

Graduate studies in education in the state of Amapá, Brazil: research groups on educational policy

Pós-graduação em educação no estado do Amapá: os grupos de pesquisa sobre política educacional

El posgrado en educación en el estado de Amapá: los grupos de investigación sobre política educativa

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to analyze the networks of scientific cooperation built around scientific production in co-authorship with leaders of research groups on educational policies in connection with the Federal University of Amapá (UNIFAP). Such purpose will be guided by the following question: Which networks have been built by the leaders of research groups on educational policies associated with UNIFAP by means of their co-authored scientific production? The methodology prioritizes bibliographical and documental review. The bibliographical baseline is grounded on authors and the documental baseline includes the platform of the Directory of Research Groups with the National Council on Research (CNPq) and Plataforma Sucupira. The analysis shows the research networks built around scientific production, and shows also that, although these researchers have strengthened some partnerships, mainly with researchers from the Federal University of Pará, there is still a need for more interlocution with other institutional spaces beyond the regional and national context.


Keywords: Graduate Studies. Research Groups. Co-authorship.

RESUMO

O artigo objetiva analisar as redes de colaboração científica construídas por meio da produção científica em coautoria com os líderes de grupos de pesquisa em políticas educacionais vinculados à Universidade Federal do Amapá (UNIFAP). Tal finalidade será orientada pelo seguinte questionamento: quais redes os líderes de grupos de pesquisa em políticas educacionais vinculados à UNIFAP construíram por meio de sua produção científica em coautoria? A metodologia privilegia a pesquisa bibliográfica e documental. A base bibliográfica ancora-se em autores e a documental inclui a plataforma do Diretório de Grupos de Pesquisa do Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq) e da Plataforma Sucupira. A análise revela as redes de pesquisas construídas por meio da produção científica, e, embora esses pesquisadores tenham algumas parcerias fortalecidas sobretudo com pesquisadores da Universidade Federal do Pará, ainda carecem de mais interlocução com outros espaços institucionais fora do contexto regional e nacional.

Palavras-chave: Pós-Graduação. Grupos de Pesquisa. Coautoria.

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RESUMEN

El artículo analiza las redes de colaboración científica construidas a partir de la producción científica en coautoría con los líderes de grupos de investigación en políticas educativas vinculados a la Universidad Federal de Amapá. Este propósito está orientado por la siguiente pregunta: ¿Qué redes construyeron los líderes de los grupos de investigación en políticas educativas vinculados a UNIFAP, a través de su producción científica en coautoría? La metodología privilegia la investigación bibliográfica y documental. La base bibliográfica, está anclada en autores y la documental incluye la plataforma Directorio de Grupos de Investigación del CNPq y la Plataforma Sucupira. El análisis revela las redes de investigación construidas a través de la producción científica, y aunque existen algunas alianzas fortalecidas, especialmente con investigadores de la Universidad Federal de Pará, aún necesita más diálogo con otros espacios institucionales fuera del contexto regional y nacional.

Palabras clave: Posgraduación. Grupos de Investigación. Coautoría

INTRODUCTION

The Northern region of Brazil consists of the states of Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima and Tocantins, which, along with the states of Maranhão, in the Northeast, and Mato Grosso, in the Midwest, form the Legal Amazon. Together, they cover an area of 5,015,067.86 km², or about 58.93% of the national territory (IBGE, 2022). Despite the size of the Amazon and its environmental and political importance, investments in science, technology, and innovation are not sufficient to promote the development of research in the region.

In terms of postgraduate education, the North is the region with the lowest number of programs compared to the other regions of Brazil. In the specific case of postgraduate education programs (PPGED), there are only 15 master's and five doctoral programs. The PPGED at the Federal University of Amapá (UNIFAP), which is the focus of this study, is the most recent. It was created in 2017 and was the last state in the North to hold a master's in education approved by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES). The first attempt dates back to 2006, when a proposal for a master's degree was sent to CAPES, but it was not approved: "This was because it did not meet a sine qua non condition for this purpose to become effective: enough qualified teaching staff for this initial move" (UNIFAP, 2022, [n.p.]). In 2014, after another attempt, the proposal was again not approved. This time, the weakness pointed out by the evaluators was a "[...] lack of articulation between the disciplines and scarce teaching production, which did not meet the minimum requirements of the area" (UNIFAP, 2022, [n.p.]).

