

ARTICLE

SCHOOL COURSE AND EXPERIENCE OF ADOLESCENTS IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW: POSSIBLE TRAJECTORIES.

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ABSTRACT: The school life of Adolescents in Conflict with the Law is characterized by negative indicators. In this regard, Bazon, Silva and Ferrari report a study in which two trajectory patterns related to the schooling experience of juvenile offenders were identified and described. Based on this study, the present study aimed to describe the school experience of Adolescents in Conflict with the Law and understand their school experience. The research, of a qualitative nature, based on a biographical approach, had the collaboration of 12 adolescents. The data collected through interviews were treated through thematic content analysis. The results indicated two school trajectories: Trajectory I - From good to bad school experience and trajectory II - A predominantly negative school experience, although punctuated by positive experiences. The school trajectories found resemble those described by Bazon, Silva and Ferrari, but they add / detail information.

Keywords: Teenager in Conflict with the Law. School Adjustment. Development.

PERCURSO E EXPERIÊNCIA ESCOLAR DE ADOLESCENTES EM CONFLITO COM A LEI: TRAJETÓRIAS POSSÍVEIS

RESUMO: A escolarização dos Adolescentes em Conflitos com a Lei caracteriza-se, em geral, por indicadores negativos. Focalizando a experiência escolar destes adolescentes, Bazon, Silva e Ferrari relatam a existência de dois padrões de trajetórias, tendo por base dados de uma amostra de 06 jovens. Adotando este estudo como referência, a presente pesquisa teve

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como objetivos descrever o percurso escolar de adolescentes em conflito com a Lei e compreender sua experiência escolar. A investigação, de natureza qualitativa, baseada em uma abordagem biográfica, contou com a colaboração de 12 adolescentes. Os dados coletados através de entrevistas foram tratados por meio de análise de conteúdo temática. Os resultados indicaram duas trajetórias escolares: Trajetória I - Da boa à má experiência escolar e Trajetória II - Uma experiência escolar preponderantemente negativa, embora pontuada por vivências positivas. As trajetórias escolares encontradas assemelharam-se às descritas por Bazon, Silva e Ferrari, porém acrescentam/detalham informações.

Palavras-chave: Adolescente em Conflito com a Lei. Ajustamento Escolar. Desenvolvimento.

INTRODUCTION

According to Le Blanc (2006), the involvement of adolescents with the practice of law-offending acts can be more or less significant, depending on the frequency and severity of such infractions (BAZON, KOMATSU, PANOSSO, & ESTEVÃO, 2011). Studies indicate that when there is an infraction, the practice of crimes begins very early on the teenager's life, and the repetition of criminal behavior is dynamically associated with the fact that those children / adolescents experience many difficulties inside of social institutions, being precariously socialized (LeBlanc et al, 1998; Tolan, 1987; as cited by LeBlanc & Kaspy, 1998; LeBlanc, 2006). Engaging in an infraction is always a complex and multidetermined phenomenon, associated with several variables that may be biological, psychological and social, and which synergistically influence each other from childhood to adolescence. (BAZON, KOMATSU, PANOSSO & ESTEVÃO, 2011; LEBLANC, 2006). The developmental path of these adolescents is often marked by adversity, whose negative effects tend to accumulate over time (JANOSZ & LEBLANC, 1999; LEBLANC, 2006, 2010; LOEBER, 1982; LYNNE-LANDSMAN, GRABER, NICHOLS, & BOTVIN, 2011; ZHANG et al., 2010).

Focusing specifically on social variables, it is known that these can be located in different contexts such as the family, the school, the peer network and the community. During the adolescence, the variables related to the school and the peer group are highlighted in terms of the weight of their influence (CALDWELL, STURGES, SILVER, 2007).

Especially concerning the school context, studies indicate that the experience of adolescents engaged in law-offending acts is generally negative: they feel stressed at school, have problems with their teachers and colleagues, perform poorly on most academic subjects, and are often reprimanded and sanctioned by school authorities. In this perspective, some authors point to the negative school experience as one of the predictors of the delinquent engagement in adolescence (CALDWELL, STURGES, SILVER, JANOSZ & LEBLANC, 1999, LILJEBERG et al. , 2010), while a strong bond with the school would be one of the more robust protective factors against such involvement in offensive behavior (COSTA & ASSIS, 2006; VAN DER LAAN, BLOM & KLEEMANS, 2009).

Although a student's academic performance is also multi-determined, Le Blanc (2006) argues that when it is poor/low, it acts as a central variable in the process that promotes the weakening of the school bonds because it gives rise to feelings of incompetence and inadequacy. The low quality of relations between students and teachers and peers also have a negative effect on the school bonds. Dynamically, through a weak school bonds, it is more difficult to assimilate school rules and, therefore, more likely that the student performs divergent behaviors. In this way, the student's chances of being punished within the school are increased, which also contributes to the weakening of school bonds (JANOSZ & LEBLANC, 1999; WYNNE & JOO, 2011). When the bond with the school ceases to exist, a likely consequence is school dropout. When an adolescent is already exposed to other risk factors, school dropout can help foster law-offending engagement (LEBLANC, VALLIÈRES, & MCDUFF, 1993; ROCER & PATERNOSTER, 2011; WEERMAN, 2010).

