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Incarcerated Women and Drug Trafficking: A Literature Review



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ABSTRACT

Women deprived of liberty and drug trafficking is a subject that is currently under discussion and there is little literature addressing this theme. This paper aimed to trace the main characteristics of incarcerated women and drug trafficking, starting from the literary review, as this tool allows the construction of new knowledge through reading and analysis of scientific articles that were published. The read articles made it possible to know the different realities of female incarceration, allowing also to make comparisons about each author's point of view. To analyze the results, seven graphs and tables were constructed to reveal the common characteristics presented by the nine articles analyzed. The first informs the average age, the second one provides the educational level of these women, the third one shows about the main crimes committed by them, the fourth presents the legal situation, the fifth indicates the variable related to maternity, the sixth inference to illicit drug use and which are the most used, and the last graph describes the employment context before incarceration. Interestingly, the research took place in different states and this made it possible to know the reality of each one. From this, it can be concluded that most women prisoners in those researches in Brazil are mothers, have a low level of education, the age range is between 18 and 30 years. Most of them use narcotics for years, and drug trafficking is the most common crime committed by them.



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INTRODUCTION

The female gender in the criminological context is described by most researches as victims of oppression, fear, madness, lack of choice and affective involvement as criminal men. Traditional theory sees women as sweet and gentle symbols, and when they escape this pattern, this figure becomes called devilish and crazy.

For Barcinsk (2009), in the field of criminology in general, little effort has been made to understand the particular context in which women choose to engage in criminal activity, which is often related to male actions.

In the conclusion of the aforementioned author, there is a difference between the circumstances between when a man commits a crime and when he is a woman. Given this context, it is necessary to analyze several studies that may reveal the main characteristics of these women who are imprisoned in Brazilian prisons.

For Lopes *et al.* (2010) crime has been steadily increasing worldwide and women are increasingly protagonists of criminal episodes. The author reports that in the last four years there has been a 37.47% increase in the female prison population. Lopes *et al.* (2010) argue that scholars point out that there are different causes of crime, describing it as a complex phenomenon that encompasses biological, psychological and social factors.

To reach this conclusion of the results nine scientific articles were selected from forty-two studies, to analyze the data seven graphs were built, and each one presented common characteristic about the profile of incarcerated women.

Data revealed that the majority of women arrested are responsible for drug trafficking and that the prevalence of age is between 18 and 30 years, mothers, drug users, have a low level of education, most are in the provisional regime.

This study describes some characteristics of incarcerated women. Because the data indicate that women are increasingly committing crimes, and this makes society begin to reflect and think about alternatives that may change this reality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research work aimed to perform a literature review on the main characteristics of incarcerated women and drug trafficking. Literature review is a method that allows the construction of new knowledge about a particular subject, always starting from scientific articles already published, seeking to analyze the results of each research and make comparisons of the results presented by the chosen studies and build from that a new knowledge. To analyze the data of this research, several scientific articles referring to the chosen theme were consulted.

The sources were scielo, lilacs and capes databases. In the periodic portal of Capes were found nine publications with the theme Women Incarcerated and the prison space with publication 2005, being cited by twenty-four scientific articles, with the theme Women Incarcerated and factors associated with drugs and other crimes were found 9 articles with publication date also 2005.

Lilacs is one of the sources where several articles can be found in the health area, of three articles that were found two were related to the prevalence of violence suffered by women involved in drug trafficking. But only one was related to the theme to be analyzed.

Firstly, articles were selected whose contents were related to the profile of incarcerated women and the selection criterion was given by reading each article and the sources found.

Forty-two articles and one digital book were selected. Out of the articles found, only nine were screened and selected to theoretically support this research.

The articles that were excluded were directed to describe male criminals, it is noteworthy that most of the articles found were aimed at reporting the reality of the prison system in the male optics, few were the articles that returned to describe the profile of women incarcerated by trafficking drugs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Initially, the articles surveyed discussed the history of incarceration and the punishment of women who became involved in drug trafficking. Most of the sources found in their publications are dated from 2001 to 2005, sources for more than ten years were discarded, of forty-two articles found, only eighteen presented contents related to the theme of this work

and their publications are between the years of From 2009 to 2014, of these eighteen articles only nine were selected as reference to be analyzed and the others were excluded because they spoke about crimes committed by men. Selected articles portray the main characteristics of incarcerated women and drug trafficking.

