

**IMPLEMENTATION OF PARFOR AND PARFOR EQUITY AT UFMA:
CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITS TO THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF TEACHER
EDUCATION**

**IMPLANTAÇÃO DO PARFOR E DO PARFOR EQUIDADE NA UFMA:
CONTRIBUIÇÕES E LIMITES PARA A DEMOCRATIZAÇÃO DA FORMAÇÃO
DOCENTE**

**IMPLEMENTACIÓN DEL PARFOR Y DEL PARFOR EQUIDAD EN LA UFMA:
CONTRIBUCIONES Y LÍMITES PARA LA DEMOCRATIZACIÓN DE LA
FORMACIÓN DOCENTE**



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ABSTRACT

Teacher education in basic education in Brazil has historically presented profound regional, social, and institutional inequalities, especially in states marked by educational vulnerabilities, such as Maranhão. In this context, public policies aimed at democratizing access to higher education become strategic for teacher appreciation and for improving the quality of basic education. The National Program for the Training of Basic Education Teachers (PARFOR) and, more recently, PARFOR Equity, were created to expand access to higher education for in-service teachers, prioritizing inland regions and historically marginalized groups. This study aimed to analyze the implementation processes of these programs at the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), highlighting their contributions and limitations regarding the democratization of teacher education. The research adopted a qualitative, descriptive, and exploratory approach, based on documentary analysis and bibliographic review. Institutional reports, legislation, public calls, and official documents from CAPES and UFMA were examined. The results indicate that the programs contributed to expanding access to teacher education courses, strengthening the interiorization of higher education, valuing cultural diversity, and reducing educational inequalities. Despite administrative, financial, and pedagogical challenges, PARFOR and PARFOR Equity demonstrate potential to consolidate equity policies and strengthen teacher education in Maranhão.

Keywords: Public Policies. Right to Education. Teacher Education. Basic Education. Educational Equity Management.

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RESUMO

A formação de professores da educação básica no Brasil apresenta, historicamente, profundas desigualdades regionais, sociais e institucionais, especialmente em estados marcados por vulnerabilidades educacionais, como o Maranhão. Nesse contexto, políticas públicas voltadas à democratização do acesso ao ensino superior tornam-se estratégicas para a valorização docente e para a melhoria da qualidade da educação básica. O Programa Nacional de Formação de Professores da Educação Básica (PARFOR) e, mais recentemente, o PARFOR Equidade, foram instituídos com a finalidade de ampliar o acesso de professores em exercício à formação superior, priorizando regiões interioranas e grupos historicamente marginalizados. Este estudo teve como objetivo analisar os processos de implementação desses programas na Universidade Federal do Maranhão (UFMA), destacando suas contribuições e limites para a democratização da formação docente. A pesquisa adotou abordagem qualitativa, de caráter descritivo e exploratório, fundamentada em análise documental e revisão bibliográfica. Foram examinados relatórios institucionais, legislações, editais e documentos oficiais da CAPES e da UFMA. Os resultados indicam que os programas contribuíram para a ampliação do acesso à licenciatura, fortalecimento da interiorização do ensino superior, valorização da diversidade cultural e redução de desigualdades educacionais. Apesar dos desafios administrativos, financeiros e pedagógicos, o PARFOR e o PARFOR Equidade evidenciam potencial para consolidar políticas de equidade e fortalecimento da formação docente no Maranhão.

Palavras-chave: Políticas Públicas. Direito a Educação. Formação Docente. Educação Básica. Gestão da Equidade Educacional.

RESUMEN

La formación de profesores de la educación básica en Brasil presenta históricamente profundas desigualdades regionales, sociales e institucionales, especialmente en estados marcados por vulnerabilidades educativas, como Maranhão. En este contexto, las políticas públicas orientadas a la democratización del acceso a la educación superior se vuelven estratégicas para la valorización docente y la mejora de la calidad de la educación básica. El Programa Nacional de Formación de Profesores de la Educación Básica (PARFOR) y, más recientemente, el PARFOR Equidad, fueron creados con el objetivo de ampliar el acceso de profesores en ejercicio a la formación superior, priorizando regiones del interior y grupos históricamente marginados. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar los procesos de implementación de estos programas en la Universidad Federal de Maranhão (UFMA), destacando sus contribuciones y límites para la democratización de la formación docente. La investigación adoptó un enfoque cualitativo, de carácter descriptivo y exploratorio, fundamentado en análisis documental y revisión bibliográfica. Se examinaron informes institucionales, legislaciones, convocatorias y documentos oficiales de la CAPES y de la UFMA. Los resultados indican que los programas contribuyeron a ampliar el acceso a las licenciaturas, fortalecer la interiorización de la educación superior, valorizar la diversidad cultural y reducir las desigualdades educativas. A pesar de los desafíos administrativos, financieros y pedagógicos, el PARFOR y el PARFOR Equidad evidencian potencial para consolidar políticas de equidad y fortalecimiento de la formación docente en Maranhão.

Palabras clave: Políticas Públicas. Derecho a la Educación. Formación Docente. Educación Básica. Gestión de la Equidad Educativa.

1 INTRODUCTION

The training of basic education teachers in Brazil has a trajectory historically marked by regional inequalities, institutional limitations and disputes around the social function of education. Since the nineteenth century, when the first Normal Schools were created to prepare teachers for primary education, teacher training has developed unevenly, concentrating mainly in economically more favored regions and reaching only a restricted portion of the population. These first experiences of institutionalization of teaching took place in a context of organization of the national State and the gradual expansion of public education, but they maintained a strong elitist character and low territorial coverage, especially in the poorest provinces of the country.

Throughout the twentieth century, the expansion of basic schooling and the growth of public education networks significantly increased the demand for qualified teachers. With the creation of universities and higher education courses, an attempt was made to structure a national policy for teacher training, articulating pedagogical, scientific and specific knowledge of the teaching areas. However, educational expansion occurred in an accelerated way and often disconnected from the effective conditions of training and professional valorization. In different Brazilian regions, especially in the North and Northeast, thousands of teachers began to work without adequate training in the area in which they taught, revealing deep educational and structural asymmetries.