There is, therefore, evidence demonstrating a significant link between certain aspects of the schooling process and the engagement in law-offending behavior during adolescence. However, there are relevant gaps in knowledge on the subject, especially with regard to the perspective of adolescents who are persistently involved in committing offenses about how their school life is / has been experienced (SANDER, SHARKEY, OLIVARRI, TANIGAWA, & MAUSETH, 2010). Only a few studies aiming to understand how teen offenders signify their school experience are identified in the literature, despite their importance to provide clues about the dynamics of the process which contributes to the weakening of the school bond in these cases. The investigation performed by Ashkar and Kenny (2009) with sixteen teen offenders about their school

experience is one of these studies. Overall, participants in this study reported that they could not stand it or that they hated school. In addition, they said that while the school had been fun in the early years, it became more and more difficult and that they weren't able to learn basic contents such as reading and writing. Many participants reported feeling tired of asking for help from their teachers, without success, and that, often felt ashamed to be ridiculed by them in front of the whole class. As for the school environment, they said that the school in which they studied favored gang membership and that situations of violence were common.

Sander et al. (2010) also conducted interviews with sixteen teenage offenders and their mothers. The study participants reported that they would like to have had more attentive teachers, to help them learn and perform school tasks. They also said that when their grades started to get lower by the sixth grade, it discouraged them from continuing to study. They reported that in the early school years they liked their teachers, but that after the change of school cycle, they began to feel that they could not count on any of them.

Moore and McArthur (2014) also conducted a study of eleven young offenders in correctional custody seeking to understand their educational experiences. Participants reported that they did not like their teachers, had few friends at school and felt that no one really cared about them. They reported feeling lonely for being excluded by peers who were considered "good students" and for losing contact with their friends by constantly changing schools. The adolescents reported positive school experience only during the execution of the measure of deprivation of liberty, when, according to them, different from what they had previously experienced, they were not afraid or ashamed when answering questions during class or asking their teachers for help.

In Brazil, Silva and Salles (2011), when investigating the school experience of adolescents during the measure of assisted liberty, concluded that this is often marked by a processes of discrimination and exclusion of the teenagers from the school environment. The work published by Bazon, Silva and Ferrari (2013), also in Brazil, reports the results of an investigation with the objectives of describing the school course and understanding the school experience of juvenile offenders, based on the schooling process lived by them. The analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from six adolescents investigated in several school establishments allowed the identification of two patterns of school trajectories regarding the adolescents' experiences: one, whose mark is the discontinuity in the quality of school experiences,

since the initial years of the schooling process were experienced as positive, and a second moment, qualified as negative (T1); another, whose mark is the continuity, characterized by a school experience qualified in a predominantly negative way, from the beginning (T2).

The research on which is based the publication by Bazon et al. (2013) addresses scientific questions related to the way in which adolescent offenders undergo the schooling process, with an additional contribution as it indicates that the experiences in this segment vary, suggesting the existence of subgroups that need to be better understood. In this context, it is considered that new studies, with diversified samples, in this same line of investigation, are important, taking into account the necessity to observe if the trajectories described can be verified, being open to the possibility of undergoing alterations with the addition of new data. Thus, the present study reports the investigation which proposed to verify, through a methodology similar to that employed in the research described by Bazon et al. (2013), whether or not the school trajectories described by these authors would be corroborated, based on data from a new sample of adolescents in conflict with the Law. Thus, the present study had the following specific objectives: (1) to describe the school career of adolescents in conflict with the law; (2) to understand the school experience of these teenagers, based on the schooling process lived by them, considering the existence of different school trajectories.

METHOD

For the development of this qualitative study, the Biographical Approach was adopted (CARRA, 2001), which is based on an interactionist perspective that analyzes subjective experiences as experiences resulting from interactions with the “other”. In this perspective, what the individual does, his/her choices, the meaning he/she assigns to events, and the interpretation given to the experience is more important than the concrete events themselves.

In the thread of biographical methodologies, the focus on the temporal dimension is expected to reveal trajectory typologies. The concept of trajectory is inherent to the mode of procedural representation that implies the description of the movement which links the different states (points) in a living space (PINEAU & LEGRAND, 1993). The trajectories can be studied from a longitudinal perspective: prospectively, through the course of the individual’s life; or retrospectively, through the reconstitution of history, that is, his or

her biography. In the present study, the biographical reconstitution method was applied, which consists of the articulation between heterobiographical and autobiographical data. In the case of interviews, it is considered that the construction of the narrative takes place at the same time as an intellectual reconstruction of the past and a re-creation of the present, which includes concerns about the future. Therefore, it is understood that the person's story is constituted by the narrative, by the way the person talks about it (CARRA, 2001).

In addition, as Agra and Matos (1997) put it, just as “modal trajectories” (of a generic and statistical character) frame “individual / singular trajectories”, the latter can also reveal the first. Thus, it is believed that from the individual trajectories of a group of adolescents, who have in common the fact of having been involved in the practice of infractions, one can describe “typical” school trajectories, which show the regularities of the relationship of adolescents in conflict with the law with their school.