TABLE NO. 1. CHARACTERIZATION OF THE STUDIES ANALYZED

Author	Year	Country	Focus	Method
Mariana Barcinsk	2009	Brazil	Protagonism and victimization in the trajectory of women involved in the drug trafficking network in Rio de Janeiro	Discursive Analysis
Santos <i>et al</i>	2009	Brazil	Across the Walls: Female Crime	Qualitative and descriptive analysis
Lopes <i>et al</i>	2010	Brazil	Imprisoned women and drug-related factors and crimes	Cross-sectional and descriptive.
Nicolau <i>et al et al</i>	2011	Brazil	Portrait of socioeconomic and sexual reality of female prisoners	Quantitative and descriptive approach
Cavalho e Jesus	2012	Brazil	Women and drug trafficking: a portrait of the blatant occurrences in the city of São Paulo	Data analysis
Ilka Franco Ferrari	2012	Brazil	Incarcerated Women: They, their children and our policies.	Document Analysis
Oliveira <i>et al</i>	2013	Brazil	Epidemiological profile of pesidiarias from Paraiba-Brazil: a descriptive study	Cross-sectional, descriptive and quantitative study
Bressan	2013	Brazil	Profile of women incarcerated in the Santa Catarina region of Amarel	Bibliographic, descriptive and applied research approach
Santos e Santos	2014	Brazil	Prisons: a contribution about the origin of female incarceration in Brazil	Quantitative, transversal and descriptive approach.

Based on the sources analyzed, to understand the context of women concerning the process of incarceration, one must first know the origin and history of the prison.

The meaning of imprisonment is punishment. To the law the word punishment is linked control of social relations, morality and religion, and this would be the way to prevent criminal or criminal behavior, avoiding the violation of the law established by society.

For Santos and Santos (2014) the penalty comes from the Greek word poené and the Latin poena, and that meant a state response to an offense committed. The purpose of the penalty is to prevent further offenses. Since the penalties come from organized societies and they were

guided by the state and intertwined by the religious order, where it was up to the priest to apply the penalties, and the punishments were seen as a process of purification of the soul.

During the middle ages, there were two types of prisons: the state and the ecclesiastical, referring to the state penalties were kept to be imposed and the ecclesiastical were intended for reflection and repentance.

In the Middle Ages, Europe suffered from poverty and the rise of criminal acts, and it was necessary to build a place to impose the custodial sentence. Santos and Santos (2014, p.05) argue that: *“The penitentiary system was intended to reform the offender, which would be done by work and discipline. Also noteworthy is the intimidating nature of these establishments in relation to the popular ones. They knew that if they committed an offense they would be taken to such establishments.”*

These establishments were feared by those who committed wrongdoing, delinquent people were left in these houses to receive corrective measures. After the implementation of these houses, the law came to guide the statute of these corrections establishments.

The first prisons arose as a result of the population increase in the cities, which were forced to build a place to put those who committed crimes, the first jails built were mixed, where men and women were in the same place, there was no gender distinction.

Historical data indicate that in Amsterdam two types of Rasphuis and Spinhuis establishments were created, Rasphuis being intended for men and Spinhuis for women. This was the first female house of detention record according to Santos and Santos (2014).

In Brazil during a time that was a colony of Portugal, the penalties were applied according to the precepts that governed the metropolises, so have Santos and Santos (2014) that: *“The penalties were manifested in the lashes that occurred in the trunk, where they were chained to those who somehow rebelled against their masters. At the institutional level, existing jails served as a place of withdrawal for the offender. The Philippine Ordinances retained the torment, still widely used in Europe. An example of his imposition in Brazil is recorded in the way Tiradentes was punished, with the dismemberment and display of parts of his body in a public square. Under its validity, the Court of State Relations of Brazil was created in 1609, in the city of Salvador, reporting to the Portuguese Court. Later, others were created in Rio de Janeiro, Maranhão and Pernambuco. The coming of the court to Brazil makes the colony*

headquarters of the Portuguese empire. Along with the royal family, comes an entire organization that maintained its administrative and judicial functioning, in line with what existed in Portugal.”

With the coming of the royal family happened to the opening of the commercial ports, consequently had increasing population and of crimes, with that were forced to build public jails. Infringements were at the disposition of the Philippines orders such as torture, galleys, the death penalty.