In 2016, a new project was sent to CAPES, involving, in addition to the mobilization of UNIFAP researchers, a group of institutions such as the State University of Amapá (UEAP), the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), mainly PPGED/UFPA, as well as the support of the State and Municipal Departments of Education in Macapá. In 2017, the PPGED/UFPA was approved by CAPES to create a master's degree in education, structured around two lines of research: educational policy and education, cultures, and diversity.

In this study, we focus on the educational policy line of research,¹ in which we want to study the networks of scientific collaboration built through co-authored scientific production with the

1 The focus on the field of public educational policies is based on the understanding that studies on educational policies provide reflections on the changes, potential, challenges and scenarios of Brazilian education, without losing sight of the role of the state in guaranteeing, organizing and managing education. Thus, in this study, we sought to consider the multiple connections between public educational policies that demarcate them, structurally and conjuncturally, in a given historical-social context, expressing the Amazon, especially Amapá.

leaders of the educational policy research groups linked to UNIFAP. We wish to answer the following question: What networks have the leaders of educational policy research groups that are associated with UNIFAP built through co-authored scientific production?

Since the creation of UNIFAP in 1990, there has been an effort by the professors of education courses to contribute to the training of teachers to work in basic education in the state of Amapá. However, given the complexity and dynamics of the educational phenomenon and its interfaces with the social, political, economic and cultural context, the continuous training of educational professionals has become a necessity, which has led to the provision of other levels of training, such as the creation and expansion of master's and doctoral courses *stricto sensu*, as well as the consolidation of scientific production through research groups.

The theoretical and epistemological basis of our analysis is historical-dialectical materialism, a method that requires a critical treatment of the subject in its totality and contradictions, and that allows the researcher to grasp human activity in its complexity and historicity. It is, therefore, a method that "[...] has social practice as the fundamental reference for the construction of knowledge, where its criteria of validation reside" (Martins and Lavoura, 2018, p. 233).

In historical-dialectical materialism, human work is the central element for analyzing and understanding social phenomena: "This is the deepest meaning of the scope of the historical-dialectical materialist method at the service of the construction of knowledge about reality" (Martins and Lavoura, 2018, p. 232). In this conception, the process of theoretical construction about concrete reality is understood as a labor process, since it is the result of the activity of individuals "[...] who are historically situated, of abstract decoding about concrete reality" (Martins and Lavoura, 2018, p. 225).

Through bibliographical research, we collected and examined the research that has been conducted to understand the process of construction and analysis, as well as the results obtained. According to Pádua (2016, p. 60), bibliographical research allows the researcher to "[...] get in touch with what has already been produced and recorded about their research topic".

In documentary research, we agree with Evangelista (2012, p. 15) that "[...] every source brings an understanding of the world and generates a reading, and [...] every reading has a commitment". Thus, according to Evangelista (2012, p. 14): "It is therefore necessary to grasp the multiple determinations of the source and the reality that produces it", since documents are carriers of intentionalities. In the words of Evangelista (2012, p. 14): "Documents are products of selected information, evaluations, analyses, trends, recommendations, and proposals. They express and result from a combination of intentions, values, and discourses [...]".

The methodological path developed can be summarized as follows: a) survey of research groups on educational policy linked to UNIFAP in the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) directory of groups; b) identification of the leaders of the research groups; c) survey of the records of scientific articles in the Lattes CVs of researchers; d) access to scientific articles in journals; and e) analysis and interpretation of the data using the content analysis technique.

The article is divided into the following sections: this introduction, followed by the section dealing with the process of implementing postgraduate studies in education in the Northern region of Brazil; then we look at the research groups on educational policy and scientific production in co-authorship; and finally we present the conclusion.

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF BRAZIL

The first PPGED in Brazil was created in 1966 at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio). However, the expansion of courses only took place in the 1970s, following the implementation of the National Postgraduate System (SNPG) (Ramalho and Madeira, 2005; Santos and Azevedo, 2009).

The development of postgraduate studies in education as well as in other areas of knowledge took place within a project of conservative modernization implemented by the military-corporate regime, whose goal was “[...] the training of qualified human resources for all levels of education, the preparation of high-level researchers and the advanced training of professionals” (Ramalho and Madeira, 2005, p. 71).