PARTICIPANTS

Twelve teenage offenders, aged 15 to 18 years, recruited in programs of Socio-educational Measure of Assisted Liberty, in the city of Ribeirão Preto - SP, Brazil, participated in the study. Consistent with the qualitative approach adopted, it was stipulated that the number of participants would be defined according to a saturation criterion¹ (Carra, 2001). During the data collection, no participant reported something that was incongruent to the general meanings already produced on the other interviews, which could justify the need to collect data with more adolescents, considering, for example, the establishment of a new school trajectory pattern. Thus, it was considered that there was theoretical-empirical saturation.

Table 1 contains information for characterizing the participants in relation to their age, the offense on the basis of which they fulfilled the socio-educational measure and the school situation at the time of the interview.

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TABLE 1. Characterization of the participants regarding age, offense for which they fulfilled socio-educational measure and school situation

Participants	Age	Offense	School Situation
Marcelo	18	Robbery	Dropout
Vinicius	15	Trafficking	Dropout
Anderson	18	Trafficking	Studying
Guilherme	16	Trafficking	Dropout
Fábio	18	Theft	Dropout
Álvaro	18	Robbery	Dropout
Ismael	17	Theft	Studying
Gian	17	Robbery	Studying
José	18	Trafficking	Studying
Jeferson	17	Trafficking	Dropout
Luciano	16	Trafficking	Dropout
Kaique	15	Trafficking	Dropout

All participants were taking socio-educational measures for the first time, except for Anderson, who had been detained at Fundação Casa, a custodial center for juvenile offenders. In addition to the delicts that resulted in the application of the socio-educational measure in progress, all participants had in their history other police arrests and reports.

MATERIALS AND INSTRUMENTS

The materials used in this research were a digital recorder and note sheets. As for the instrument, the same semi-structured interview script from the study reported by Bazon et al. (2013) was used. It was elaborated with the intention of triggering the narratives about the “history of the school experiences” of the participating adolescents; It contains complementary “stimulating questions” whose objective is to seek information about the variables posed in the literature as relevant to the teenager-school interaction (relationships / affections / attitudes / behaviors).

PROCEDURES

Before contacting the adolescents and their parents, the research project was analyzed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Philosophy Sciences and Letters of Ribeirão Preto - University of São Paulo.² Thus, authorized by their parents, participants were interviewed individually in the institutions where they were recruited, ensuring that they displayed security and privacy conditions. The interviews were recorded in audio and transcribed in full so that they could be read and analyzed.

The most objective data concerning the school course, provided by the adolescents, were checked and reorganized according to information verified with the counselors of the socio-educational measure, responsible for the follow-up of the adolescents in the institutions, as well as in the “School Report Card” system that makes it possible to follow the performance in the site of the Secretariat of Education of São Paulo (SED, 2017).³ As for the data related to the actions / interactions, perceptions and feelings, these were treated with the help of the synthetic categories proposed based on the content analysis method by Bardin (2002). In a first step, the data of the “history of schooling experiences” of each of the adolescents were studied separately, and in depth. The categorization procedure started when data began to make sense; thus, the naming of the categories was formulated observing repetition patterns. In practical terms, this stage of the analysis corresponded to what is commonly called “data reduction” (MILES & HUBERMAN, 1994). Having the synthetic categories for each adolescent, the comparisons were made, regarding the adolescents’ school experiences among themselves, aiming to identify similarities and differences. At this stage, the analysis was also performed with the help of the synthetic categories.

Having established the results found in the research reported here, these were contrasted with those described in the publication by Bazon *et al.* (2013) concerning the school trajectories of adolescents in conflict with the law studied by them, in order to verify whether their data would be corroborated or not by those of the present study.

RESULTS

Regarding the objective (1) to describe the school career of adolescents in conflict with the law, table 2 summarizes the information regarding each adolescent, showing the repetitions and

drop-outs according to age. At the time the interviews were held, only José, Ismael, Gian and Anderson were attending school.

TABLE 2. Characterization of the educational background of the participants with regard to ages and grade levels⁴, including repetitions and dropouts.

Participante	Idade e Percurso Escolar													
Marcelo	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	8 ^a	-	-	-	-	
Vinicius	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15				
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	-	-	-	-				
Anderson	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	-	-	-	6 ^a	-	6 ^a	
Guilherme	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	-	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	-	-	-			
Fábio	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	-	-	7 ^a	8 ^a	-	
Álvaro	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	8 ^a	-	-	-	
Ismael	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	8 ^a	8 ^a	8 ^a			
Gian	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	8 ^a	8 ^a	8 ^a	8 ^a		
José	0 - 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	-	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	8 ^a	8 ^a	10	20	30	30
Jeferson	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	8 ^a	10	20	-		
Luciano	0 - 6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
	-	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	7 ^a	-			
Kaique	0 - 5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
	Pré Escola	1 ^a	2 ^a	3 ^a	4 ^a	5 ^a	6 ^a	7 ^a	8 ^a	-	-			

