

Homeschooling in Brazil: teacher's perspectives

Kayo Eduardo Alves Cardoso^I
Andréia Araújo da Nóbrega^{I, II}

^IUniversidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte (UERN) – Patu/RN, Brazil

^{II}Universidade Estadual de Maringá (UEM) – Maringá/PR, Brazil

ABSTRACT – Homeschooling in Brazil: teacher's perspectives. This research used a qualitative-quantitative approach to understand the perspectives of primary and public school teachers in some municipalities in the state of Rio Grande do Norte on the regulation of homeschooling. It was concluded that it is necessary to continue the debate in order to better understand and participate in the regulation of homeschooling in Brazil. The teachers interviewed were opposed to the idea of allowing students to complete their education outside of a conventional school, considering it essential despite its shortcomings. Therefore, the research highlights the importance of listening to teachers, who play a direct role in this context, to inform decisions on the regulation of homeschooling in Brazil.

Keywords: Home Education. Homeschooling. Teaching.

RESUMO – Educação Domiciliar no Brasil: perspectivas docentes. Esta pesquisa utilizou uma abordagem quali-quantitativa para compreender as perspectivas dos docentes da rede básica e pública de ensino de alguns municípios do estado do Rio Grande do Norte sobre a regulamentação do Ensino Domiciliar. Concluiu-se que é necessário continuar o debate para melhor compreensão e participação na regulamentação do ensino em casa no Brasil. Os docentes entrevistados se opuseram à ideia de permitir que os estudantes concluam sua educação fora da escola convencional, considerando-a essencial apesar de suas deficiências. Portanto, a pesquisa destaca a importância de ouvir os docentes, que desempenham um papel direto nesse contexto, para informar decisões sobre a regulamentação do ensino domiciliar no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: Educação Domiciliar. Homeschooling. Docência.

Introduction

The debate around the possibility of homeschooling in Brazil is not something recent. This method of teaching has already been constituting a reality in several countries for some decades. According to Moreira (2017), the United States, in the 1970's, was the country where there was the emergent appearing of homeschooling and where it gained strenght, since it placed itself as a social movement that went against the formal teaching ministered at the formal education institutes of the time. Besides the United States, in countries such as "[...] Austria, Belgium, Canada, Australia, France, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Italy and New Zeland, homeschooling is legalized. In others, such as Germany, it's illegal" (Bernardes, 2019, p. 32-33).

In Brazil, draft biills are being created which seek to add and regulate homeschooling as a possibility of a teaching method. In 2022, the Chamber of Deputies approved the base text of the draft bill 3.179 de 2012 which "[...] alters Laws nºs 9.394, of 20 December 1996 (Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education), and 8.069, of 13 July 1990, (Statute of the Child and the Adolescent), to dispose about the possibility of a home offer for basic education". Besides that, since 2019, the DB 3262/19 is under consideration, which "[...] alters the Decree-Law nº 2.848, of 7 December 1940 – Penal Code, to include the sole paragraph in its art. 246, aiming to prevent that home education (homeschooling) does not constitute a crime of intellectual abandonment" (Brasil, 2019).

The relevance of the theme lies in being a question of, facing approval or disapproval, there will be educational consequences which need to be collectively thought out and discussed. For that, it's necessary to listen to certain diverse points of view to reach a broader outlook regarding the theme.

In order to expand the debate around the mentioned subject, this work has a general goal of comprehending the conceptions and positionings of teachers of Basic Education who are active in municipalities of the State of Rio Grande do Norte, in the context of the public education system in the country, about the regulation of homeschooling in Brazil. As specific goals, we have: realizing a theoretical gathering about what is being discussed so far about the subject; identifying the previous knowledge of teachers of basic education about homeschooling; and finally, analyzing the perceptions and attitudes of teachers of basic education about the proposal of regulation of home schooling in Brazil.

For the theoretical foundation of this research, we utilized authors such as: Alencar; Yannoulas (2022); Bernardes (2019); Moreira (2017); Penna (2019); Roncatto (2019); Rosa; Camargo (2020); Septimio; Pessoa (2020); Vasconcelos; Boto (2020).

Methodology

In this present work, for methodological means, the quantitative and qualitative approaches were used, with the first being the one which “[...] intends and allows the determination of indicators and trends present in reality, in other words, representative data and objectives [...]” (Freitas Mussi et al., 2019, p. 418). Still according to the author, these approaches collaborate in the understanding of the existence and/or interference of particular elements or not, which may serve as foundation for acts that aim to confront the presented reality. On the other hand, the qualitative approach is the one which:

[...] works with the universe of signifiers, of motives, of aspirations, of beliefs, of values and attitudes. This set of human phenomena is understood here as part of social reality, since human beings are distinguished not only by acting, but by thinking about what they do and by interpreting their actions inside and from the reality lived and shared with their peers (Minayo, 2007, p. 21).