Santos and Azevedo (2009) point out that the lack of tradition in research was reflected in the initial organization of postgraduate courses in education in areas of concentration, based on the curriculum of the pedagogy course. This format fragmented the sub-areas of research and required “[...] students to take a wide range of subjects before carrying out their research, which greatly extended the time it took to get their degree” (Santos and Azevedo, 2009, p. 541).

According to Gamboa (2007), the areas of concentration generated a crisis in postgraduate programs in the late 1980s and 1990s, precisely because they reduced the time to carry out master’s and doctoral research, which was left until the end of the course, when time for completing the curriculum was running out. For this reason, at the end of the 1990s, CAPES proposed that postgraduate programs (PPGS) be organized into lines of research. In this new proposal for organizing postgraduate courses,

[...] [w]hat mattered was that the student had a project linked to a line of research right from the start of the course. In theory, this meant placing research at the center of the course’s development and implied greater coordination and rapprochement between researchers, since the development of lines of research required the formation of groups that were part of it. (Santos and Azevedo, 2009, p. 541)

The organization of the lines, as well as the creation of research groups, contributed to a faster completion of the master’s and doctoral programs. It is worth noting that the development of postgraduate studies in education in Brazil has been uneven, i.e., the more economically developed regions have concentrated the largest number of PPGEDs; the Southeast, for example, has hosted the majority of PPGEDs since the 1960s. Although the federal government recognizes the inequalities in the supply of postgraduate courses in Brazil, as evidenced by the different National Postgraduate Plans (PNPG) (Ramalho and Madeira, 2005; Santos and Azevedo, 2009), there has been no significant change in this map of regional asymmetries.

According to Ramalho and Madeira (2005, p. 72), since the first PNPG was developed between 1975 and 1980, the North and Northeast regions “[...] were not even able to make the most of the available funds due to a lack of installed capacity”. At the end of this plan, “[...] the Northeast had five master’s courses in education, all of them facing the difficulties of their marginality in a system with a high level of centralization and concentration in the Southeast” (Ramalho and Madeira, 2005, p. 73).

It was not until 1992 that the first doctoral program was established in the Northeast, at the Faculty of Education of the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), followed by similar programs at the Federal University of Ceará (UFC) and the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN). In the North, the first attempt to institutionalize a doctoral program dates back to 2003, at the Faculty of Education of the Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM), but it was suspended, and its doctoral students were absorbed by the PPGEs in the Northeast (Ramalho and Madeira, 2005).

In 2005, the 5th PNPG was approved for the period 2005–2010, with the aim of increasing the number of master’s and doctoral students by increasing scholarships and research funding. In the North and Northeast regions, Ramalho and Madeira (2005) point out that the challenges were great due to the historical regional and intra-regional disparities in the supply of postgraduate education in Brazil, as shown in the excerpt below:

Postgraduate programs in education in the five regions, at master's and doctorate level (73 programs in total in 2005), have the following percentages: Southeast: 45% master's and 56% doctorate; South: 26% master's and 17% doctorate; Northeast: 16% master's and 17% doctorate; Midwest: 9% master's and 10% doctorate; North: 4% master's and no doctorate. If we only consider the doctorates, the concentration of programs on the South-Southeast axis is even greater: the South and Southeast regions hold 73% of the country's Postgraduate Programs. (Ramalho and Madeira, 2005, p. 75)

The authors point out that this imbalance in the percentages offered is the result of structural problems stemming from the economic and social development model implemented in Brazil, which has led to profound social, economic, and educational inequalities among Brazilian regions, which extend to the supply of postgraduate courses.

The uneven supply of postgraduate education in Brazil is remarkable, especially in the North and Northeast regions. However, the implementation of postgraduate education took place later in the North, especially in doctoral education, since there were no doctoral programs in this region until 2005.

In the North, the institutionalization of postgraduate education also took place asymmetrically among the states because it developed through a process of unequal expansion of programs in the different states of the region. In the survey we carried out in August 2022 on the Sucupira platform, we identified 15 master's courses and five doctoral courses in the Amazon, according to Chart 1, which shows the PPGEDs in the North accredited by CAPES.

Chart 1 – Postgraduate studies in education in the Northern region.