From the table, it is possible to observe that all adolescents presented a lag between their age and the school grade they were cursing. The group average is of 3.25 years. The lag is due to failures and / or evasions. In general, the participants have a history of many repetitions and almost all of them have at least one episode of school dropout. Half of the participants dropped out at least once, before the age of 15. The average age at which they stopped attending school for the first time is 14.5 years. Only Joseph, Ishmael and Gian had not left school at some time, until the time of their participation in the research. However, it should be noted that, even in these cases, there are recent school repetitions, which are mainly due to absenteeism. Despite these similarities in the school career of these teenagers, there are also some peculiarities. Marcelo, Vinicius, Anderson, Guilherme, Fábio and Álvaro, for example, presented greater school deficits due to repetitions and especially to the years that they stopped attending school. Other adolescents, however, presented a smaller gap and advanced a little more in the school grades, as it is the case of José and Jeferson.

With regard to the objective of (2) understanding the school experience of these teenagers, based on the schooling process lived by them, considering the existence of different school trajectories, data analysis and interpretation identified two patterns of schooling trajectories: I - From good to bad school experience; II - A predominantly negative school experience, punctuated by positive experiences. The main results are presented below, organized around these two broad categories.

TRAJECTORY I- FROM GOOD TO BAD SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

This trajectory denotes a discontinuity of the quality of experiences at school: what was initially perceived as positive became negative. This process refers to the experiences of 9 adolescents. In general, they described the beginning of school life as positive, describing the school as good. Over time, with the increase of school requirements in terms of performance, the experience became negative. On this track, the teens also highlight the wear of relations with teachers, partly due to the increase in the number of teachers with whom they should interact in the change of school cycle, and also due to the punishments received because of inadequate behavior.

These elements seem to underlie, in the adolescents' perception, the process that contributes to the transformation of positive school experience into negative ones. The main product of this transformation is the gradual disinterest they felt towards the school.

[Talking about the early years of his school life] “Cool ... I liked it ...” [About years before the evasion] “For me it was boring, I tried to get used to it, but I could not! Then I stopped ...” (Anderson)

[About years before school] “It was all good ...” [About years before the evasion] “When there was a lot of homework, I got discouraged...” (Álvaro)

It should be noted that adolescents, whose school experiences are synthesized in this group, seem to present poor school performance, since the beginning of school life.

[About reading and writing skills] [Did you learn this?] [Silence] “No!” [...] “I never learned it!” (Vinicius).

This, however, does not seem to count decisively to disqualify the early years, considering that in the memories the playful dimension of school activities seems to prevail, perhaps because the demands for academic performance were less evident and / or frequent, or perceived as little serious. However, with progress in the school grades, poor performance started to become evident for the adolescents themselves, probably due to the more systematic evaluation process. Thus, the teenagers began to feel unmotivated to study, even if for some of them the relation between school difficulties and lack of interest in learning is still not very clear. School activities are now described as tedious.

[How was class?] “Oh, it was bad ... because it was difficult” (Marcelo)

Apparently, as a result of this transformation, the relationship with teachers and other school employees gets gradually worse.

“Ah, it’s more annoying ... ah, the teachers are more strict, right? Because ... They are complicated, they teach things their way” (Gian)

However, the disqualification of the school experience does not affect all aspects of this experience equally. The preservation of positive evaluation of the school is denoted in some of the adolescents. This seems to come from the fact that these adolescents experience ambiguous feelings about school which could stem from the contradiction between initial (positive) experience and subsequent / current (negative) experience; or from the fact that despite the preponderance of disqualification, there are positive circumstances that punctuate the experience, especially with regard to social interaction with peers.

“Ah, there was an annoying woman there, but the school was nice, I had many colleagues.” (Guilherme).

A more attentive analysis of this trajectory allowed to identify some variations in it. On the one hand, a subgroup of adolescents, here called “A”, composed by Guilherme, Álvaro, Marcelo, Vinicius, Fábio and Anderson, the initial school experience was perceived

as positive, especially due to the social aspect. However, as the demands for academic achievements gain space, and as a result, their poor performance is evidenced, the school experience is signified as extremely negative and the positive aspects do not seem to be sufficient enough to guarantee the permanence in school.

In this subgroup, from an early age, adolescents probably felt less competent to respond to the expectations related to school performance. This feeling would be the basis of the “decision” of not studying, which happened very early in this subgroup, as it can be seen on Table 2. Data from the school trajectory of these adolescents reveal a large gap related not only to repetitions but also to the number of years evaded from school. With the exception of Álvaro, all the adolescents of this subgroup evaded for the first time before being 15 years old, some very early, like Gustavo, who did it at the age of 10. These young people not only left school for the first time very early, but also spent a lot of time without studying. They all currently are or had already been out of school for at least three years.

