienced peers; the need for programs or actions to welcome beginners who enter the first stage of Basic Education. The studies also suggest that the precarious conditions found in the institutions have important implications for the entry into teaching with Early Childhood, since the beginners tend to organize their practices based on the contexts in which they are inserted.

Final considerations

Despite the importance of the period of entry into the teaching career highlighted by several studies, and the relevance of daycare centers and preschools in the comprehensive development of children aged 0 to 5 years, it was found from the research reported here that, in the period 1996-2018, only 10 dissertations/theses were produced in Brazil that focused specifically on how the beginning of teaching in Early Childhood Education occurs.

In the North, South, and Northeast regions of Brazil, no publications on this theme were found in the investigated databases. At the doctoral level, only one of the 10 doctoral studies was published. Taking into account the importance of this research in the foundation of public policies aimed at the beginning of teaching in Early Childhood Education, the situation is worrying. The findings suggest the need for new studies on beginning teachers in daycare and

preschools that can support the permanent adoption of professional insertion programs by Brazilian cities as one of the elements for the establishment of quality early childhood education. Such studies need to consider the specificities of the entry into the career taking into account the context of the first stage of Basic Education.

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