State	ME	DO	MP	DP
Acre	1	-	-	-
Amapá	1	-	-	-
Amazonas	2	1	-	-
Pará	5	3	-	-
Rondônia	1	-	-	-
Roraima	2	-	1	1
Tocantins	1	-	1	-
Total	13	4	2	1

Source: prepared by the authors based on the Sucupira Platform Reports (CAPES, 2022).

ME: Master's Degree; DO: Doctorate; MP: Professional Master's Degree; DP: Professional Doctorate.

The states of Acre, Amapá, and Roraima have one program offering academic master's courses, representing only 5% each of the total; the state of Tocantins has 20% of the total number of programs; Roraima has three master's courses (two academic and one professional) and a professional doctorate, the only one in the Northern region of Brazil. The state of Amazonas has two academic master's programs and one doctoral program. The state of Pará has the largest number of programs in the North: five academic master's courses and three doctorates. In percentage terms, the state accounts for 33.3% of master's degree programs and 60% of PhD programs.

Although the number of programs in the Amazon has increased, they are still insufficient to serve the region, which geographically represents almost 60% of the national territory. It is

important to note that even the states that have master's and doctoral programs are unable to meet the pent-up demand for *stricto sensu* training in the Brazilian Amazon. Between 1996 and 2017, the North region was responsible for graduating only 4.8% of masters and 2.4% of doctors, while the Southeast region graduated 47.2% of masters and 56.9% of doctors, the Northeast graduated 18.6% of masters, 15% of doctors, the South graduated 21.7% of masters and 20.1% of doctors and the Midwest graduated 7.8% of masters and 5.6% of doctors (CGEE, 2019).

The states in the North have the lowest percentage of master's and doctoral degrees awarded per 100 thousand inhabitants in Brazil. The national average is 29.7 masters and 10.4 doctors per 100 thousand inhabitants; in Pará, the percentage is 17.5 masters and 3.6 doctors; in Amazonas, 17.3 masters and 3.8 doctors; in Tocantins, 16.1 masters and 2.2 doctors; in Acre, 13.1 masters and 1.2 doctors; in Roraima, 20, 9 masters and one doctor; in Rondônia, 10.9 masters and 0.9 doctor; and in Amapá, eight masters and 0.8 doctor (CGEE, 2019). The Amazon still has the lowest rate of master's and doctoral degrees, as well as the lowest percentage of master's and doctoral degrees per 100 thousand inhabitants. The states of Rondônia and Amapá, for example, have less than one doctor per 100 thousand inhabitants.

The lack of *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses in the Amazon has repercussions on the low rate of training of researchers, on scientific production indicators, and on research that could elucidate the problems affecting the education of local communities (indigenous, *quilombolas*, riverside dwellers, etc.), their regional and national interfaces and international articulations.

In Chart 2, we list the PPGEDs by higher education institution (HEI) in Northern Brazil. UFPA is the institution with the largest number of postgraduate programs in education in the North: three master's degrees and two doctorates, as well as having the only grade 5 programs in the region. However, most of the programs are located in the capital, Belém. Only the PPGEduc is in the interior of the state, in the city of Cametá.

The Federal University of Tocantins (UFT) and the Federal University of Rondônia (UNIR) have two postgraduate programs in education. They are the only institutions in the North region with professional postgraduate programs in education. UEPA and the Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM) have postgraduate programs in education, with master's and PhD courses. UEA, UNIFAP, UERR, Universidade Federal do Oeste do Pará (UFOPA), UFAC and Universidade Estadual de Roraima (UFRR) have only one postgraduate program with an academic master's degree. It is important to note that all the states in the North have at least one postgraduate program in education.

This offer in the North has developed sparsely and very slowly. The first master's program was developed at UFAM in 1987, 21 years after the first postgraduate education program in Brazil, which dates back to 1966. The second program was conceived in 2003, 16 years after the formation of the first master's course in the region, this time at UFPA. The first doctoral program was set up in 2008, also at UFPA. Of the five doctoral courses, three were created between 2019 and 2020, so they are newly accredited. In the 35-year period of postgraduate programs in the Northern region (1987 to 2022), only in 2010, 2014, 2017, and 2019 were two or more programs formed, with 2014 standing out as the year in which five courses were approved.