Facing this, the methodology used here constitutes as qualitative, understanding that these approaches, although different, can assume a connection of complementarity, allowing a larger elaboration and understanding of the studied phenomena. In accordance to this Minayo and Sanches (1993, p. 247) express that:

The relationship between quantitative and qualitative, between objectivity and subjectivity isn't reduced to a continuum, it can't be thought of as contradictory opposition. On the contrary, it is desirable that social relationships can be analyzed in their more 'ecological' and 'concrete' aspects. Thus, the qualitative study may generate questions that can be thoroughly looked at in a quantitative way, and vice-versa.

To reach the proposed goals in the present work, a theoretical revision was realized, a methodological research which is characterized as:

[...] the revision of literature about the main theories that guide the scientific work. This revision is what we call bibliographical survey or bibliographical revision, which may be realized in books, serials, newspaper articles (Pizzani et al., 2012, p. 54).

The proposal was formulated based on analyses and thoughts about homeschooling in Brazil present in publications, such as books, articles and final projects that discuss such subjects.

Through an exploratory research, being that in which, “On many occasions there are also new problems for which specific theories have not been developed. In that last instance, we usually talk about exploratory research, in which the investigator goes on proposing a new interpretative discourse” (Minayo, 2007, p. 17). A survey was applied, through *Google forms*, with 8 objective questions that were sent and answered by male and female teachers of basic and public education systems, starting from the premise that, according to Thiollent (1987, p. 33) “[...] the survey is applied to a group of people chosen by

diverse procedures based on criteria of representation of the global population which is the object of the investigation". Still according to the author, the questions present in the surveys are equivalent to the hypotheses in the form of interrogation.

There were 35 participants, with 68.6% of them of the female gender and 31.4% of the male gender; in an age bracket of 27 to 72 years old; accounting for between 3 months and 34 years of a teaching career, and active in early childhood education (11.4%), elementary education I (25.7%) and elementary education II (20%) and high school education (42.9%). This way, the goal was to identify the previous knowledge of teachers of basic and public education in Rio Grande do Norte in regards to homeschooling in Brazil and to investigate where these education professionals are placed inside the debate.

At last, the application of a second survey was conducted, this one written, open and semistructured, sent in a *word* file through *whatsapp* to 8 teachers of public and basic education. The 8 participating teachers are residents of the potiguares municipalities of Umaziral Patu, Serrinha dos Pintos and Olho D'água do Borges, which are situated in the West microregion of the State. Amongst the selected teachers, 6 are of the female gender and 2 are of the male gender, ranging in age from 23 to 53 years old. 2 teachers were selected for each of the levels of teaching of basic education, having their academic training in pedagogy (4), a degree in chemistry (1), languages-Portuguese (2) and geography (1), who have been active in classrooms from 2 to 24 years. The teachers in question are identified by alphabet letters, highlighted in italic, so their identities are preserved

The justification for the choice of the participant subjects of the surveys is owed to: variety in cities in which they reside, them being residents of the municipality of Patu/RN and surroundings, making it possible to know, a little, the realities of some schools and practices present in the region; facilitating access and contact with the participants, composition in the teaching body of public and basic education; active time in their respective levels of training.

Homeschooling in Brazil

This section was developed based on discussions and thoughts built regarding homeschooling in Brazil found in books, articles, and final papers that address the topic.

It's divided in three subsections: the first, titled *Concept and legislation*, discusses the concept of the term *homeschooling* and some legal perspectives that govern Brazilian education; the second, titled *Homeschooling Families*, approaches the families who are adept of this model of teaching, their profiles, motivations and opinions; the third subsection, titled *Analysis of Homeschooling*, presents some premisses and justifications which are used by those who are pro and against homeschooling in Brazil.

Concept and legislation

According to Septimio and Pessoa (2020), the modality of home-schooling is characterized by being a continuous process in which the family, willing to afford the responsibility, takes on the direction of the schooling process of basic education of children and teenagers, without there having, mandatorily, a monitoring coming from formal state educational institutes. In addition to this characterization of homeschooling, Moreira (2017, p. 55) says that:

Homeschooling is a modality of teaching which doesn't obey a unique logic, massified by all the families, by basing it on the principle of educational sovereignty of the family, meaning, it's foundation is the freedom for each family to determine how their children's education will take place.

In light of this, we can understand it as a modality of teaching in which the family assumes the role of being responsible for the process of teaching-learning of their children in basic education age, without them having to attend a school space. In charge of the parents, they may opt to direct a formal education themselves and/or share the role with a private teacher, always in accord with the possibilities and necessities of those involved.

In Brazil, there are legislations about the educational scope which work jointly, aiming for a systematization and standardization of teaching. Those guidelines can be found in the CP (Penal Code, Decree-law n° 2.848/40); ECA (Statute of the Child and Adolescent, Law n° 8.069/90); CF (Federal Constitution of 1988); and the LDB (Law of Guidelines and Bases for National Education; Law n° 9.394/96).