During this period, teacher training was linked to the political, economic and social transformations of the country, reflecting different projects of society and conceptions of education. At various times, fragmented training models prevailed, characterized by the separation between theory and practice, the precariousness of teaching work and the insufficiency of permanent policies for professional qualification. The need to expand basic education, especially from the 1970s and 1980s onwards, further highlighted the limits of the initial and continuing education offered to education professionals.

With the enactment of the Federal Constitution of 1988, education began to be recognized as a social right and duty of the State, strengthening the debate on teacher appreciation, quality of teaching and democratization of access to school. Subsequently, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN No. 9,394/1996) established the requirement of higher education for the exercise of teaching in basic education, legally consolidating the need for professional teacher qualification. Despite the normative advances, the universalization of this right remained a challenge, especially in states marked by socioeconomic inequalities and difficulties in accessing higher education.

In view of this scenario, public policies for teacher training began to assume a strategic political role in confronting the historical inequalities of Brazilian education. Programs aimed at expanding the access of practicing teachers to higher education have become fundamental to promote professional qualification, strengthen public education networks and reduce regional disparities in the educational field.

In this context, the National Program for the Training of Basic Education Teachers (PARFOR) was instituted by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) in 2009 as a government strategy to address the shortage of qualified teachers in the public network. The program sought to offer licentiate courses to practicing teachers who did not have specific training in the area of activity, ensuring them the legal qualification required by the current educational legislation. The national coverage of PARFOR made it possible to serve thousands of teachers in different regions, especially in inland and hard-to-reach locations, becoming a reference for public policy aimed at professional valorization and the strengthening of basic education. Its implementation contributed to the expansion of access to higher education and to the reduction of historical asymmetries between regions, although it has faced limitations related to the management, financing and continuity of actions.

PARFOR was part of a broader set of policies for the expansion and interiorization of higher education implemented in the first decades of the twenty-first century, a period marked by the expansion of federal universities, the creation of new campuses and the strengthening of educational inclusion programs. In this context, teacher training came to be understood not only as a technical requirement for professional practice, but as a strategy for social development, reduction of regional inequalities and strengthening of public education networks. The role of CAPES in coordinating the program has given greater national articulation to teacher training policies, promoting cooperation between the Union, states, municipalities and higher education institutions.

In 2023, the National Program for the Promotion of Equity in Basic Education Teacher Training (PARFOR Equidade) was instituted, also under the coordination of CAPES, in partnership with the Secretariat of Continuing Education, Youth and Adult Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion (SECADI/MEC). This new format emerged with the purpose of meeting the specific demands of teachers who worked in contexts of greater social, cultural and educational vulnerability. PARFOR Equity has incorporated an identity and inclusive dimension by offering courses aimed at quilombola communities, indigenous people, rural populations, people with disabilities and the deaf, recognizing diversity as a structuring element of education. This

proposal expanded the reach of traditional PARFOR by prioritizing historically marginalized groups, reinforcing the commitment to the democratization of teacher training on equitable and culturally contextualized bases.

The creation of PARFOR Equity also relates to contemporary discussions on social justice, interculturality, and recognition of differences in the educational field. In a country marked by ethnic-racial and territorial inequalities, universal policies have often proved insufficient to guarantee effective equality of access and permanence in higher education. Thus, the program began to incorporate principles aimed at recognizing the cultural and linguistic specificities of the subjects served, valuing traditional knowledge and promoting greater approximation between the university, local communities and contextualized educational practices.

At the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), the implementation of PARFOR began in 2009, with the offer of teaching degree courses in 37 municipalities in Maranhão. Throughout its history, the institution has become a protagonist in the consolidation of this public policy in the region, responding to historical demands for teacher training and expanding the access of basic education professionals to the university. In 2024, UFMA also started the execution of PARFOR Equity, structuring degree courses in areas such as Quilombola School Education, Indigenous Intercultural Education, Inclusive Special Education and Bilingual Education for the Deaf. Such courses were planned based on articulation with local communities, schools and managers, seeking to respect cultural specificities and promote greater integration between the university, the educational system and the populations served. The insertion of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity in UFMA highlights not only the strategic role of the institution in the state, but also the challenges inherent to management, financing and pedagogical monitoring.

In the context of Maranhão, such programs assume even greater relevance in view of the historical indicators of social inequality, territorial dispersion and difficulties in accessing higher education. Maranhão has a significant concentration of rural municipalities, traditional communities and regions with low human development indexes, factors that have historically impacted the training of basic education teachers. In this scenario, UFMA's performance through PARFOR and PARFOR Equity represents an important strategy for university interiorization, contributing to bring public higher education closer to populations historically excluded from training processes.

In view of this scenario, the following guiding question was formulated: what is the importance of the implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity in the state of Maranhão,

in terms of educational management and democratization of teacher training in basic education?

To answer this question, the general objective of the research was to analyze the processes of implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity at UFMA, highlighting how educational management contributed to the promotion of equity. The specific objectives consisted of: investigating the history of public policies for teacher training in Brazil and Maranhão; identify management strategies adopted by UFMA in the implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity; know the organizational structure of the programs in the institution; and to evaluate the contributions and limits of these actions for the democratization of access to higher education by public school teachers.

The methodology adopted a qualitative approach, with a descriptive and exploratory character, based on documentary analysis and bibliographic review. Legislation, public notices, institutional reports of UFMA and academic productions related to PARFOR and PARFOR Equity were examined, allowing us to understand the implementation processes, the structure of the courses and the management mechanisms adopted. The investigation sought to articulate official data and specialized literature to identify the strategies for democratization of teacher training, the challenges faced and the results of the two programs, providing subsidies for the critical evaluation of the contributions in the context of Maranhão.