Considering the level of administrative dependence, we identified that the PPGEs belong only to public HEIs, with a predominance of federal ones. This reinforces the role of public universities in training researchers and producing knowledge in the Brazilian Amazon. According to Costa Morosini (2008, p. 139), "[...] it is the public HEIs that manage to fulfill the research function [...]. This assertion is backed up by the expansion of the Brazilian higher education system, which has mostly taken place in private HEIs [...]"

Chart 2 – Postgraduate education in the Northern region, by higher education institution (2022).

HEI	Program	Level	Year the course started			
			ME	DO	MP	DP
Universidade Federal do Pará (UFPA)	PPEB	ME	2016	-	-	-
	PPGED	ME/DO	2003	2008		
	PPGEDUC	ME	2014	-	-	-
Universidade Federal do Tocantins (UFT)	PPGE	ME	2012	-	-	-
	PPPGE	MP	-	-	2017	-
Universidade Federal de Rondônia (UNIR)	PPGE	ME	2010	-	-	-
	PPGEEProf	MP/DP	-	-	2014	2019
Universidade do Estado do Pará (UEPA)	PPGED	ME/DO	2005	2019	-	-
Universidade do Estado do Amazonas (UEA)	PPGED	ME	2020	-	-	-
Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM)	PPGE	ME/DO	1987	2010	-	-
Universidade Federal do Amapá (UNIFAP)	PPGED	ME	2017	-	-	-
Universidade Estadual de Roraima (UERR)	PPGE	ME	2014	-	-	-
Universidade Federal do Oeste Do Pará (UFOPA)	PPGE	ME	2014			
Universidade Federal do Acre (UFAC)	PPGE	ME	2014	-	-	-
Universidade Federal de Roraima (UFRR)	PPGEduc	ME	2019	-	-	-
UFPA, UFAM, UFOPA, UFT, UFAC, UNIFAP, UFRR, UNIR E UEA*	PGEDA	DO	-	2020	-	-

Source: prepared by the authors based on the Sucupira Platform Reports (CAPES, 2022).

MD: Master's Degree; DO: Doctorate; PM: Professional Master's Degree; PD: Professional Doctorate; PPBS: Postgraduate Program in Basic School Curriculum and Management; PPGED: Postgraduate Program in Education; PPGEDUC: Postgraduate Program in Education and Culture; PGPE: Postgraduate Program in Education; PPPGE: Professional Postgraduate Program in Education; PPGEEProf: Postgraduate Program in School Education; PGEDA: Postgraduate Program in Education in the Amazon. *The Postgraduate Program in Education in the Amazon (PGEDA) was approved by Capes on April 5, 2019, and brings together 39 researchers from nine Universidade Federals and one Universidade Estadual in the Northern region with the aim of training new doctors to research education in the region as a priority, creating strategies for intra-regional integration and consolidating existing research groups in the Amazon. Available at: <http://www.educanorte.prosp.ufpa.br/index.php/br/programa/apresentacao>. Accessed on: June 20, 2022.

According to Catani, Oliveira, and Michelotto (2010, p. 271), “[t]his suggests that private universities have little interest in offering master’s and doctoral programs, especially academic ones, probably because they don’t make the expected profit. The authors classify these institutions as “teaching universities” because they focus their activities exclusively on developing teaching activities.

Postgraduate education in the Amazon only exists in public universities. However, to maintain it requires more investment, adequate physical structure, and highly qualified professionals with exclusive dedication, which is why the private sector prioritizes offering graduate courses focused solely on teaching activities, whose financial return is greater.

According to Catani, Oliveira, and Michelotto (2010, p. 277), the expansion of postgraduate courses, the development of research and the production of knowledge must

be analyzed in relation to the productive restructuring of capital, which currently “imposes a new reality for the 21st century, namely knowledge as a fundamental element of production and the accumulation of differential advantages in a capitalist scenario of globalized competition”. Furthermore, according to Catani, Oliveira, and Michelotto (2010, p. 277), “this new reality often generates a process of dependent inclusion or technological exclusion of countries and regions that are not interested in the commodity-producing system of globalized capitalism [...]”.