In the Federal Constitution of 1988, it is stated that "Education, right of all and duty of State and the family, will be promoted and encouraged with contribution from society, aiming for the full development of the person, their exercise of citizenship, and their qualification for work" (Brasil, 1988, art. 205); in the Law of Guidelines and Basics for National Education, with an update from 2017, it is disposed in the article 4°, paragraph I that, the offer of public school education is a duty of the State, which will be promoted by means of "[...] free and mandatory basic education from ages 4 (four) to 17 (seventeen) [...]" (Brasil, 1996, art. 4); the Statute of the Child and the Adolescent, in its article 55 presents that "The parents or legal guardians have the obligation to enroll their children or pupils in the regular network of education" (Brasil, 1990, art. 55) and in its article 129, paragraph V it still expresses that the family or legal guardian has to "[...] follow their attendance and progress in school" (Brasil, 1990, art. 129), and the Penal Code of 1940, in its article 246 informs that the absence, by the family, of the provision of primary education to children of school age, without justification, is typified as a crime of intellectual abandonment (Brasil, 1940, art. 246).

In this way, we may understand basic formal education as a responsibility that must be shared between the family, the State and so-

ciety, without having sovereignty of one over the other. The State has the duty to offer free institutions of teaching whereas the families must enroll their sons and daughters, as well as following their process of educational teaching-learning and their attendance.

Up until the moment of the elaboration of this research¹, it is currently in processing at the Chamber of Deputies the Draft Bill 3262/2019, which proposes an alteration of the Penal Code in its art. 246 that regards the crime of intellectual abandonment in light of situations in which, in the absence of justification, the child is not enrolled in a learning institution, with a penalty of 15 days to a month's detention or fine (Brasil, 1940, art. 246).

The draft bill proposes the inclusion of a sole paragraph in article 246, exempting parentes or legal guardians that adopt the modality of homeschooling of being accused of the crime of intellectual abandonment (Brasil, 3262/2019). This measure aims to direct the crime solely to those who won't properly offer primary education to children of school age, not being applied to families that opt to educate their children at home.

In 2022, the Chamber of Deputies approved the base text of draft bill Nº 3.179-B DE 2012, authored by Federal Deputy Lincoln Portela that comes to alter Laws nºs 9.394, of 20 of December 1996 (Law of Guidelines and Bases for Federal Education), and 8.069, of 13 June 1990, (Statute of the Child and Adolescent), to provide the possibility of offering basic education at home. Using the final draft of the project, it states that "It's admitted basic education at home, by free will and responsibility of the parents or legal guardians of the students [...]", making exceptions in cases which "[...] the direct legal guardian has been convicted or is serving a sentence [...]"; it becomes necessary the formalization of choice of homeschooling by a learning institution where it must present "[...] proof of higher education or technological vocational education, [...] by at least one of the parents or legal guardians and criminal records of parents or legal guardians; it must be realized, annually and mandatorily, the enrollment of the student in an official learning institution.

The home schooled student must follow the BNCC² for their school year, with activities registered quarterly. A learning institution will assign a tutor, control the attendance, realize semiannual meetings and yearly evaluations. The choice of the parents is revoked after insufficiency in evaluations or failures for two consecutive years or three non-consecutive years.

According to Masschelein and Simons (2014), historically the school is a target to schemes and attack plans that seek to reprimend it, control it and neutralize it. According to them, in spite of all the transformations that occurred in the learning institutions aiming for their improvement, it was all a strategy of dismantling and neutralization of the learning ideal, implementing a dynamic of persecution to satisfy and maximize the individual learning necessities, reducing the school to being, only, the institution that provides such services.

According to Saviani (2020), the democratic, universalizing and egalitarian public school model that is aimed for ends up being in contradiction with the current capitalist society. Once reached, providing to all access to a quality public education that ensured the appropriation of knowledge of all citizens equally, it would result in its overcoming as a capitalist society.

According to Septimio and Pessoa (2020, p. 144):

What is noticeable, actually, is that the discussion is in vogue to attend to the specific needs of politicians committed to a neoliberal agenda, of a privatist and elitist nature, in which the public problems are solved in an individual manner, which reduces the obligations of the State.

Thus, the proposal for homeschooling in Brazil can be understood as another one of several tactics of attack against the educational institution, seeing that, it comes to deny its character and relevance which are beyond their roles as educator and socializer. Under this point of view, it's constituted as an attempt to decimate and devalue the importance of the teacher's role as a graduate professional in their area, treating them as *easily* replaceable. This view ends up contributing to a larger social abyss between the different opportunities of individuals, judging the school as an outdated space and placing home schooling, something not possible to all, as an immediate solution.

Homeschooling Family

The draft bills that were created aim for the alteration of those official documents which regulate basic education in the country for the purpose of making homeschooling a path that is possible, legalized and regulated. In Brazil, the National Association of Home Education (ANED, 2021), is an institution that was founded in 2010 through a group of families that believed they possessed not only the duty to educate their children, but also the right to be able to opt for the teaching modality. Thus, ANED defends "[...] the freedom, and priority of the family in the choice of the genre of instruction to be ministered to their children" (ANED, 2021) having as central engine the educational autonomy of the family, being a strong ally in the fight for the regulation of homeschooling in the country.