On the other hand, the other subgroup of adolescents, here called “B”, composed by Gian, Ismael and José, also denotes a transformation from initial school experience, from good to bad. But, in this subgroup, in the second moment of the school trajectory (qualified as “bad”), aspects and / or positive experiences in the school stand out for the teenagers. These “positive points” that “dabble” the school experience seem to feed the fragile attachment of these adolescents to the institution, which in turn leads to progress to more advanced grades. Such progress fosters the feeling that they may be able to meet academic demands, regardless of what the school assessments indicate. Faced with the dissonance between the data of reality (the school progression vs the low performance), the teenagers often show contempt for the school content as a way to explain the poor performance. In summary, the trajectory I includes some variations within it, according to the synthesis of data for Subgroup A and Subgroup B. These variations are better described below.

SUBGROUP A - POSITIVE INITIAL EXPERIENCE, WHICH GRADUALLY BECOMES NEGATIVE

The adolescents of this subgroup, although being able to recall only few memories of the initial phase of school, described it as positive. Their memories refer to pleasant things evolving games / toys, parties and walks. From pre-school to elementary school, school life is still experienced as positive, but apparently what sustains this positive perception “diminishes”, as appreciations from year to year become

more generic, what can be concluded by the less frequent references teenagers make to pleasant activities during these years in the interviews.

Mostly, there is a positive perception of the teachers in the early years. The characteristics valued in these professionals are related, especially, to the disposition to help and to solve doubts. According to the interviews, over time, teachers and other school agents are perceived negatively, because, in the view of the teenagers, they are not concerned with the students' learning and, therefore, do not make themselves available to help them in their school difficulties. The memories of each particular teacher are rather faint. At no time (whether it is positively valued or negatively valued) would any teacher figure have marked their spirit significantly. Few teachers were nominally remembered.

One of the most striking characteristics of the school trajectory in this subgroup is the fact that the aspect described as most positive refers to the social conviviality provided by the school, both with peers and with teachers (those perceived positively). That is, the aspect that is positively valued in the school experience refers to elements that have nothing to do with school contents and / or possible academic acquisitions. In this wake, the gradual deterioration of this social conviviality, especially with peers, due to the rearrangements in the classes and the repetitions, seems to be a central element to the gradual process of school dropout. In this logic, the teenagers in this subgroup do not apprehend or describe clearly the utility of the school. Some even mention not caring about this aspect and sometimes seem to understand the school as having a very different function from that of transmitter of knowledge; they seem to think of it as a place for leisure / fun.

[So, the ideal would be for schools not to exist?] “No, I’m not saying there shouldn’t be schools, I’m saying that school should not be a school, it should be ... like a party” (Álvaro)

Regarding school performance, it was possible to observe that, despite variations, throughout the school period, the performance of these adolescents, according to the teens' perception, declined, which is especially noticeable in the cycle changes (in the 5th and 8th grades). All adolescents reported learning difficulties in at least one subject. It is necessary to emphasize that such difficulties, when evidenced by the school evaluations, are experienced in a very negative way.

[And what did you like the least?] “Like the least? Damn ... what I liked the least about school was when I went to the library; I had to stay there reading in front of everybody. Damn, I did not like reading in front of everybody. “[And why did not you like it?]” Oh I was ashamed, I could not read very well, I only read a little bit alone. “(Guilherme)

The interviews with the teenagers indicate the perception that their performance was obviously worsening as school's demands increased; with that, their self-image as someone able to meet the school's demands seems to have not been built or seems to have been destroyed. The result of this process, in practical terms, was their dropping out of school.

“Ah, it got more difficult, then I stopped studying ...” (Vinicius)

“I thought the school was cool and everything, only it was boring ... In the 8th grade ... Oh, I did not want to go to school any more. I did not want it any more, I really did not want to study ...” (Vinicius)

Before the school difficulties, the realization of being unable to correspond to the demands makes it so – in spite of the fact that the adolescent had had a positive beginning in school and still maintain a generally positive opinion about it – they start failing to attend school. The perception of his own performance as low / weak, the feeling of incompetence and the consequent sense of failure (personal) seem to be the basis of the demotivation to study and of the dropout.

However, when asked about the reasons for poor performance, all adolescents explain it as a result of lack of personal effort. They share the view that school failure is their responsibility. They feel that they have not put enough effort into it.

[What does school teach that you think is important?] “Reading and writing ... [Did you learn this?]” Never ... Ah, I did not try hard enough ...” (Vinicius)

Interestingly, conceptions of “good” and “bad” student, for these adolescents, do not seem to be related to academic achievement / performance, but, as a matter of priority, to conformity or nonconformity to school disciplinary rules, without making a connection between discipline and performance. Under this perspective, the adolescents' narrative indicates attempts to alter their own behavior at school, aiming at the adjustment to the institution's expectations regarding discipline. Apparently, such attempts, given they were unsuccessful, also constitute negative experiences.

According to their account, the school took measures to correct the “bad” students, which mostly consisted in separation of the student from the classroom environment or even from the school (through “suspensions”), with an interruption in the learning-teaching process for the student. All the adolescents in this subgroup report being “corrected” by the school in this manner.

“I was suspended or put in time-out... behind the door. Yeah! With my nose on the wall... I felt bad, because I had to stand the entire time, I couldn't

sit. Sometimes, they (the teachers) made me leave the classroom, and I had to stay outside without doing anything.” (Fábio)

These experiences of school sanction and punishment, which, in fact, violate the Child and Adolescent Statute because they are vexatious, seem to promote the students' leaving the school. Many of the students did leave their studies immediately after an episode of the kind.