In this conception Ferrari (2010) says that the origin of the female prison, always prevailed in the moral and religious discourse, involving the idea of domestication of the fragile, docile and delicate sex. Although Brazil has proclaimed its independence, but the situation of penalties has remained unchanged, with Santos and Santos (2014) pointing out that: *“The Imperial Charter of 1824 called for a Criminal Code to be drawn up, recommending that the jails should be safe, clean and well-ventilated, and the defendants separated by the type of imputed offense. She retained the death penalty but abolished cruel punishments such as branding, torture and scourging.*

It was not until 1830 that the criminal code bill was introduced, where deprivation of liberty was a form of corporal penalty. Historical record in Brazil reveals that the first prisons were built to house men and women. There was no gender distinction and no degree of criminality. Thus Santos and Santos (2014) discusses: *“The common ground between the first three female prison institutions is their administration by the nuns. It is identified by the congregations, a work to bring women back to the moral values prevailing in society. The administration was handled by the Sisters of the Congregation of the Good Shepherd 'Angers, who, through religious teachings, sought to realize this rescue. This brotherhood comes from France; Its goal, when it appeared in 1929, was to care for the young.”*

The order expanded beyond France, and, in the countries where it operated, did its mission with the prey. Before arriving in Brazil, their work was already registered in Chile and Argentina. Among its precepts, they were guided by gospel passages aimed at the forgiveness and healing of the sinful woman.

It is clear that the emergence of female prisons was due to the need to separate women from men, a reality that lasted for many years since the female representation in crime was

considered insignificant, but there were already data regarding the crimes committed by them.

As described by Bressan apud Brasil (2013): *“The Brazilian Prison System consisted of several mixed penal establishments, which had pavilions, wards and cells adapted for women, mostly with prison overcrowding. Due to fewer women incarcerated compared to the male prison universe, female penal establishments had small area and capacity and generally resulted from adaptations from the original structure of other properties, whose projection did not include the shelter of incarcerated persons. It was usual to find structures built next to male penal establishments, as an appendix of these, for the custody of women. Severe problems characterized the Brazilian penitentiary system in the middle of the first decade of this new century, whose origins, in the various structural deficiencies still common to the general population of the country, were represented by the precariousness of the physical conditions offered in jails and prisons, the shortage of vacancies, absolute unhealthiness in imprisonment units, commonly characterized as deposits of human beings.*

Collaborating with this idea Santos et al (2010) reveals that the female prison was created in Brazil around 1940, a time when there was a criminal reform, the jurists of the time feared that gender equality would imply an increase in crime in the female context. , to the author contrary to what the jurists thought, to this day remains a small number of women who comment on crimes, although the statistics reveal the increase in numbers of women arrested.

In recent years the number of women arrested in Brazil has been increasing according to the National Penitentiary Department in 2010 Brazil indicated that it had 21,770 people arrested, being 11,867 in the closed regime and 9,903 in provisional prison. Already in 2011, the number went to 23,045, with 12,945 inmates in prison and 10,100 in provisional prison.

Ferri (2010) in his research states that there was a growing increase in women arrested between 2000 and 2006, about 135.37% while the male population grew by an average of 53.36%. One notices a significant number that women who are committing crimes.

For author Oliveira *et al.* (2013) the increase happened in several countries, especially Brazil, and this fact has caused concern, due to overcrowding in Brazilian prisons and lack of structure and qualification of those in the prison system, and this has the As a consequence of the spread of disease, increased drug use and exposure to violence, such aspects make the

prison system a public health problem, it is perceived that the form of imprisonment in Brazil is considered as needy and obsolete.

From the author's point of view, the laws seem to have applicability due to the multiple violations of essential rights such as health, education, work, preservation of family ties and access to social reintegration policy, especially for the underprivileged, in this group includes women. incarcerated, continues Oliveira et al (2013) that the reality of female prisons does not have the same assistance and attention as male prisons since the dangerousness was not related to the female figure, so the prisons built for them are based on Male.

In the research by Carvalho and Jesus (2012), the main condemnations of women during this period were trafficking, theft, and theft, respectively.

Between 2010 and 2011 there was an increase in women's arrests for drug trafficking crime in Brazil, from 14,643 to 16,911.

In Nicolau's research (2012), the participation of women in the Brazilian prison scenario is only 5.31%, which the profile tends to be young, such as the low socioeconomic and educational level, unemployed, prostitute, single, separated, coming from centers. urban areas and the reason most often is drug trafficking.

Barcinski (2009) conducts research on the protagonism, victimization, and trajectory of women involved in the drug trafficking network in Rio de Janeiro. The author's research methodology was based on a descriptive analysis, in which five women who were arrested for interviews were interviewed. drug trafficking, the goal was to explore what aspects of life these women had before they were arrested and to capture the dilemmas in how they justify their participation in illicit activities. The author reveals that:

The fact that drug trafficking is recognized as a male activity makes analyzing the trajectory of these women a particularly complex undertaking. Due to the unusual nature of their experiences, it is expected that the process of identity construction of these women will be marked by a constant negotiation between different discourses about the feminine. Therefore, by the very nature of the activity in which these women take part, it is not surprising that their identities are marked by tensions and contradictions, usually reflected in the appropriation of dissonant discourses about their conditions.