There isn't, in this country, a census to accurately pinpoint the number of families and students that adhered to homeschooling. According to data from ANED (2021), in this country there are about 35 thousand families that practice homeschooling and about 70 thousand students who find themselves with basic schooling not being realized in official public or private schools, indicating a large growth curve of adepts in the last decade.

According to research done by Bernardes (2019) who, by means of surveys, sought to map the profiles of 23 families adept of homeschooling in Brazil, demonstrated that there was a predominance (about 74%) of families composed of 3 or 4 members. In addition, it

estabilishes that “More than 80% of them possess a household income n between three and twenty minimal wages in effect in the country. They have all finished High School, with 87% having a higher education degree. Of this set, almost 50% have a post-graduate degree, including Master’s and Doctorate” (Bernardes, 2019, p. 138).

The motivations that drive families to choose homeschooling to continue their children’s basic education vary, ranging from motives that are “[...] technical-scientfic, ideological, social, moral, religious (of faith) and also fear” (Septimio; Pessoa, 2020 p. 138). According to Bernardes (2019), amongst the most cited motivations we have the convergence of the religious matter between the school and the family; the high levels of violence and bullying amongst students; schols with unsatisfactory and fragile structural conditions. The presence of drugs inside the school environment; abuse and preccocious exposure to sex and difficulties with concentration of students due to the classroom environment.

Based on the exposed data, we noticed that in light of all of the obstacles that can be found in the learning institutions, whether they are public or private, the parents or legal guardians begin to see homeschooling as an alternative to solve this immediate matter and thus, try to guarantee a quality education for the children and teenagers.

Theoretical Analysys of Homeshcooling

Amongst the arguments in favor of homeschooling used by defenders of this teaching modality, we have that, adopting homeschooling promotes a larger capacity to:

[...] protect the child and the teenager from situations of violence, whether in the trajectory to school, or the school itself (by means of bullying, juvenile delinquence and indoctrination), it is more worried with the improvement of the academic performance, since no time is wasted on class management, with activities that devia-te attention from the scheduled and specific content of each component of the curriculum (Picoli, 2020, p. 2).

In accordance with that, São José (2014, p. 150) assures us that, amongst the motivations of families to adhere to homeschooling, would be the fact that it enables a larger:

[...] flexibility of schedules; the freedom to opt for a differentiated curriculum, and to continue or resume learning according to the possibilities and needs of the student without maintaining them prisioner to a curriculum or a sole didactic material; to experience different methodologies.

According to Guiotto (2018), *homeschooling* allows a process of teaching-learning that is more personalized, since the number of students is quite reduced when compared to a traditional classroom, thus, it’s possible to obtain better results in a shorter amount of time.

When questioned about the possible insufficiency of socialization for young people and children who complete basic education without attending a learning institution, the defenders of home

schooling claim that, in spite of the term homeschooling, the education in this teaching modality wouldn't happen only inside the family home, not counting only with its participation during the entire process (Moreira, 2017). According to Roncatto (2019), the process of teaching-learning, when directed by parents or legal guardians, would ensure that the child, or the young person, would not be restricted to socializing only inside the home, socialization would also occur by inhabiting diverse spaces such as music, dance, and theater courses, museums, parks and markets.

The central idea in defense of homeschooling according to Fuhr and Alejarra (2020), revolves around the choice of education by the family, understanding the learning institution not as one mandatorily imposed upon citizens, but actually, being placed as being another possible path for the education of the new generations.

Amongst the arguments that oppose the practice of homeschooling in Brazil, "[...] the most frequent line of questioning in relation to home schooling refers to the socialization of children" (Moreira, 2017, p. 125), seeing that one of the main collective spaces permeated by children, who will find themselves cohabiting with other similar and different subjects amongst themselves. In spite of arguing that social coexistence with other individuals may happen in diverse spaces that are not the school, Septimio and Pessoa (2020) point that it's worth questioning how many and which Brazilian families would have the necessary resources to afford the frequent attendance of their children in these environments, this being a question of the economic conditions of families.

Still referring to the item of socialization of homeschooled students, it is mentioned that "[...] the family cannot handle the several ways of living that each citizen participates in and will participate in" (Cury, 2006, p. 670). In addition, Picoli (2020, p. 9) says that:

If every child and every adolescent becomes an adult and enters the adult world, complex and plural, in which their values are not the only valid values, in which relationships amongst human beings no longer happen in the same way they do in the family, in which you are exposed to the dangers of appearing, the dangers of birth rates, it is sensible that this entry doesn't happen in a radical way, as a rupture, but that it happens in a gradual way.

In this way, the school is an institution capable of assuming this role in the approach and transition, in a progressive way, of private spaces, such as the family, to collective spaces where it will face, get to know and mingle with the other and their particularities, contributing to the protection of plurality in the ways of being in the world, allowing for a training as citizens, in the collectivity, that values respect and defense of differences.

According to Costa (2015), the autonomy of parents and legal guardians in being able to opt for home schooling constitutes as a stripping away of the fundamental right to an education which is possessed by the children and teenagers and adolescents and not the

relatives. This power of choice given to the parents, would go against what is sad in the documents that approach and regulate education in Brazil.