In summary, in this subgroup, the school is perceived positively, especially when the adolescents involved talk about to the initial years of schooling, pertinent to the period of daycare/pre-school and the first few years of elementary. They have good memories of this period, especially considering their social lives. However, as time goes by, they report the experience of increase in their academic demands, and the sense that their performance was below the expectations. Even though the students have criticisms towards teachers, indicating having lived with teachers that are very little concerned about students' learning, they take full responsibility for their low performance, related to their low effort made to overcome difficulties in learning, according to them. In this period, there is evidence that they presented behavioral problems. However, they don't relate these problems with these learning difficulties (be it as cause or consequence). These processes work towards making the school experience negative. In this path, all of them end up leaving their studies eventually.

SUBGROUP B – VERY POSITIVE INITIAL EXPERIENCE THAT WORSENS WITH TIME, ALTHOUGH TOLERABLY

The adolescents that make up this group provided data that allows the conception that their school experience was lived more intensively positive than the others', especially in the first few years. The school experience also degrades over time, but the negative aspects that contribute to that seem to be more circumscribed to certain aspects. Therefore, a radical disqualification of the school experience is not observed. Because of that, they differentiate objectively from the adolescents in group A in terms of schooling paths for not having abandoned their studies, for having reached higher levels of education and for wishing to continue their studies.

As with the previous subgroup, the good memories refer fundamentally to the beginning of their schooling, pertinent to the period of daycare/pre-school and the first few years of elementary school, and are associated with playful activities and a positive perception of their relationship with peers and teachers. The criteria for the positive evaluation of teachers are: the display of interest by the student, with

motivation and learning on the students' part; the openness to dialog; the competence to maintain the control over a classroom.

"I think that a good teacher must interact with students. It's not the teacher that - because the student doesn't seem to care - ... that he leaves them alone! They go after the student. That's the good teacher... Ah! The student is quiet, sleeping, and they go there: 'No! Let' wake up! You're here to study, you need to study!' There are other teachers that don't care: 'You want to sleep? Sleep!' Doesn't even care..."

In this subgroup, the initial experience, more emphatically qualified as positive, is described as pleasant. The teenagers remember the teachers and other school staff, as well as experiences lived in the institution, with more detail. The description of teachers is more detailed in this subgroup, as if the memories are more vivid, because the experience was more outstanding. The very inappropriate behaviors presented from this time are interestingly remembered as "children's stuff" and, according to the teenagers, the teachers talk about these behavioral problems. The teens in this subgroup also don't recall being punished for it in this initial phase.

"Ah! Because at the time I was a little mischievous. A brat! I didn't want to dram, I wanted to keep playing. I even bit my teacher once! A story... Nothing more, silly kids' stuff." (Ismael)

"They didn't fight with me. they talked to me, but didn't fight." (Ismael)

Throughout the school years, the inadequate/undisciplined behaviors previously understood as "kids' stuff", tolerated and managed through dialog, according to their perceptions, start being perceived as unacceptable in school. That way, these students, who until then felt welcome in this environment due to difficulties to behave in an adequate/discipline manner, compatible with the school environment's expectations, begin feeling watched and having relational problems in this context. From the feeling of pleasure associated to being at school, they move onto the feeling of injustice before punishments they begin suffering. The teachers start being partly negatively valued, because, in the students' eyes, they behave differently from those from before, which talked about the behavioral problems. The teenagers put that the teachers changed, becoming inaccessible or seeming to be "against them", without questioning towards the possibility that such change follows that relative to the expectations of the teachers taking into account their age/their maturing.

"In some grades, some of them were really mean to me! In the second year of high school, some teachers... I know they didn't like me..." (José)

On the other hand, the social experience with their peers at the same age, which doesn't seem to alter much, from one moment to another in their paths is conceived as an important positive aspect, even

when the school experience deteriorates for these students. However, it is not enough for the school experience to be generally positively evaluated, differently from adolescents from group A, which perceive this aspect as being the most relevant for a good school experience. This seems to be the fundamental difference between the groups. In this subgroup, having good academic performance (“doing well” on subjects) é just as, if not more, important than having a “good” social life at school. According to the data of these adolescents’ paths, motivation seems to be connected to the fact that they had satisfactory academic performance. They seem to be proud of it.

“Ah, I always got good grades because I did well on tests, on subjects, that kind of thing... so I did little homework. I had good grades...” (José)

As with subgroup A, they also perceive an increase in the school’s expectations throughout the years. However, they deem themselves capable of meeting the expectations, apparently; matching the other students. The difficulties they present and that are evidenced by school evaluations are, in their perception, relative to specific subjects.

“Then, it started decreasing a little... it started getting harder, I didn’t do homework... Because I didn’t see any benefit in what the teachers were talking about. Geography, history...” (Ismael)

Thinking about such difficulties seems to generate doubt in the teenagers about their abilities for academic life, but, in the end, they conclude that “yes, they were capable”, even though they lived situations indicative of low performance.