Barcinski (2009) analyzes the conditions of the interviewees' statements, as they reveal that there is a part of victimization and passivity. As a result, he became involved in trafficking because he had economic difficulties and was in social vulnerability.

The articles that were selected reveal the profile of women who were arrested, most research describes the type of crime, age, prevalence of drug use, education level and work activity. The profiles of women arrested will be described according to research that was analyzed as a theoretical basis for this literary review.

In the survey Carvalho e Jesus (2012) traces the age of women imprisoned in São Paulo state prison, data reveal 11% were in the age group of 13 to 17 years, that 40% of women were between 18 to 25 years, 23% had between 26 and 30 years and 20% were 31 to 40 years old and 6% over 50 years.

The survey also reveals the level of education about 60% had completed elementary school, 16% incomplete elementary school, 18% complete high school, this article the percentage value does not reach 100%, because the missing 6% not has been revealed. The variables related to the work activities given revealed that 61% of the women arrested stated that before being arrested they had some formal or informal paid activity, 31% of the women said they were unemployed and 8% being a student.

The study by Carvalho e Jesus (2012) was based on data collected from the arrest notices in the event of drug trafficking occurrences arriving at the Police Inquiry Department of the Barra Funda Forum of the City of São Paulo. 667 forms that had data on arrest in the act of trafficking between December 2010 and January 2011.

In a study by Nicolau *et al* (2012) conducted in the state of Ceará and reveals that the age group of women who are arrested for drug trafficking are young people aged 18 to 24 years totaling 39.4%, this percentage was the only one that the authors revealed, the remaining percentage data were hidden, making it difficult to know the quantitative of the age groups and their percentages. The data presented by the two surveys reveal that the prevalence of age is higher among women arrested for trafficking is between 18 and 24 years. Nicolau *et al* (2012) reveals that 52.9% were arrested for trafficking, the other crimes were theft with 20% and theft 16.7%, 10.1% data were not revealed in the survey.

Regarding the level of education, it was found that 74.2% had completed elementary school and 56.8% had incomplete elementary school, these were the only data referring to education level, these data were not well clarified by the research. Nicolau *et al* (2012) also reveals that about 55.8% of inmates stated that they used drugs. Nicolau *et al* (2012) conducted data collection between January and March 2010, in the female penitentiary of Aquiraz-CE and 155 detainees were interviewed. In the research by Nicolau *et al* (2012) the data were not described in detail, as some information became vague, making it difficult to collect more data, the variables presented were the highest percentage and the other data were not shown.

According to the research by Lopes *et al.* (2010) about 62.4% of women arrested for drug trafficking in Rio Grande do Sul, 12.5% is related to theft, 11.1% homicide, 8.7% theft, 1.4% latrine, 1% stellionate and the other 2.85%, 0.5% data were not revealed.

The age variable was also presented in this research which demonstrated that the minimum average age found was 18 years and the maximum 61 years.

This research also revealed the prevalence of drug use and dependence. About 54.4% admitted that they used drugs, regarding the reasons for drug use, the survey mentions that 24.5% used it out of curiosity, 12.9% used it under pressure or influence from others and 6.3% claimed who used it for personal problems and 1.9% data were not revealed. Lopes *et al* (2010) was the only author who was concerned with knowing the reasons that led these women to use drugs.

An interesting fact of this research was to describe the main types of drugs they used the most, 22% admitted using crack, 12.2% cocaine, 11.5% marijuana, about 50% mentioned the use of substance alcohol use. The other percentages were not revealed.

Related to the variable work activity, about 72.2% of women revealed that they were working before being arrested, 15% had a formal job and data not mentioned in the survey. A amostra de coleta de dados de Lopes *et al.* (2010) aconteceu de dezembro de 2007 a janeiro de 2008 na Penitenciária Feminina Madre Pelletier na cidade Porto Alegre no Rio Grande do Sul. Participaram da entrevista 287 detentas.

Oliveira *et al* (2013) reveals in their sample that in the State of Paraíba about 52.40% of incarcerated women are on average between 18 and 28 years old, 32.20% aged between 29 and 39 years and 15%. between 40 to 50, 1.4% was hidden in the search.