Facing the motivations that bring families to adhere to homeschooling related to the infrastructure of the school and the training and overloading of teachers which end up compromising the quality of teaching, it is inferred that “[...] the solution would be to solve them in a collective perspective and not enabling the well-off families a right to opt-out, of not living with the issue” (Septimio; Pessoa, 2020, p. 142). Having homeschooling as an option, in light of the discontent with the current educational system, we let go of a continuous community struggle so that improvements are made and some of the central problems with the education in Brazil are solved or minimized.

General Perspectives

Through a survey, via *Google Forms*, with 8 objective questions, which was sent to teachers of basic and public education networks, the goal was to identify their knowledge regarding homeschooling in Brazil, aiming to locate where the teachers find themselves inside the debate around homeschooling.

When questioned about whether they had or hadn't already heard of the theme, 91,4% of the interviewed people answered yes and 8.6% answered no. In regards to staying informed about homeschooling in Brazil, doing research about the topic, 45.7% said they do research or have researched, whereas 54.3 claimed they don't.

When questioned about whether they are or aren't aware that in 2022 the Chamber of Deputies approved the Draft Bill N° 3.179-B from 2012 which aims to dispose about the possibility of home schooling in Brazil, 88,6% of the interviewed subjects claimed they were aware of this Draft Bill, and the remaining ones (11.4%) claimed they were not aware of this issue. Finally, 11.4% of teachers claimed they know some families that have adhered to homeschooling, whereas the remaining ones (88.4%) claimed they didn't know any.

In light of the exposed data, it's possible to notice that the teachers of public and basic educational networks are aware of the existence of the debate around homeschooling in Brazil, something that can be seen as unheard of to some, but which is being placed as an emerging conversation topic for some decades now. However, in light of the 54.3% who answered that they don't research or have never researched about homeschooling, and the 11.4% who claimed they don't know about the Draft Bill N°3.179-B, it's noticeable that there's still a part of the faculty that is still not sufficiently aware of the theme and its elements and that, because of that, may not be apt to contribute to the debate in defense of its ideals in the placement of professionals of education.

According to Roncatto (2019, p. 10):

The importance of looking at homeschooling, in Brazil, lies in the fact that, once approved, it will have repercussions in some

laws which have as a pattern formal and regular education, [...]. also, in case it is legalized, countless doubts about what can be done and how it should be done; which subjects will be developed; in what way the evaluations of development and the obtaining of certifications of completion will take place; amongst others, will have to be faced.

Thus, it's important that teachers are aware of the debate around homeschooling in Brazil, since that, it's approval or refusal will impact the educational system as a whole, either by having an emergence of new dynamics between homeschooling school, teacher and student, in case it's approved; or by having to come up with possible ways and solutions for those students who had already adhered to homeschooling, in case the proposal is denied.

In that sense, starting with the data pointed above, collected with the goal of getting familiar with the state of the debate amongst teachers, it was then conducted the second part of this research, facing deeper answers from participants who already display some knowledge of this theme.

The teachers' gaze: understanding homeschooling

By means of a survey answered by 8 teachers of public and basic educational networks of the State of Rio Grande do Norte, containing 10 subjective questions about their opinion on homeschooling in Brazil, their interpretations of reality being inserted inside their places of work, as well as the idea of the relevance of teaching and educational institutes, it was possible to analyze the perceptions of these teachers about the proposal of regulation of homeschooling in Brazil and its possible ramifications.

Right from the start, a question emerged about the knowledge and understanding of teachers about what is the meaning of homeschooling, coming to the conclusion that they all have a familiarity with the theme which is in accord with what can be found in academic literature. A learning modality in which there is an absence of attendance from the student at a learning institution, the process of teaching-learning happens, mainly, inside a home, having the parents or legal guardians as those who assume the task of planning, conducting and checking the entire process (Andrade, 2014; Aziz, 2020; Roncatto, 2019).

Next, after being questioned about home schooling, in the condition of a possible learning modality, it would give the necessary support so that students could finish basic education, all of the participants claimed, categorically, that in no way could the modality of homeschooling provide that support for the student. A common concern which was raised was about who would fill the role in this learning process. Who would they be? What training would they have? Would that be enough to match the team of professionals offered by the school? For *Teacher C*, it's necessary to "[...] consider some important points: at first the knowledge of those responsible; and the

adequate and organized space, supporting material and pedagogical support”.

According to Vasconcelos and Boto (2020), family environments tend to be more uniform, whereas schools are characterized by a diversity of individuals who interact in the same space. That contributes to prepare students for coexistence in a diverse society. When students are outside the school, they may not develop abilities of recognition and respect for diversity, because, they do not have the opportunity to confront the different. The authors have also raised similar questions to the interviewed teachers, questioning how the familiar environment may encompass diversity not only of people, but also of school subjects. They wonder about the viability of hiring a private tutor for each subject or how parentes may handle the teaching of all subjects, considering that at school they are ministered by specialized teachers.