The research presented in this article is organized into five sections. After this introduction, the second section describes the methodology adopted, detailing procedures, sources and analysis steps. The third section examines the historical, legal and political context of teacher training in Brazil and Maranhão, addressing the creation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity and situating their incorporation into UFMA, as well as the regional and structural challenges for the qualification of basic education teachers. The fourth section analyzes the implementation of these programs at the university, divided into subsections that deal with the operationalization of PARFOR at UFMA and the management of PARFOR Equity, considering courses offered, centers served, number of enrollments, profile of faculty-students, institutional strategies and main obstacles. Finally, the fifth section presents the final considerations, synthesizing the impacts of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity on the democratization of teacher training in Maranhão and pointing out opportunities to improve public policies aimed at educational equity.

2 METHODOLOGY

The rigorous understanding of any social or educational phenomenon depends directly on the clarity and adequacy of the methodology employed. According to Gil (2019), scientific methodology consists of the set of procedures used to achieve research objectives in a systematic and reliable way, allowing the results to be analyzed and interpreted critically. Lakatos and Marconi (2017) highlight that the methodological choice guides the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, being fundamental to confer validity and consistency to the study. In this sense, the methodology is not limited to indicating techniques, but establishes the paths for the production of knowledge, ensuring that the research processes are replicable and subject to scientific evaluation. This research, therefore, is based on methodological principles that ensure rigor, transparency and social relevance, offering a clear overview of the procedures adopted to analyze the implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity at UFMA.

The general objective of the research is to analyze the processes of implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity at UFMA, highlighting how educational management contributed to the promotion of equity. The specific objectives consisted of: investigating the history of public policies for teacher training in Brazil and Maranhão; identify management strategies adopted by UFMA in the implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity; know the organizational structure of the programs in the institution; and to evaluate the contributions and limits of these actions for the democratization of access to higher education by public school teachers.

To achieve these objectives, the research used a qualitative approach, with a descriptive and exploratory character, based on documentary analysis and bibliographic review, classic methods and widely recommended by authors such as Gil (2019) and Severino (2017) for investigations in applied social sciences. The qualitative approach proved to be adequate because it enables an in-depth understanding of institutional processes, management practices and educational dynamics that cannot be reduced to numerical indicators alone. According to Minayo (2014), qualitative research works with the universe of meanings, social relations, representations and interpretations produced by subjects and institutions, allowing the understanding of complex phenomena inserted in specific historical and sociocultural contexts.

The descriptive character of the investigation sought to identify and systematize information regarding the implementation of the programs, the administrative strategies adopted by the university, the territorial distribution of the courses and the mechanisms of democratization of access to teacher training. The exploratory dimension, on the other hand, allowed us to broaden the understanding of an object that is still recent and in the process of consolidation, especially in the case of PARFOR Equity, whose implementation at UFMA took

place from 2024 onwards. In this sense, the research sought not only to describe institutional data, but also to critically interpret the political, social and educational meanings of these initiatives in the context of Maranhão.

The documentary analysis included ordinances, enrollment reports, course planning and institutional data from the Ministry of Education, CAPES and UFMA, while the bibliographic review allowed contextualizing the results based on consolidated academic production. Official documents related to national teacher training policies, educational legislation, selection notices, institutional resolutions, academic reports and administrative documents produced by the university and the federal agencies responsible for coordinating the programs were examined. The use of these sources made it possible to understand both the normative aspects and the concrete processes of operationalization of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity at UFMA.

The literature review focused on studies on public educational policies, teacher training, educational management, democratization of higher education and equity in education. Authors who discuss teacher training in the Brazilian context were mobilized, as well as research focused on policies for the interiorization of higher education and regional inequalities in education. This articulation between institutional documents and specialized literature allowed us to build a broader analysis of the impacts and limits of the programs investigated.

The analysis of the documents followed systematic steps: survey and careful selection of sources, categorization of information into central themes (implementation strategies, access of teachers from remote regions and impacts on training), critical synthesis in the light of the literature and identification of gaps and challenges. Initially, the mapping of the documentary sources available in the institutional portals of CAPES, the Ministry of Education and UFMA was carried out. Then, the documents were organized according to their nature and purpose, allowing the identification of information related to the creation of the programs, curricular organization, administrative management, number of vacancies offered, municipalities served and profile of the participating teachers.

Subsequently, an analytical reading of the material was carried out, seeking to identify recurrent categories related to the democratization of access to higher education, the internalization of teacher training, the promotion of equity and institutional challenges faced by the university. This stage allowed us to understand the relationships between public policies, university management and specific social demands of the Maranhão context. The interpretation of the data was carried out in conjunction with the bibliographic review, making it possible to confront the official documents with the theoretical discussions produced in the educational field.

This methodological sequence made it possible to understand the interrelations between educational management, democratization of teacher training and promotion of equity, ensuring coherence and analytical depth. The qualitative approach allowed the evaluation of both quantitative aspects, such as the number of classes and enrollments, as well as qualitative dimensions related to academic management, pedagogical monitoring and articulation with local sociocultural contexts, ensuring reliability and validity of the results (Lakatos; Marconi, 2017; Gil, 2019). In addition, the combined use of documentary analysis and literature review contributed to expanding the interpretative consistency of the research, allowing the programs to be examined not only as administrative initiatives, but as public policies linked to debates on the right to education, social justice and reduction of educational inequalities.

The methodology adopted offered a rigorous approach to understand the implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity at UFMA. The documentary analysis and the literature review allowed for a critical evaluation of the contributions and limitations of the programs, subsidizing the improvement of public policies, educational management and the promotion of equity. By articulating theoretical foundations, institutional documents and critical analysis of teacher training policies, the research sought to contribute to the debate on the democratization of higher education and the valorization of basic education professionals in contexts historically marked by social and regional inequalities. This systematization created the basis for analyzing the historical trajectory and current practices of teacher education in Brazil and Maranhão, confronting legislation and reality, a theme that will be explored in the next section.