“... a little difficulty I still have is division, but I have the power of will to learn what I need to learn... ah, I think I do well in school...” (Gian)

“Ah, I didn’t like to do homework, because I already knew what the teachers were talking about...” (Ismael)

Concerning academic discipline, as aforementioned, even though they presented some behavioral problems (inadequate behavior), they don’t perceive themselves as being undisciplined. In this matter, they perceive themselves and other behaviors positively, in light of the perception that they attribute to the teachers from the initial period of schooling. Their negative perception of themselves and of their behaviors attributed to teachers from the subsequent periods of schooling contradict, so to say, their self-perception, it has no resonance in the adolescents. In the contrary, the negative evaluation by some of the teachers, according to the teenagers, was unfair, being the main cause of conflict among them.

“Then the annoying teachers started already... wanting to puff their chests. They were a piece of work, fought about anything. Then, whenever I acted up, even if they said something... about something I didn’t do [...] Then after

some time, I started talking back. Then the problem between me and the principals started. The teachers would talk at me when I hadn't done anything, then I started complaining. They weren't very used to my complaining, they liked me to listen and keep quiet. I didn't keep quiet at all... I started arguing with them" (Ismael)

Even though the adolescents in this subgroup hadn't definitely evaded the school until the moment of the interview, their relationship with the school was deteriorated. Or better yet, the value attributed to school and to schooling itself had diminished much, making their attendance to school continue for extrinsic factors to the school, detached from learning in its own.

[What does the school teach that you think is important?]
"What if I told you I don't think like that at all... But for you to find a job, put it on your résumé, that's what's good about it... Just to get a job, really..." (José)

In summary, for these adolescents, as well as for the ones from group A, the school experience seems to take a specific course (Trajectory I), coming from good and going to a bad experience: from the positively valued initial years, to a second moment, going through negative experiences, associated, mainly, to the difficulties inherent to the school's demands, evidenced by evaluations, which indicate a worsening of academic performance, and through conflicts in the relationships with teachers. In this sense, these adolescents present, in the most recent years, behaviors that reflect the weakening of their bonds with the school. However, considering they seem to have built a self-image of "good student", based on the sense of competence to learn, differently from those in subgroup A, there is no history of school evasion in subgroup B.

TRAJECTORY II – A PREPONRANTLY NEGATIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE WITH LAPSES OF GOOD EXPERIENCES

A second pattern in students' paths evidenced in the study refers to a process that denotes continuity in quality of the school experience; namely, preponderantly negative.

[How has it been since you started going to school?]
"Darn, it was really annoying. School is horrible, I didn't like it" [...] "Ever since I was little, I already didn't like the school." (Jeferson)

"... it was a weird feeling that I had when I was at school, I always had, always had a – I don't know – this bad feeling, anxious for it to be over soon, you know?" (Kaique)

However, with more specific questions, they recall some positive moments lived in school, most of which were associated with

a good relationship with a certain teacher or with the way how, in a given school, academic difficulties were dealt with. These adolescents seem to have lived strongly negative experiences according to their evaluation in the school context repeatedly, interpreted as disrespect with their difficulties, which has created a profound feeling of injustice. Having a few good experiences seems to contribute to generate a higher reactivity to negative ones, provided it serves as a parameter of comparison one to another, which renders them a more vivid and more critic position towards situations/occurrences perceived as negative.

This process refers to the experience of 03 adolescents from the sample: Jeferson, Luciano and Kaique. The subgroup formed by these teenagers will be named **“Subgroup C”**. In this subgroup, it is possible to note vivid memories, especially from elementary school, of teacher and other school staff being perceived as cold people, lacking in commitment with education, rigid, and indisposed to comprehend the needs/difficulties of students.

“Annoying one! [teacher] No one could speak, otherwise she would hit the desks with a ruler... she fought with people, called the students’ mothers...” (Luciano)

“... they [teachers] didn’t do anything! They: ‘Ah, I’m making my money all the same and I don’t need any of that!’ As if he was just doing his job!” (Kaique)

“... he [teacher] screamed like hell! Even made the boy cry there. Ah, and the kid hadn’t even done the thing there. The boy started talking, crying: ‘Not even my father screams at me like that, you’re screaming!’ It was one hell of a fight. We didn’t like him either. In the middle of the year, that’s when what I told you happened. I was there, he was being funny, I walked out of the classroom, he ran after me and I jumped over the wall and left. I only came back [to study] in the other school...” (Kaique)

“Because she was very annoying... She wanted to talk to my mom all the time, to my father... Ah, she said I didn’t do anything, said that I participated in the classroom without any interest, that I was wasting time...” (Jeferson)

They report meaningful relationships with one or another teacher and/or school staff, based on the perception that they were nurturing and offered support, and not punishment. These positive experiences are described as isolated events in their school experience.

“I thought she was good, because she tried to teach me, cared about us, helped... Now, the other teachers never helped anyone...” (Kaique)

The data from these adolescents is partially alike the data from those of Trajectory I regarding the fact that they also experienced a gradual increase in school demands. However, for these, it denotes the clear perception of academic difficulties, evidenced by evaluations, implicating bad/low performance, which is described as being a very painful experience by them.