The next question aimed to know if the participants saw any impact when it comes to hiring teachers of the public and private educational networks, as well as the performance of these teachers, since, home schooling would become a possible modality. On this issue, there was a divide amongst those who answered that yes, there would be impacts and those who didn't think so. Amongst those who answered that they did not see any implications, they showed they were based on the idea that only a small portion of the population would wish to adhere to homeschooling, and an even smaller one would be able to afford the conditions demanded to adopt and maintain this teaching modality, “[...] this would not be a threat to the teaching profession. It would be a very small portion of the population who would adopt this manner of teaching” (*Teacher D*). As for the others, they claimed that the devaluation of the teacher and, consequently, the view of them as easily replaceable professionals, could be one of the consequences of homeschooling, “[...] with the presence of this teaching method, which is currently illegal in Brazil, as well as making the hiring of teachers more difficult, it devalues it” (*Teacher B*).

According to Vasconcelos and Boto (2020), the possibility of being able to opt for homeschooling would affect, from their point of view, private institutions a lot more than public ones, since, they understand that the audience who is supported by the private network would be the one who would possess, supposedly, better material means to adhere and maintain their offspring in one of these learning modalities. To them, the students supported by the public learning network would still remain taking advantage of this space, which has been their right for a long time, even with homeschooling being regulated in the country. But it's worth pointing out that this learning modality permeates many elements, amongst them “[...] it negatively affects teaching as a historically constructed profession, since, inside this perspective, anyone, regardless of their training, could teach” (Rosa; Camargo, 2020, p. 14).

Moving on, it was asked whether, with the regulation of homeschooling in Brazil, teachers glimpsed any problems that would emerge and/or intensify inside the educational context. They all claimed that yes, they believed there would be negative consequences born from this regulation. Some of the common points claimed by them were the impact in the development of socialization and the socioemotional skills, as well as the emergence and/or worsening of psychological problems on the part of the student.

From the moment that the child begins to study only at home in the company of the family, they will be increasingly more distant from the social environment and may be quite harmed in their socioemotional state, starting to have difficulties in interacting with other people, difficulties with expressing themselves in public and consequently of making friendships (*Teacher A*).

Here is important to emphasize that, besides the possible effects on the students, coming with the possibility of homeschooling, there is also the fear that “[...] the clearance of *homeschooling* in Brazil [...]” means “a weakening of the schools, especially public ones” (Septimio; Pessoa, 2020, p. 142). To the authors, with the identification of numerous problems inside the scope of public education already happening, with it being thought up, effected and supervised by several agents, to which conjecture it would move towards, once it is facilitated to the families and the attendance or lack thereof of their offspring in the institutions of basic education? Furthermore (Penna, 2019; Picoli, 2020), there should be thought about the function performed by the schools in what concerns the network of protection of children and teenagers. Besides their function of building educational knowledge, this institution allows the proximity of other cultural institutions that come to work with the network of security of the physical and emotional integrity of these subjects that, inside homeschooling will become less visible and supervised by the State.

On the possible perspectives for the socialization and development of socioemotional skills of the student, in the context of homeschooling, teachers believe that homeschooling contributes to form a closed off, isolated and little interactive individual. The teachers also claimed that, the school space provides several levels and degrees of socialization amongst students, teachers and other staff of the learning institution, which comes to collaborate in acquiring the skills of socializing, knowledge and respect for the differences, something that home schooling would not be able to provide without deficiencies.

The lack of coexistence with their peers could bring a major difficulty in sharing spaces, in understanding the need of living collectively, or even the voluntary distancing of others in the long run (*Teacher F*).

In dialogue with this idea, Penna (2019) says that the socialization that happens in other spaces which are not the school, by itself, will not be enough for a student who doesn't attend school, since, the school space is able to provide a socialization that is specific to that space, that which places different thoughts, feelings, views and ways of being in the world in a dialogue that is appropriate for new learn-

ings of self, of others and ourselves. To Alencar and Yannoulas (2022, p. 124), homeschooling may “[...] suppress these broader elements of the formation of being, weakening the conception of an education that values the pluralism of ideas, the full development and human formation”.

When asked if the theme of religion was inserted in any way inside the institution where they worked, as well as in their classes and in what way this topic was approached and handled by them, some claimed they worked with religious content, very structured on development of morality using books, amongst them the Bible, as claimed by *Teacher A*, who says she works “By means of activities that encouraged good manners, the values of a dignified life, the importance of practicing good deeds, such as generosity, charity, friendship, kindness and also work on self-esteem, the valuing of the self in a personal and social manner”. Others claimed they approach religion only when it’s present inside the content to be worked in the classroom, in these cases there is a search for impartiality, such as is the case for *Teacher E*, who, by teaching the subject of religion, has worked “[...] in the most unbiased manner possible. I sought to approach the most diverse manners of faith, without focusing on any of them”. In general, they have all denied any focus on practices of one or other religion on the part of the school and the rest of the staff, when it comes to the students, as well as, declaring to take a respectful approach towards the religions of all.