3 TEACHER TRAINING IN BRAZIL AND MARANHÃO

This section aims to analyze the historical and legal trajectory of teacher education in Brazil and Maranhão. Seeking to understand how public policies and legal frameworks have shaped teacher training, allowing to contextualize the implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity at UFMA, in line with the specific objectives of the research. This analysis is fundamental to identify how educational legislation has influenced access to teacher training and the promotion of equity in basic education.

In the colonial period, education was essentially religious and restricted to the elites, with the Jesuits playing a central role in basic instruction and in the training of future teachers, centered on catechesis and the maintenance of social order (Faustino, 2001; Carvalho, 2003). Teacher training was informal and limited, marked by the scarce supply of schools and the absence of specific government regulations for popular education.

In this context, the work of the Society of Jesus structured an educational model aimed at moral and religious formation, in which teaching had as its main purpose the consolidation of Portuguese colonial domination. The preparation of the masters occurred predominantly through practical experience and religious orientation, and there were no systematic public policies aimed at professional teacher training. As Saviani (2013) observes, Brazilian colonial education was characterized by social exclusion and the absence of an educational system organized by the State.

Independence and the Empire brought the creation of rudimentary norms, such as the Regulation of 1827, which established the first standards for normal schools and the training of primary teachers, but in a way that was still elitist and concentrated in the capitals, leaving the interior practically unassisted (Saviani, 2013). The Law of October 15, 1827 represented an important legal milestone in establishing guidelines for schools of first letters, but its limitations revealed the country's structural difficulties in universalizing public education. The first Normal Schools, created from the 1830s onwards, sought to prepare teachers for elementary education, but remained concentrated in large urban centers and served a small number of students. Tanuri (2000) points out that these institutions contributed to the institutionalization of teacher training in Brazil, although they still maintained a strong selective and elitist character.

During the Old Republic (1889-1930), educational reforms sought to expand access to education, but teacher training maintained centralizing and regionally differentiated characteristics. Normal schools continued to prioritize formal content and the reproduction of traditional knowledge, while Maranhão faced structural difficulties in ensuring quality teacher training, reflecting historical inequalities in infrastructure and human resources (Gatti, 2010; Oliveira, 2008).

During this period, positivist influences and the ideals of modernization of the State boosted debates on the need to expand public education, but educational policies continued to be marked by deep regional inequalities. While states in the Southeast had a greater expansion of normal schools and investments in education, Maranhão remained with a reduced supply of training institutions and low schooling rates. The precariousness of the material conditions of the schools and the scarcity of qualified teachers made it difficult to consolidate more comprehensive educational policies.

The Vargas Era (1930-1945) introduced measures to centralize and professionalize teacher training, with the creation of teaching schools and normal courses in various regions. Despite expanding the offer of courses, the actions still favored urban centers, and training continued to be restricted to authoritarian and content-based models (Saviani, 2013). The

creation of the Ministry of Education and Public Health in 1930 marked the beginning of a more nationally articulated educational policy, but the reality in Maranhão still reflected significant gaps in teacher training and school infrastructure.

The reforms inspired by the New School movement began to defend teacher training based on more modern scientific and pedagogical principles, emphasizing active methodologies and greater appreciation of childhood and the educational process. However, such proposals reached the different Brazilian states in an unequal way, keeping Maranhão distant from the main experiences of pedagogical renewal developed in the country.

During the military regime (1964-1985), education underwent reforms aimed at quantitative expansion and technical training, with the creation of institutes and programs aimed at the rapid professionalization of teachers, but with little investment in pedagogical quality (Dourado, 2015). The LDBEN of 1961 and subsequent decrees sought to regulate teacher training, but the emphasis remained on basic education focused on literacy and discipline, neglecting critical training and regional equity. Maranhão, like other peripheral regions, remained with limited access to continuing education courses and specialized training.

In this context, a technicist perspective of education predominated, focused on administrative rationalization and the preparation of labor for economic development. Many emergency programs were implemented to quickly address the shortage of teachers, especially in inland regions, but without ensuring adequate conditions for pedagogical training. As Dourado (2015) analyzes, the quantitative expansion of education during the military regime often occurred dissociated from consistent policies of teacher appreciation and educational quality.

With the enactment of the Federal Constitution of 1988, education became a fundamental right, ensuring equal conditions and the duty of the State to offer adequate training for all basic education teachers. LDBEN 9.394/1996 consolidated principles of democratization and quality, defining guidelines for the initial and continuing training of teachers and establishing minimum standards of schooling and professional qualification (Saviani, 2013; Gatti, 2010). In Maranhão, these norms represented significant advances, especially with the expansion of university centers and continuing education programs, but regional inequality and infrastructure limitations still constituted important barriers to the full implementation of public policies.

The Federal Constitution of 1988 redefined education as a social right and broadened the debate on valuing teaching, quality of teaching and democratization of access to school. Subsequently, LDBEN No. 9,394/1996 established the requirement of higher education for the exercise of teaching in basic education, legally strengthening the need for teacher

professionalization. Despite these legal advances, challenges persisted related to the internalization of higher education, student permanence, and teacher training in rural municipalities and socially vulnerable regions.

Classic authors of teacher training, such as Gatti (2010), Saviani (2013) and Oliveira (2008), emphasize that, although Brazilian legislation has evolved continuously, the practical application in the national territory has revealed profound regional differences. In Maranhão, the gap between legislation and the daily practice of schools highlighted the need for programs that considered local specificities and historical challenges, providing support to teachers in practice and expanding access to higher education. This historical reality justifies the creation of policies such as PARFOR and, more recently, PARFOR Equity, aimed at the democratization of teacher training, especially for teachers who work in municipalities in the interior.