In this way, the organization of geographical space is guided by the logic of capital interests through the instrumentalization of nature and knowledge (Catani, Oliveira and Michelotto, 2010). The instrumental use of nature and knowledge leads to different appropriations of national territories and generates educational and economic asymmetries. In the Amazonian context, for example, the logic of development was and is based on the exhaustive exploitation of natural wealth, materialized through the plundering of raw materials for the international market. This is the logic that has underpinned the development projects implemented in the Amazon.

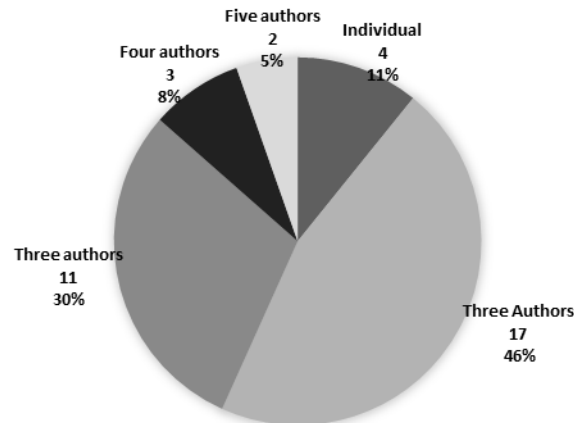
For capital, “[...] education and knowledge become economic problems, as they become central elements of this new pattern of development” (Catani, Oliveira and Michelotto, 2010, p. 278). Thinking of education as an economic problem is a way of framing education and knowledge as “[...] the driving force and axis of productive transformation and economic development” (Catani, Oliveira and Michelotto, 2010, p. 278). In this way, education is subordinated to the designs of capital, used to promote capitalist reproduction and accumulation. For this reason, only science and technology that can have an impact on the reproduction of capital, on the generation of surplus value, are of interest; in other words, only knowledge that is useful to capital is relevant. In this sense, thinking about postgraduate studies in the Amazon requires problematizing the uses of knowledge and nature in the global agenda of capital’s needs.

RESEARCH GROUPS ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTION IN CO-AUTHORSHIP

The creation and institutionalization of research groups in the Brazilian academic-scientific structure has been an important step in the process of knowledge production and consolidation of postgraduate studies. In the Amazon, research groups play an important role in the training of researchers and in the inclusion of relevant topics in the theoretical-methodological framework on the Amazon. They also promote the creation of collaborative networks that encourage dialogue with colleagues, exchange of experiences, and interaction with more experienced researchers. For this reason, the group is fundamental for new researchers: “[...] because you don’t learn how to do research, you don’t develop research skills just by reading manuals. This learning takes place through dialogues, interfaces, and fruitful participation in working groups [...]” (Gatti, 2005, p. 124). It is “through the group and in the group that the researcher builds collaborative networks with other researchers, groups, and institutions” (Matos, Reis and Costa, 2020, p. 9).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The *corpus* of analysis is made up of 37 scientific articles published in journals between 2008 and 2022; of these, four were individually authored, the rest (33) were co-authored, of which 17 were had two authors and 16 had three or more co-authors. Graph 1 shows the percentages of co-authored articles.

Graph 1 – Articles published by research group leaders between 2008 and 2022.

Source: prepared by the authors (2022).

Although co-authored publications represent the majority (33) of the publications analyzed, they are concentrated in simple co-authorship (with two authors). The research carried out by Leite *et al.* (2014) found, that in the field of education, the least frequent type of co-authorship is that with three authors. In the research we carried out, although the majority of articles were written by single authors, co-authorship with three authors is significant: a total of 11 articles were written with the participation of three researchers. Although the percentage is low, co-authorship with five authors is noteworthy because it is not common in the human sciences, as pointed out by Leite *et al.* (2014).

The co-authorship network built by the leaders of the PPGED/UNIFAP education policy research groups between 2008 and 2022 has a total of 39 co-authors. The professors are central to the networks and have the largest number of connections with members both inside and outside the research group. There are co-authors who are not part of the research group associated with UNIFAP who also have a higher recurrence of co-authorship. These co-authors are also professors, which supports the claim that professors are key to building research networks.

Most of the articles were written with the participation of specialization and master's students associated with UNIFAP. For Lopes and Costa (2012, p. 727), the co-authored scientific production in the field of education "[...] contributes to the training of master's and doctoral students, as well as to the insertion of researchers in training for the production of knowledge in the field and in its political-academic intricacies" (Lopes and Costa, 2012, p. 727).