According to Aziz (2020), only in cases where a negative and irreconcilable impact between school and religion is indeed alleged, in which the frequency of the first would affect the religious freedom of the parents and, mainly, of the interests of the students inserted inside a religious community, with their values and particular ways of living, it’s when there would be plausible motivation to justify the removing and absence of the student from the learning institution. However, still according to the author, such a situation is shown to be a rare occurrence in reality. From her point of view, the use of this argument, on the part of the parents, aims to mask the real intentions and motivations, once they would stand out from certain themes approached at school (gender and sex education) and/or contents that provide a scientific elucidation (the theory of Evolution) which contradicts that of a religious nature (creationism) which is desired by some families for their children. Taking this into account,

[...] it’s understood that the mandatory school attendance does not affect the essential core of the right to freedom of religion and faith of the minor, holder of the right in question, despite eventually contradicting their parent’s beliefs and personal choices, although based on questions of a religious character (Aziz, 2020, p. 569).

When questioned about the presence or lack of bullying, violence, precocious sexualization and drugs inside their work environment, as well as, about which manners are adopted to approach and handle these themes, the vast majority of participants claimed to

have witnessed problems of this kind, amongs them *bullying* was the most commonly cited one. The stance used to approach such events is, mainly, that of group and private dialogue and, when not resolved, the matter is brought to the management and, consequently, informed to the parents, as claimed by *Teacher G*: “When the school becomes aware of this cases, it seeks to, at first, talk to the student, try to understand what is happening, and then talk to the family and, when necessary, involve the competent authorities”.

Roncatto (2019, p. 60) highlights that bullying occurs in various social contexts, not only at school. Facing it is essential, but home education may leave children unprepared to handle it in the future, since school may teach them to handle such situations. The author says, also, that “[...] the school contributes a lot with the need to tolerate the differences of other people, and to know how to coexist with them”.

About the structural and material precariousness of the work environment which are concerning at the moment, we found teachers dissatisfied with the material conditions of the learning institutions, emphasizing that this comes to affect the process of teaching-learning and everyone involved, as is the case to *Teacher D*, for whom “[...] the lack of materials is always there. Most of the time we take from our own pocket to teach a good class. Even if we work with recycling, with recyclable things, but we need to supplement”. Others claim they are satisfied with how the school is and what they are able to provide. Amongst those who claimed they were satisfied, there are those who claim having experienced a precarious reality in the past, but due to structural renovations that occurred in the schools where they teach, the conditions in which they found themselves have changed for the better.

Our school has been through renovations recently, which currently helps a lot with the quality of teaching. But as a person who has seen both realities (um-renovated school/renovated school) I can claim that the lack of school supplies, of resources to purchase work supplies such as pencil ink, printing paper, amongst other school supplies, hurts a lot [...] (*Professora H*).

It's known that learning institutions suffer due to defficiencies and problems in what concerns their material conditions, and the moviment in favor of homeschooling brings to the surface the issues being a favorable element for its regulation in Brazil. However, it's necessary to think that the path for overcoming these problems in education is not through an individual choice, such as removing students from school. But actually, in collective work that comes to understand the realities and, then, to claim qualitative improvements for the schools and their professionals, not only pointing out the present deficiencies, but being willing to compete for these spaces, (Alencar; Yannoulas, 2022). On this subject Roncatto (2019) claims that, the role of the family should not be restricted to only enrolling their children at shcools. The family, the school and society must act together with the goal of seeking for improvements for the education which is offered. According to the referred author, home education should not

flourish in face of the existing deficiencies, because, beyond its technical role, the school is also the one capable of promoting an integral development of the subjects and to act in the fight against social inequalities.

The penultimate question was about the role of the teacher from the current basic and public networks of education, of its relevance and action inside our society. The answers highlighted the social base position that the teacher occupies, contributing not only with sharing ideas, thoughts and interpretations, but also with their presence as an important figure for the new generations, someone who contributed by socially stimulating the creation of individuals who are ethical, critical and citizens capable of reflecting and transforming society.

In my conception, the fundamental role of the teacher, whether from the public, or private network, whether state or municipal, [...] is to possess commitment, competence, embrace their work and show that their students are capable, that they are able to see the world in a different way (*Teacher D*).

The public network teacher is a daily warrior who tries with their practice to change the lives of children who in many cases need not only knowledge, but also an education that does not occur on the part of the families and also affection, the public network teacher, despite little recognition, seeks ways to be able to reach the largest possible number of children in their classes, in a way that they learn not only the taught subjects, but also, that they learn how to be good citizens [...] (*Teacher A*).

According to Alencar and Yannoulas (2022, p. 124), “The role of teachers and other professionals of education that occupy this space cannot be ignored, the specialization of this work is fundamental for the development of the student [...]”. Corroborating with this point of view, Vasconcelos and Boto (2020) highlight that the teacher is a professional of education, a subject who had their training years focused on teaching, on educating and that, for that reason, would be the one with the competence to take on this role inside a classroom and to do their job in an efficient manner. The authors also claim that, this teacher’s work is under constant vigilance, once they do it in view of everyone. Whether is inside the classroom with dozens of students, whether it’s at school with the management team, the supervisors, headmasters and other staff, their work as teachers is, incessantly, being observed, which comes to contribute and demand that this teacher comes to fulfill their role. Within homeschooling, this visibility of the process of teaching-learning and those involved is almost completely absent.