In this sense, public policies for teacher training began to assume a strategic role in reducing educational inequalities and strengthening public education networks. PARFOR and PARFOR Equity are part of this context as initiatives aimed at expanding access to licensure, professional valorization and the promotion of educational equity, especially in states historically marked by structural difficulties, such as Maranhão.

Therefore, the trajectory of teacher training in Brazil and Maranhão reveals a historical process of legal advances that, however, is confronted with practical challenges, such as regional inequality, lack of infrastructure and concentration of resources. Legislation has evolved from rudimentary instruments in the colonial period to constitutional and legal frameworks that ensure the right to education and qualified teacher training, but the effectiveness of these norms depends on the implementation of contextualized public policies. This historical and legal analysis provides the necessary foundation to understand the most recent processes of teacher training, a theme that will be deepened in subsequent sections, especially in the study of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity at UFMA.

4 PROCESSES FOR IMPLEMENTING PARFOR AND PARFOR EQUITY IN BRAZIL

Continuing the historical and legal analysis of teacher training in Brazil and Maranhão, presented in the previous section, this section aims to examine the processes of creation and implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity, highlighting their relevance in the national scenario and their subsequent incorporation by UFMA. While section three broadly situated the historical and legislative context of teacher education, here we seek to understand the operationalization of these public policies, analyzing institutional strategies, the geographical

distribution of courses, academic management and the mechanisms of inclusion of historically marginalized groups.

The National Plan for the Training of Basic Education Teachers (PARFOR) was instituted in 2009, in the context of the expansion of federal education policies, through Decree No. 6,755, of January 29, 2009, and regulated by Normative Ordinance MEC/CAPES No. 40/2009 (Brasil, 2009; CAPES, 2009). Its creation was motivated by the worrying situation revealed by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP), which indicated that about 40% of the teachers in office in the country did not have specific qualifications for the area in which they taught (INEP, 2009). This reality mainly affected schools located in peripheral, rural regions with low socioeconomic development, especially in the North and Northeast of Brazil, where the shortage of licensed teachers was more pronounced.

The program was born within the scope of the Education Development Plan (PDE, 2007) and the goals of the National Education Plan (PNE 2001–2010), which emphasized the urgency of valuing teachers and the universalization of higher education for basic education teachers. In addition to meeting the training deficit, PARFOR sought to create conditions for the strengthening of the teaching career, articulating goals for the expansion of higher education to the specific demands of the municipal and state education networks (Gatti, 2011; Libâneo, 2013).

Among its main objectives were: to expand the offer of licentiate courses under special regimes, to prioritize municipalities with a historical deficit of qualified teachers, to reduce regional inequalities in access to higher education and to contribute to the valorization of teaching as a profession of the State. In its first decade of operation, PARFOR mobilized 90 public institutions of higher education, including federal, state and federal universities, reaching approximately 334 thousand teachers enrolled in teaching degree courses, distributed in more than 3 thousand Brazilian municipalities. Until 2016, data from CAPES (2017) indicated that more than 300 thousand professors entered classes of the program, with an average completion rate of more than 70%, a significant result given the historical difficulties of permanence in higher education faced by professors in practice. During this period, the program offered about 51 thousand vacancies per year, in more than 2,500 service centers, prioritizing locations with a low Human Development Index (HDI) and a high deficit of qualified professionals.

PARFOR represents, therefore, a policy of a strategic nature, by combining a logic of federative integration, mobilizing universities, federal institutes, states and municipalities, with a focus on reducing regional inequalities. This configuration allows teachers from public schools in rural, quilombola, indigenous, riverside and peripheral urban areas to have access to

licensure training, in many cases offered in the municipality itself or in centers that are easy to travel. By creating a cooperation network between the Union, states, and municipalities, the program broke with the tradition of fragmented training policies, which historically disregarded local specificities (Dourado, 2020).

PARFOR Equity, established in 2022 within the scope of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), emerged as an unfolding and improvement of previous policies. Aimed primarily at teachers belonging to historically marginalized social groups, indigenous people, quilombolas, blacks, people with disabilities, and rural education teachers, the program sought to ensure not only access to higher education, but also the construction of training proposals sensitive to cultural and territorial specificities (CAPES, 2022). This aspect of PARFOR expands the dimension of equity, incorporating the right to difference and social justice into teacher training policies, in line with the principles established by the National Education Plan 2014–2024, especially goal 15, which provides for ensuring specific higher education training for all basic education teachers.

The creation of PARFOR Equity also dialogues with international commitments assumed by Brazil, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda, in particular SDG 4, which establishes ensuring inclusive, equitable and quality education. By directing public policies to historically excluded segments, PARFOR Equity materializes a qualitative advance in relation to the first phase of the program, reinforcing the need to reconcile quantitative expansion of vacancies with contextualized training, which respects the sociocultural diversities of the country (Souza; Amaral, 2022).

Thus, both PARFOR and PARFOR Equity should be understood as structuring initiatives in the field of teacher training, which go beyond compensatory actions to address historical deficits. The first consolidated a national network for the offer of degrees in a special regime, expanding the presence of higher education in underserved regions and guaranteeing qualification to hundreds of thousands of teachers. The second, by introducing the principle of equity, reaffirms the commitment that access to training should be universal, but also differentiated and sensitive to local realities. This evolution demonstrates that the public policy of teacher training in Brazil has sought, albeit with limits, to align itself with principles of democratization, valorization and social justice.

4.1 FROM NATIONAL POLICY TO INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE: PARFOR AT UFMA

Maranhão, a state historically marked by critical educational indicators, has been present since the initial phase of implementation of the National Plan for the Training of Basic Education

Teachers (PARFOR). With low school performance rates, illiteracy rates above the national average and a high concentration of teachers without higher education, the adherence of the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA) to the program in 2009 represented a milestone for the democratization of teacher training in the region (INEP, 2010; UFMA, 2023).