The intellectual collaboration involved local and regional researchers from different institutions, such as the UFPA, the Universidade do Estado do Pará (UEPA), the Universidade Estadual do Sudoeste da Bahia (UESB), the Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU), and the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). However, the state where the leaders have the most collaborative research is Pará, and the institution is UFPA. The relationship between PPGED/UNIFAP and UFPA predates the approval of this program by CAPES, which is maintained through collaborative research.

Sant'Ana (2015, p. 1145) states that collaborative networks between universities contribute to "[...] overcoming institutional, regional, and national boundaries that are considered to limit the understanding of reality." He goes on to say that the formation of scientific networks is gaining importance in academic discourse, mainly because it allows researchers and their students to collaborate with other projects and institutions.

According to Matos, Reis, and Costa (2020), the geographical location of research groups can be an obstacle, especially financial, but it is not an obstacle to research with partners from different institutions. Developing research in partnership is a process of theoretical maturation, exchange of

ideas, and a lot of learning, especially for researchers and research groups that are in the process of being formed. In this way, collaborative research expands inter-institutional relations and inter-knowledge among researchers. For this reason, the formation, and institutionalization of research groups on education policy in the Northern region “[...] is essential to promote research that expands the collaborative network in the region, consequently increasing the scientific production in the area and, above all, contributing to the training of new researchers” (Matos and Reis, 2019, p. 127). That is why it is important to strengthen these spaces.

However, Ramalho and Madeira (2005, p. 80) point out that postgraduate education in the North and Northeast lacks consolidated research groups to “[...] guarantee the conditions for the academic and scientific productivity of the groups and lines of research, to highlight the regional participation in the country as a whole.”

The data collected draws attention to the need to develop more research on educational policies in educational institutions in this region, as well as to increase the number of PPGEDs in the North of Brazil. The PPGS are institutional spaces for the training of researchers who contribute to the development of new research and the elucidation of problems that directly affect education.

Despite the organization of researchers in research groups and the construction of networks to exchange ideas with thematic reference groups, the uneven distribution of postgraduate education in Brazil reverberates in scientific production. Mainardes (2018) found that the majority of authors of articles on education policy come from the Southeast (45.7%) and South (25.7%) regions, which together account for 71.4% of the research analyzed. The Northeast (17.1%), Midwest (7.9%), and North (3.6%) regions, on the other hand, account for only 28.6%. A study by Mainardes (2018) found that the North is the region with the lowest percentage of scholarly production on education policy, accounting for only 3.6% of the production.

CONCLUSION

The research shows that postgraduate education in the North of Brazil is still insufficient to serve a region as vast, complex, and diverse as the Amazon. Offering doctoral courses is an urgent necessity, given the importance that doctoral training represents for the expansion of postgraduate studies in education in the Amazon, the strengthening of research, the expansion of research groups, and the production of knowledge about this territory.

Despite the need to expand postgraduate studies in education, the Federal Government has recently cut the budget of public universities, especially the funds allocated to research development, which has directly affected postgraduate studies. Without resources, research is not developed, laboratories are scrapped, grants are reduced, and knowledge does not advance. In a region like the Amazon, with its continental dimensions, maintaining postgraduate studies in a context of limited resources is, in itself, an act of resistance and the result of the struggle of professors and students.

The researchers who led the educational policy research groups at PPGED/UNIFAP conduct research in partnership with different local, regional, and national researchers and institutions. The data collected from the researchers’ Lattes revealed that co-authored research began before the research group was institutionalized, but the expansion and regular production of scientific articles occurred after the group was formed.

Therefore, the creation of educational policy research groups is important for the regular development of research that strengthens the field. It is necessary, however, to analyze this scientific production in greater depth to identify the themes, subject, and theoretical framework and to understand the trends, the paths followed, as well as the perspectives under construction.

The research networks built through co-authored scientific production, although they have strengthened some partnerships, especially with researchers from UFPA, still lack more dialogue with other

institutional spaces outside the regional and national context. The internationalization of postgraduate studies is a necessity, due to the requirements of research funding agencies, the CAPES evaluation system, which uses this criterion as a mechanism to assess the quality of postgraduate studies, and because it allows an intercommunication with researchers from other social and scientific contexts and realities.

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