Related to the legal aspect 52% were arrested for drug trafficking, 28.4% association with drug trafficking, 13.3% assault, 6.2% homicide, 0.4% estelionato, 0.4% sexual abuse.

Regarding the level of education of women incarcerated in Paraíba, the survey found that about 16.7% had completed elementary school, 59% had not completed elementary school, 9.7% had completed high school, 7% had not completed high school and 7.5% had not completed high school. literate.

The research conducted by Oliveira *et al.* (2013) took place between July and October 2012 in four female prison units in Paraíba. The interview was attended by 551 women who were detained at the units of Cidade Campina Grande, Cajazeiras, João Pessoa and Patos.

Bressan's research (2013) describes the profile of women incarcerated in a prison unit located in the city of Tubarão (Santa Catarina). Samples related to age, legal profile, and educational level were collected.

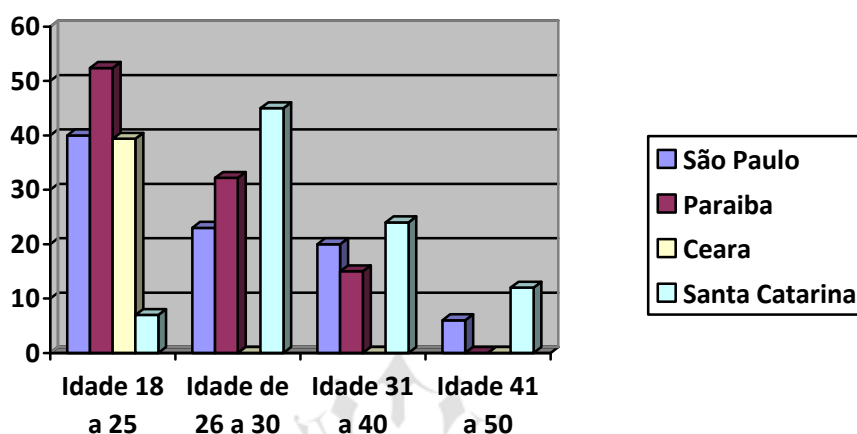
Results found by Bressan (2013):

The age range for women incarcerated in the Tubarão prison unit varied significantly, with groups ranging from 21 to 30 years old, around 45%, 31 to 40 equivalent 24%; 41 to 50 equivalent 11%, 51 to 60 about 12%, 18 to 20 about 7% 61 and 70 years equivalent 1%. In the same survey, the following results were obtained according to the insertion articles: drug trafficking about 79%, followed by theft with 7%, theft with 3%.

Bressan (2013) reveals that 62% detainees had incomplete elementary school and 12% reported having completed complete elementary school, 8% complete high school, 12% incomplete high school, 2% complete college - 2% incomplete college and 2% other backgrounds. This research was conducted with 89 incarcerated women who made up the female prison population of Tubarão (Santa Catarina). Related to the legal situation the author describes that 50% of these women were in the closed regime and 31% in the provisional regime. It can be said that there are more women in the closed regime in Santa Catarina than in other states, this data reveals the same as the information provided by the National Penitentiary Department that indicates that most of the female prisoners are serving time in the closed regime.

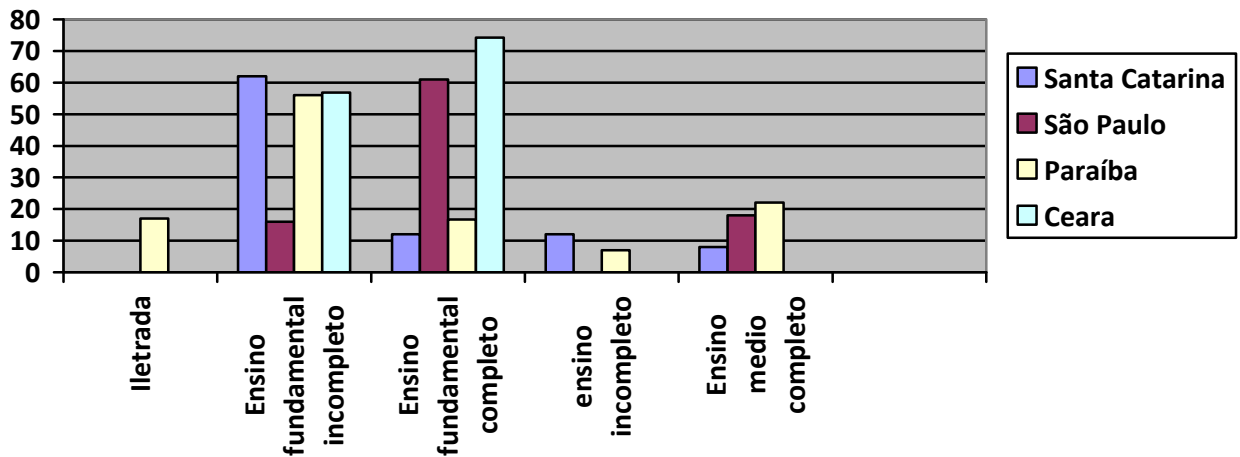
Through the analysis of the selected articles, it was found that the research by Carvalho and Jesus (2012) that although the research was conducted through the analysis of the forms of the Police Inquiry Department, the data revealed are close to those performed in loco, Because the characteristics of incarcerated women will be described by seven graphs based on the common data presented by the nine selected scientific articles, these graphs will unify the analyzed results of the articles.