UFMA was one of the first federal universities to incorporate PARFOR, offering undergraduate courses in strategic areas such as Mathematics, Portuguese Language, History, Biological Sciences and Pedagogy, aiming to meet historical shortcomings in the public education system. To ensure territorial reach, support centers were structured in strategic municipalities such as Imperatriz, Bacabal, Caxias, Pinheiro, and São Luís, with classes organized in an intensive regime, in order to enable the participation of teachers in practice, many of them from regions far from the capital (UFMA, 2020).

In the first phase of the program, between 2009 and 2016, the university offered about 4,200 vacancies in undergraduate degrees, of which more than 3,000 resulted in successful conclusions, corresponding to approximately 72% of the completion rate (UFMA, 2023). The operationalization of PARFOR involved different stages, such as a survey of regional demands, identification of teachers without full qualification, definition of priority courses, distribution of classes and centers, allocation of teacher trainers and tutors, continuous pedagogical monitoring and institutional evaluation of results. The process involved the performance of UFMA professors who, in addition to regular teaching, research and extension activities, assumed additional responsibilities in the execution and pedagogical monitoring of the program.

However, since its early years, some structural challenges have been pointed out. The discontinuity of federal funding compromised the regularity of the opening of classes; the articulation between the university and municipal departments of education has not always been effective, especially in smaller municipalities; student dropout rates presented worrying rates in certain centers, reaching up to 25% in more vulnerable locations; and university professors reported work overload due to the intensification of teaching activities in the interior (Gatti; Barreto, 2015; Brito, 2017; Silva, 2020).

Despite these obstacles, UFMA has consolidated itself as a reference in Maranhão for the interiorization of higher education, articulating PARFOR with local educational policies and ensuring the titles of thousands of teachers from the public network. The impact of this policy can be observed in the expansion of the number of licensed teachers, in the expansion of access to higher education in traditionally excluded regions and in the valorization of the teaching profession, even in the midst of difficulties of permanence and financing.

As the policy matured, criticism arose about the insufficiency of the generalist model of PARFOR to address deeper inequalities. Internal UFMA reports and evaluation studies indicated that, although there was significant adherence of public school teachers, quilombola communities, indigenous people, deaf teachers and people with disabilities continued to face barriers to access and permanence. These barriers ranged from linguistic and cultural issues to infrastructure limitations at the hubs, reinforcing historical inequalities (UFMA, 2023).

In this scenario, CAPES launched, in 2022, PARFOR Equity, regulated by Ordinance No. 206, as a policy aimed specifically at teacher training of historically marginalized groups. Unlike the original PARFOR, which was organized around a wide range of teaching degrees, PARFOR Equity focused on specific areas: Quilombola School Education, Indigenous Intercultural Education, Inclusive Special Education, and Bilingual Education for the Deaf, in line with the principles of the 1988 Federal Constitution, the LDB (Law No. 9,394/1996), and the goals of the National Education Plan (2014–2024).

UFMA officially joined PARFOR Equity in 2024, reinforcing its tradition of interiorization and expanding the reach of the policy. 12 initial action centers were established, distributed in municipalities with a strong presence of quilombola and indigenous communities, such as Alcântara, Caxias, Grajaú, Zé Doca and Santa Inês (UFMA, 2024). In this first stage, 1,200 vacancies were opened in teaching degree courses focused on the cultural and linguistic specificities of these groups, with classes organized in an intensive regime and adapted to the socioeconomic conditions of the teacher-students.

The profile of the students evidenced the relevance of the policy: 70% were women, 45% quilombolas, 25% indigenous and 15% people with disabilities, in addition to the significant presence of teachers working in rural schools (UFMA, 2024). These data reveal an important shift in relation to the traditional PARFOR, by directing efforts to audiences often made invisible by teacher training policies.

From the point of view of management, UFMA created a specific institutional structure, coordinated by the Dean of Education (PROEN) and the Interiorization Advisory, with responsibilities that included: selection of teacher trainers, logistical support to the centers, articulation with municipal secretariats and pedagogical monitoring. Even so, relevant difficulties persisted, such as precarious infrastructure in inland centers, limited connectivity, overload of university professors, and an average dropout rate of 18% in the first year, mainly related to adverse socioeconomic conditions and the reconciliation between work and study.

As a response, the university and local partners implemented mitigation strategies, such as partnerships with city halls and community associations for transportation and food,

continued training of teacher-trainers in intercultural and bilingual methodologies, psychopedagogical monitoring aimed at indigenous and deaf students, in addition to semiannual reports sent to CAPES, ensuring greater transparency and continuous evaluation.

The preliminary results were expressive. By the end of 2024, 920 teachers had successfully completed the first year of the course, achieving a permanence rate of more than 80% (UFMA, 2024). This index, although still insufficient, was considered positive in the face of adverse conditions, signaling the potential of the program to consolidate higher education trajectories among teachers from historically marginalized communities. In addition, UFMA's experience became nationally recognized, with the presentation of reports and good practices in seminars promoted by CAPES and the National Education Forum (FNE, 2024).

However, the trajectory of PARFOR at UFMA, from the initial adhesion in 2009 to the incorporation of PARFOR Equity in 2024, illustrates a movement of evolution in public policy: from massive training of teachers in practice to a focused, equitable and culturally contextualized training. At the same time that it maintains its function of expanding the teaching title in the state, the university reaffirms its centrality in the fight against social and educational inequalities, internalizing access to higher education and incorporating inclusive pedagogical practices. Although it faces structural and financing challenges, the program shows promise for building a more representative education, in line with the principles of equity and social justice.

The following section will deepen the management and implementation processes of PARFOR Equity at UFMA, highlighting the courses offered, the centers served, the profile of the students and the institutional strategies to overcome the challenges that still arise.