At last, about the importance of public learning institutions in the current context, the participant teachers emphasized that they see public learning institutions as an environment capable of generating stimuli, constructions and improvements about oneself and the world. Inserted in it, the new generations are provoked to developed cognitively, emotionally and socially at the same time in which they are being embraced in this space. For them, as well as providing this development of students as individuals, the school also carries a role as democratizer of knowledge, creator of critical citizens and it has a

transformative potential for individuals and, consequently, of societies.

The school is the institution responsible for transforming lives. It's a place where children and teenagers raise hopes and aim for a future. The public school, mainly, is a place that embraces differences, minorities. Despite all the stigmatization that surrounds it, it's from the public school that come the best professionals from the most diverse areas (*Teacher E*).

[...] it's important to highlight that the contribution and importance of the school goes much further than the access to knowledge, since that it's through the school that we may reach the decrease of violence and criminality, the emerging of new opportunities, the reduction of social inequality, the social and economical development and, subsequently, aspects that provide transformations that are not only individual, but for the entire country (*Teacher G*).

The public institutions of basic education assume three roles in the lives of students, according to Vasconcelos and Boto (2020), their primary task is to place themselves into a transitional and intermediate space of the subject that comes from a family environment and who comes to be presented and introduced to the social sphere. In order to do that, they bring the individual to build their own knowledge as someone who is literate and educated, necessary elements to comprehend and operate in the society which is permeated by their written codes and literate culture, that is their second role. The last one, concerns the training of an ethical subject and citizen, aware of the opinions, values, thoughts and ideas of the society in which they are a participant.

Concluding Remarks

The debate around homeschooling in Brazil is placed as a question that demands the participation of the greater number of individuals in society, especially those that find themselves in a direct relationship with the learning institution and its *modus operandi*, so that in this way, it becomes possible to reach pertinent perspectives, visions and reflections that allow providing an assertive decision for the family, school and society.

With the present research, it was found that the debate about homeschooling in Brazil is already something that has been revealing itself to be quite emergent within the academic field. From both sides there are arguments, justifications, and relevant points that contribute to obtaining a broader and deeper understanding of the issue and its possible ramifications.

It was possible to identify that this theme still appears to be unknown to some teachers in the public and basic education networks in certain municipalities of Rio Grande do Norte and, still, there is a significant number of educators who have not engaged in the discussion so far and, thus, are unaware of the developments and advancements regarding home education. Since this is a matter that directly involves the teaching group, actions and measures are necessary that promote and encourage the exchange of ideas and reflections

amongst them and other education professionals. Mainly, due to the existence of a threat to the professional identity of educators and to the profession's resultig devaluation.

When analyzing the responses given by the teachers participating in the opinion survey questionnaire, it is understood that, being situated within their contexts, they view homeschooling as a rather negative proposal for the field of education, as well as not very feasible given the reality of Brazil. For them, the learning institution, despite all the difficulties and adversities it presents, still stands as an indispensable, valuable, and significant space for society as a whole. It should be noted that the results achieved here refer to a sample located in a State of one of the five regions of the country and, therefore, do not represent the conceptions of the Brazilian teaching staff, as there are significant political and ideological differences throughout the country.

It is concluded that the teaching staff and other professionals of the learning institution present themselves as an extremely important element to contribute to the debate, as they deal daily, with the concrete dynamics present in the realities of Brazilian schools. It is necessary to listen, to think and to consider the material reality of each individual, their perception of the environment in which they are inserted, as well as their positioning and contribution regarding homeschooling in Brazil.

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Notes

¹ The present research was elaborated on 09/11/2022.

² The National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) is a normative document that defines the organic and progressive set of essential learnings that all students must develop throughout the stages and modalities of Basic Education (Brasil, 2017). Available at: <http://basenacionalcomum.mec.gov.br/>. Accessed in: April 1, 2023.

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Kayo Eduardo Alves Cardoso has a bachelor's degree in Pedagogy from the State University of Rio Grande do Norte (Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte) [UERN] [2023], at the Advanced Campus of Patu/RN.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5923-9151>

E-mail: kayoprof2000@gmail.com

Andréia Araújo da Nóbrega is a student at the doctoral program in post-graduate educational of State University of Maringá (Programa de Pós-graduação em Educação da Universidade Estadual de Maringá) and professor at the University of the State of Rio Grande do Norte (Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte). She graduated in Pedagogy from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte) [2008]. She holds a Master's degree in Linguistics from PROLING, by the Federal University of Paraíba (Universidade Federal da Paraíba). She has experience in the areas of Education and Portuguese Language, mainly focusing on the following topics: didactics, interships reading, literary literacy, teaching practices, textbooks, language, teaching-learning, and grammar. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3182-9175>
E-mail: andreiaaraujo@uern.br

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