Criminological profile of women arrested from the analyzed articles.



Graph 1-Variable Age of women arrested

According to the graph, it is clear that the highest rate of women prisoners are in the age group between 18 and 30 years, interesting that the average age shown in this research are from different states, in the research by Carvalho and Jesus (2012). It was conducted in the State of São Paulo, the research by Oliveira et al (2012) was carried out from the State of Paraíba, Bressan (2013) was in Santa Catarina and Nicolau *et al* (2012) was in the state of Ceará. The research by Nicolau *et al* (2012) showed only the average age of women prisoners, lacking more clarity of data, confusing the percentage value, and not describing in detail the age groups, different from those of women. Carvalho et al (2012) and Oliveira *et al* (2013), who clearly described the age groups.

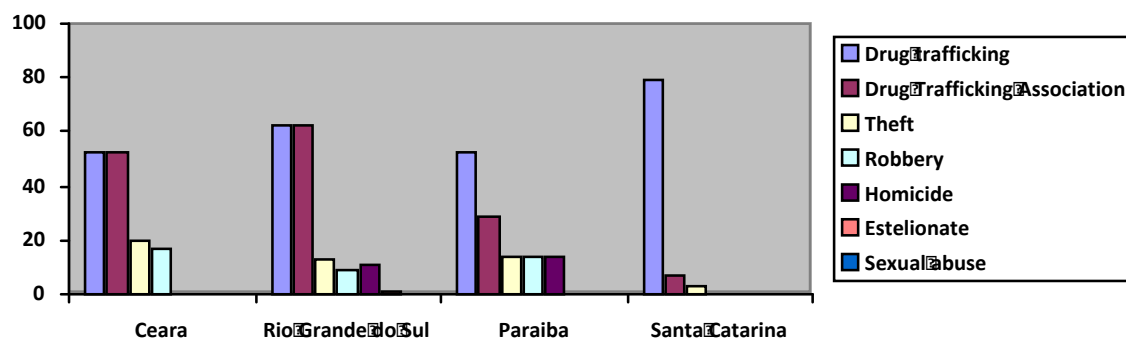


Graph 2. Level of education of incarcerated women

The data from this graph show that in Carvalho and Jesus (2012) and Nicolau *et al* (2012) surveys, the majority of women in prison in the state of Ceará and São Paulo have completed elementary school.

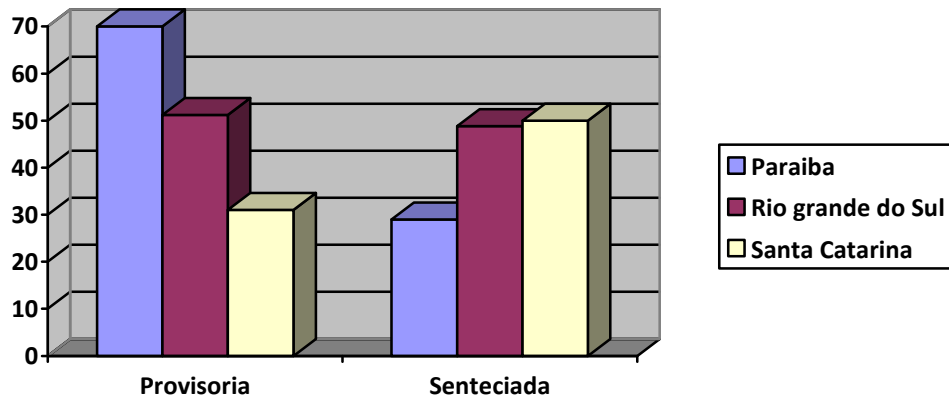
Surveys by Oliveira *et al* (2013) and Bressan (2013) show that in the state of Paraíba and Santa Catarina most women prisoners reported having incomplete elementary school, different data from research conducted in the state of Ceara and São Paulo.