4.2 MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF PARFOR EQUITY AT UFMA

This subsection presents the analysis of the management and operationalization of PARFOR Equity at the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), with the central objective of demonstrating how the institution structured, monitored and adapted the program to regional specificities, promoting access to higher education for teachers in practice in historically disadvantaged contexts. The investigation considers organizational, pedagogical and logistical aspects, allowing us to understand how national teacher training policies are articulated with local demands, ensuring the inclusion of indigenous teachers, quilombolas, people with disabilities and deaf people (UFMA, 2024; CAPES, 2022). To this end, the analysis uses institutional data from UFMA, CAPES reports and recent studies on teacher training and public policies, identifying institutional strategies and results of the action.

The implementation of PARFOR Equity at UFMA began in 2024, with the creation of 12 regional hubs strategically distributed in municipalities with a high concentration of historically marginalized populations, including Alcântara, Caxias, Grajaú, Zé Doca and Santa Inês (UFMA, 2024). For this first phase, 1,200 vacancies were opened in specific degree courses, including Quilombola School Education, Indigenous Intercultural Education, Inclusive Special Education and Bilingual Education for the Deaf. The distribution of classes sought to meet local demands, considering the geographical distance, the availability of infrastructure and the density of teachers in office, promoting qualified access to higher education in regions with difficult educational coverage.

The program mobilized about 120 UFMA professors, acting as tutors, coordinators, and teacher trainers at the centers, accumulating teaching, research, and extension functions, and ensuring continuous pedagogical monitoring (UFMA, 2024). This institutional articulation allowed the implementation of pedagogical strategies adapted to the sociocultural realities of the students, such as intercultural, bilingual and inclusive methodologies, as well as psychopedagogical monitoring aimed at indigenous, quilombola and deaf teachers, in order to reduce linguistic and cultural barriers to learning.

The profile of the enrolled students highlights the social relevance of the initiative: 70% are women, 45% quilombolas, 25% indigenous and 15% people with disabilities, with a significant presence of teachers working in rural schools and rural communities (UFMA, 2024). The adherence of the faculty demonstrates the impact of the program in reducing historical inequalities in access to academic training, promoting social inclusion and valuing cultural diversity in basic education.

In terms of management and operationalization, UFMA has structured a support network integrated with the Dean of Education (PROEN) and the Interiorization Advisory, responsible for the academic and logistical coordination of the centers, selection and training of teacher trainers, articulation with municipal education departments and continuous monitoring of classes. Among the mechanisms adopted, the continuing education of tutor teachers, the implementation of biannual evaluation processes, partnerships with city halls and community associations for transportation and food, and technological support for classes and teaching materials stand out. This structure evidenced the university's ability to reconcile national policies with local demands, promoting a model of interiorization of higher education focused on equity (UFMA, 2024; CAPES, 2022).

PARFOR Equity presents significant advances in relation to the first phase of PARFOR, by concentrating efforts on historically marginalized groups and recognizing the regional and

cultural specificities of the participants. Recent studies indicate that structured teacher training programs, such as PARFOR and PARFOR Equity, are strategic for overcoming historical inequalities, strengthening the professionalization of teachers and improving the quality of teaching in basic education (Dourado, 2020; Souza; Amaral, 2022). By integrating national policies and local demands, the program highlights a model of educational inclusion adapted to contexts of socioeconomic and territorial vulnerability, consolidating the social function of the public university in promoting equity.

The challenges faced in the implementation include precarious infrastructure in some centers, limited connectivity, overload of professors, and initial dropout of about 18% of the students in the first year, motivated by socioeconomic difficulties and reconciliation between work and study (UFMA, 2024). To mitigate them, UFMA has developed integrated strategies, including: continued training of tutors in intercultural and bilingual methodologies; individualized psychopedagogical follow-up; logistical support through partnerships with municipal secretariats and community associations; and systematic monitoring of execution, with reports sent to CAPES, ensuring transparency and constant evaluation of the results. Such measures demonstrate how institutional management can enhance the effectiveness of public policies, ensuring the permanence and academic success of the participating professors.

The results obtained until 2024 reveal concrete impacts on the democratization of access to teacher training in Maranhão. Approximately 920 professors successfully completed the first year of implementation, with a permanence rate of more than 80%, expressive numbers given the socioeconomic and geographical conditions faced by the students (UFMA, 2024). The equitable distribution of centers and courses has made it possible to serve areas with a greater historical deficit of licensed teachers, strengthening the teaching of the state and municipal public network and expanding the presence of qualified professionals in remote and vulnerable regions.

Thus, the management and operationalization of PARFOR Equity at UFMA demonstrates that public policies for teacher training, when well structured and articulated with regional specificities, can promote inclusion, equity and quality in higher education. The program contributes to reducing historical inequalities by enabling teachers in practice, especially in peripheral municipalities and traditional communities, to have access to degrees. Among the impacts already identified, the increase in enrollment in strategic areas, the strengthening of local education networks, the appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity in teacher training and the incorporation of intercultural and inclusive pedagogical practices stand out.

PARFOR Equity evidences, still in its early steps, the social function of UFMA as an agent of interiorization of higher education, although its initial results indicate more potentialities than consolidations, evidencing the need for more stable, integrated and sustainable policies. In this sense, the experience of Maranhão reinforces that programs aimed at teacher training, if accompanied by consistent monitoring and support mechanisms, can become relevant instruments for professional valorization and for the reduction of educational inequalities. These analyses support the transition to the final considerations, which will resume the contributions of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity to the democratization of teacher training in Maranhão and Brazil, synthesizing the impacts achieved and pointing out ways to improve public policies.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research started from the central question: what is the importance of the implementation of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity in the state of Maranhão, in terms of educational management and democratization of basic education teacher training?

Throughout the sections, it was possible to demonstrate that both PARFOR and PARFOR Equity play a unique and strategic role in expanding access to higher education and valuing teaching, contributing to reducing historical inequalities in the state. The investigation also showed that these public policies go beyond the strictly academic dimension, assuming social, territorial and cultural relevance in the consolidation of the right to education in regions historically marked by educational vulnerabilities and exclusion from higher education.