The information on educational attainment presented by the research by Nicolau *et al* (2012) does not describe in detail the educational attainment, only reveals the average educational attainment and compares with the reality of many Brazilians who have completed elementary school.



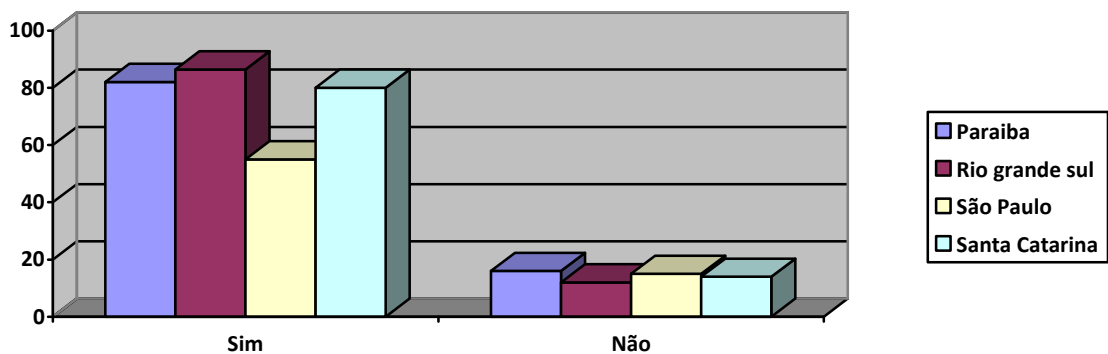
Graph 3- Main crimes committed by incarcerated women

The characterization of the offenses presented in the graph above indicates the agreement between the states involved in this research, which shows that most offenses committed by incarcerated women are primarily related to drug trafficking, followed by theft, robbery and homicide.



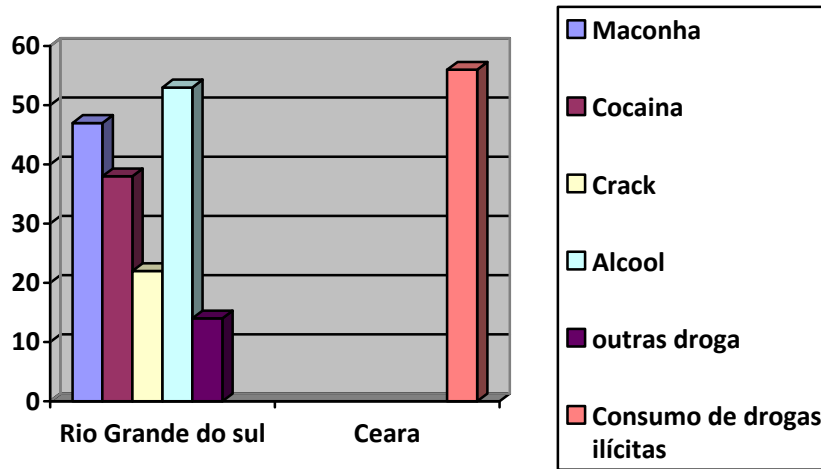
Graph 4- Legal situation of incarcerated women

It can be seen that the states that presented the data on the legal situation of imprisoned women were Paraiba and Rio Grande de Sul, the result reveals that in both states the highest index of women prisoners is in the provisional regime, it can be said that there are more women waiting to be tried and that those serving time in the closed regime in the states of Paraiba and Rio Grande do Sul. The reality of Santa Catarina is different because there are more women serving time in the closed regime than those who are awaiting trial in the provisional scheme.



Graph 5- Variable related to maternity

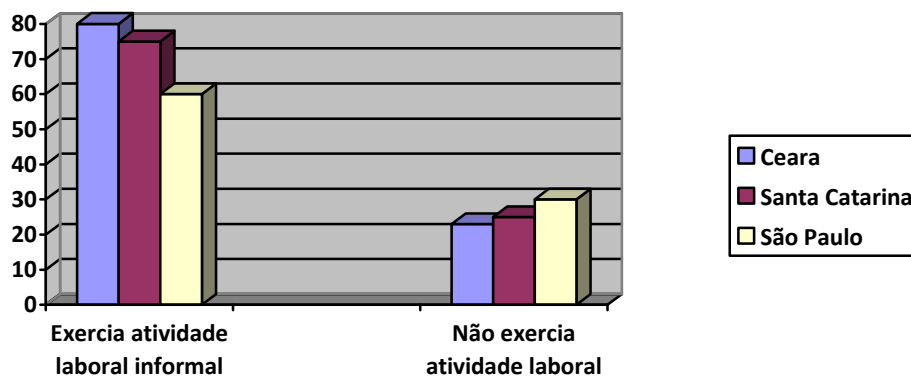
The chart reveals that most women incarcerated in the states of Paraíba, Rio Grande do Sul, Sao Paulo, and Santa Catarina reported being a mother.