Since its implementation in 2009, PARFOR at UFMA has trained 2,907 teachers in practice, distributed in 127 classes offered in 34 municipalities in Maranhão. Currently, the program is present in 42 municipalities, with 94 classes and more than 4,300 students enrolled, covering seven undergraduate courses. These numbers show the capacity for higher education to move to the interior and the positive impact on teacher training in several regions of the state. More than quantitative indicators, these data reveal the strengthening of the presence of the public university in municipalities in the interior historically distant from higher education policies. In many of these territories, the arrival of PARFOR represented the first concrete opportunity for teachers to access a teaching degree for practicing teachers, especially in rural locations and municipalities far from large urban centers.

PARFOR Equity, started in 2024, broadened the focus of the policy, directing training to teachers belonging to historically marginalized groups, such as indigenous people, quilombolas, people with disabilities, and the deaf. In the first stage of the program, 1,200 vacancies were offered in 12 centers distributed in municipalities such as Alcântara, Caxias, Grajaú, Zé Doca

and Santa Inês. Institutional data indicate that, by the end of 2024, 920 teachers had successfully completed the first year of specific courses in Quilombola School Education, Indigenous Intercultural Education, Inclusive Special Education and Bilingual Education for the Deaf, with a permanence rate of more than 80%. This number highlights the importance of support policies, pedagogical monitoring and logistical strategies adapted to local realities. The PARFOR Equity proposal introduces an important qualitative change in teacher training policies by recognizing that the democratization of access to university cannot occur in a homogeneous way, but must consider cultural, territorial, linguistic and identity differences present in Brazilian society. In this sense, the program broadens the understanding of equity by incorporating demands historically made invisible by traditional educational policies.

By articulating national teacher training policies with regional demands, the programs demonstrate that the interiorization of higher education can effectively contribute to the democratization of teacher training. Among the impacts observed are the increase in the number of qualified teachers in strategic municipalities, the appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity in basic education, the consolidation of inclusive and intercultural pedagogical practices, and the strengthening of local education networks. Such results reinforce the social function of UFMA as a mediator between public policies and historically disadvantaged educational contexts, creating conditions for teacher training to achieve greater equity.

The research also allowed us to understand that the internalization promoted by PARFOR and PARFOR Equity does not only represent the physical displacement of the university to the interior, but constitutes a political and social movement to expand the right to higher education in historically marginalized regions. This process strengthens the permanence of qualified professionals in the municipalities themselves and favors pedagogical practices that are more contextualized to local realities.

However, despite the advances, the challenges remain significant. Regional inequality still limits access in more remote municipalities, the infrastructure of the hubs and access to connectivity continue to be important obstacles, and there is a need for continuous public policies that guarantee the financial and pedagogical stability of the program. PARFOR Equity is still in its first years of implementation, and its consolidation will depend on the maintenance of follow-up strategies, training of trainers and inter-institutional articulation.

In addition, the survey revealed that many participating teachers face difficulties related to extensive travel, precarious roads, limitations in access to digital connectivity, absence or insufficiency of printing of pedagogical notebooks and the complex articulation between teaching work, intensive academic training on weekends and vacation periods, as well as family

and community responsibilities. Such conditions show that the democratization of teacher training cannot be understood only as a formal expansion of vacancies or territorial expansion of the university offer, but requires structuring policies capable of guaranteeing objective conditions of permanence, pedagogical support, access to teaching materials, digital inclusion and training quality, especially in contexts marked by regional inequalities and historical socioeconomic vulnerabilities.

Another important aspect identified throughout the investigation refers to the existing tensions between quantitative expansion and quality of training. Although the programs have significantly expanded access to licentiate degrees, challenges persist related to continuous funding, maintenance of the infrastructure of the centers, training of guiding teachers, and the administrative sustainability of the actions developed. The dependence on federal resources and the oscillations of national education policies can compromise the continuity of fundamental initiatives for states historically marked by educational inequalities, such as Maranhão.

The historical analysis developed throughout this research demonstrated that teacher training in Maranhão was, for decades, marked by the concentration of training institutions in large urban centers, by the scarcity of higher education courses and by the limited presence of the State in inland regions. In this context, PARFOR and PARFOR Equity assume strategic importance by tensioning historical structures of educational exclusion, bringing the public university closer to the social and cultural realities of the municipalities of Maranhão. Such a movement contributes to reducing regional asymmetries and strengthening basic education in territories that have historically remained on the margins of higher education policies.

PARFOR and PARFOR Equity demonstrate that structured teacher training policies can effectively contribute to the democratization of higher education and to the valorization of teaching in Maranhão. Experience indicates that, even in contexts of high social vulnerability, it is possible to offer quality degree courses, reduce historical inequalities and serve historically marginalized groups. The continuity and expansion of programs such as these are fundamental to consolidate the advances achieved and create perspectives for sustainable educational transformation. The results analyzed allow us to conclude that educational management plays a central social role in the effectiveness of these policies, since the implementation of the programs depends on permanent institutional articulations between universities, CAPES, municipal and state departments of education, pedagogical coordination and local communities.

The challenges of teacher training in Brazil and Maranhão remain, the results obtained point to promising paths, showing that equity and inclusion policies have real potential to positively impact basic education and the quality of teaching in the state and in the country.

From an interpretative point of view, the research shows that PARFOR and PARFOR Equity cannot be understood only as higher education programs, but as instruments to confront the social and educational inequalities historically produced in the Brazilian territory. By promoting access to public universities, valuing cultural identities and strengthening local education networks, these policies reaffirm education as a social right and as a concrete possibility for transforming regional realities.

Finally, it is concluded that the consolidation of teacher training policies committed to equity requires institutional continuity, strengthening of public funding and recognition of the sociocultural specificities of the different Brazilian territories. In the case of Maranhão, marked by deep historical inequalities, the strengthening of PARFOR and PARFOR Equity represents an important possibility for expanding educational justice, valuing teaching, and building a socially just, referenced, democratic, and inclusive public education.

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