Graph 6- Illicit drug use

Only in the research by Lopes *et al* (2010) reveals in detail about the drugs that are most consumed by women incarcerated in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. This sample indicates that the prevalence of alcohol use is higher than the use of cannabis, cocaine and crack.

In the research by Nicolau *et al* (2012) did not show which drugs are most used by women arrested in Ceará, the research aimed to present the percentage of women who used illicit drugs.



Graph 7- Labor activity of women before jail

Survey data from the states of Ceara, Santa Catarina, and Sao Paulo revealed that incarcerated women reported that they were formally employed and reported prior to their arrest and that the minority revealed that they were not engaged in any labor activity. The research did not go deeper at this point, only indicated the percentage of this data.

CONCLUSION

Through the sources analyzed about the context of women in the process of imprisonment, it was important to know how was the trajectory of punishment and how was the way of imprisonment of women during the history of prison and how we arrived at this model of female prison, Research has shown that in recent years the number of women arrested for committing some kind of criminal act has been increasing. Based on the research results some characteristics were revealed.

To describe the characteristics of incarcerated women and drug trafficking, we used a sample of nine articles that were screened and selected from forty-two that were found, and those that built the theoretical context of this research, during consolidation given some variables were described. such as age, educational level, main offenses, maternity, illicit drug use and labor activity before incarceration.

According to the first graph we can say that the highest rate of women prisoners is in the age group between 18 and 30 years, given this revealed by researches that were conducted in four Brazilian states, it is noteworthy that the research by Nicolau *et al* (2012) showed only the average age of women prisoners, lacking more clarity of data, because the age group was not as detailed as the other authors.

Related to the level of education, the data from the second graph shows that most of the women in prison in the state of Ceará and São Paulo have completed elementary school. In the state of Paraíba and Santa Catarina, however, the majority of women prisoners reported having incomplete elementary school, different from research conducted in the state of Ceará and São Paulo.

The third graph reveals about the characterization of the crimes that were committed by incarcerated women, the result found indicates the agreement of the states Santa Catarina, Rio Grande Sul, Ceará and Paraíba that shows that most offenses committed by women are primarily related to drug trafficking, followed by theft, robbery and murder.

In the fourth graph presents the type of regime women prisoners are in, we can infer that in the state of Paraíba and Rio Grande de Sul the highest rate of women prisoners is in the provisional regime and that the minority is serving a sentence in the closed regime. But the reality of Santa Catarina proves to be different because there are more women serving time in the closed regime than in the provisional one.

The fifth graph reveals that most women incarcerated in the states of Paraíba, Rio Grande do Sul, Sao Paulo, and Santa Catarina reported being mothers. This data was not reported in the survey conducted in the state of Ceará.

The sixth graph made inference to drug use, only research by Lopes *et al* (2010) reveals in detail the type of drug most used by women arrested in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, and the prevalence of alcohol use is higher. than the use of cannabis, cocaine and crack.

In the research by Nicolau *et al* (2012) did not show which drugs were used most by women arrested in Ceará, the research was concerned with presenting the percentage of women who used illicit drugs, but was not clearly and concisely described.

In the last graph reveals about work activity that women arrested in the states of Santa Catarina, São Paulo and Ceará, declared that they had a work activity before being arrested.

Given the data shown by the selected research, we can say that the profile of incarcerated women and drug trafficking is linked to the condition of social vulnerability, since the large mass that commits crimes is young women, mothers, with low education and drug users.

It was not easy to find recent articles that could contribute to up-to-date data, as most searches were outdated because the date of publication was very old. Thus it was possible to identify that there are still few academic studies that deal specifically with the performance of the female public in criminal acts.

And this makes this reality challenging, because we need to look for preventive measures, promotion and transformation to prevent the increase of women involved with crime, it is in this line of thought that we will reverse this picture, as the female public is increasingly getting involved in illicit acts, because society should look for an alternative aiming at the implementation of measures aimed at social reintegration of these persons deprived of their liberty.

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