“My classmates were more evolved, let’s say, more intelligent, because I kind of did worse in my class, so I didn’t like it because of that”. (Kaique)

It implies that, for these teens, the responsibility of doing well or badly at school isn’t attributed to themselves; on the contrary, they attribute total responsibility to the institute of the school; or rather, to the teachers, seen, critically, as very faulty.

“... I didn’t understand at all, (they) said (things) only once, didn’t explain, told you to do things as if you knew everything. I wouldn’t need them if it was like that.” (Kaique)

“It depends on the school, right? If it’s a good school, you have to behave right and study too, then you’ll have opportunity... if it was better for me this school, then I think I wouldn’t have done all these wrong things, because I would have already learned, I wouldn’t have difficulties, wouldn’t have had a reason to quit school.” (Kaique)

“You know, when they formed classes, there was the smart students’ class, the average students’ class and the bratty students’ class. I was always in the bratty students’ class.” [...] *“I had the capacity to be in a better class...”* [Jeferson]

For some, beyond the quality of their own performance, thought of as bad/low performance, the importance of their interpersonal relationship with teachers is clear. In this case, the negative school experiences seem to be associated with the perception of the bad relationship with the teachers and mainly with the strictness of school rules and with the severity of the punishment received.

“The schedule changed, changed because there was more teachers, more homework, more warnings... It got worse! The teachers were all strict [...] and I was never one to walk the line.” (Jeferson)

[On the episode he was kicked out of school] *“Ah, I cursed at the principal! No, she cursed us!”* (Luciano)

In regards to their self-perception as a student, it is notable that the teenagers conceived themselves, at first, as good students. However, with time, they begin to refer to themselves as bad students in relation to school discipline. This process happens, according to the data offered by the adolescents, because of the prioritized handling (on the school’s part) of behavior deemed by the school as inadequate: the application of punishment to the students and the warnings to parents/guardians. This form of handling seems to impact their family relationships, which affects them very negatively. In Jeferson’s case, because of his parents’/guardians’ involvement in the problematic situations experienced by him at school, there was an attempt at change.

“Damn, I was embarrassed the first few days. Then I was grounded at home, grounded a whole lot! Then I said: ‘Ah, I’m going to have to get good at

school' Then I started getting better and better, but... It didn't help! It got bad all over again!" (Jeferson)

It seems that, from this point forward, the teenagers stop trying to adapt to school. The inadequate behaviors are replaced, seemingly deliberately, by active disobedience to school rules, and even insubordination.

"I left the classroom without saying a thing. There were classes I didn't like, so I didn't stay in the classroom, I went to the sports court... Mocked the teachers." (Jeferson)

"Something more serious, then she [the principal] cursed at us... Then she found out, wanted to confront us. She called us sons of bitches, we weren't happy about it. [And what did you do?] Ah, a thing there... We cursed at her, and then did some stuff... [Was it like revenge?] Yeah. The principal filed a formal police report..." (Luciano)

With that, the academic performance of students, which was not good to begin with, worsens.

"It kept getting backwards... harder! Time goes by and it only gets harder, doesn't it? Ah, it was all red grades (lower than the necessary average)" (Jeferson)

The teenagers argue that they were perceived as "bad students" by teachers especially in the last years of schooling, after failed attempts at changing their own behaviors.

"Ah, they sent warnings, right? Only said we didn't do nothing, that we didn't want nothing. [They thought...] that there was no way anymore, I think." (Jeferson)

"Hell, I think they said I was hopeless, didn't have a future. I didn't do anything. They kept saying that even to become a garbage-handler you had to study. Then I said... I didn't say anything, I didn't even care..." (Jeferson)

"They also said I was no good, and that I kept acting up. When we had recess, they told others not to mingle with us, this teacher I didn't like, he said: 'That boy isn't worth it, and all', 'Don't stay with him!' They talked like that..." (Kaique)

In general, the perception these teens build of school is overall negative, denoting a fragile bond with the idea of schooling and, even, an aversion to it.

"Damn, it was really horrible. School is horrible, I didn't like it. I didn't feel like going to school..." (Jeferson)

With this, they build a very disqualified image of school, where different forms of social violence are produced and reproduced.

"... it wasn't very good, that school. There was some teachers there, damn, they gave the student no attention. They messed up the students, damn. So

the school there is real bad, looks like jail, with grids, lots of stuff, even the doors used to have grids on them. And we had to be there, but didn't like it at all. [...] It was a place for prisoners already..." (Kaique)

In summary, it is noted that, for these teenagers, the negative quality of the school experience stands out; it is attached to negative interactions with teachers and other staff and to the punishments that followed, more so if they involved the parents/guardians. Data referring to these teenagers' paths show that they had a lower age-grade lag than teens from subgroup A. Jefferson, for example, progressed until the second year of high school. However, as it is possible to observe on Table 2, all of them had evaded school least one year prior to their participation in the research. The evasion for the adolescents in this subgroup seems to be the summit of an extremely fragile connection with the institution of the school, (not) built since the beginning.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE RESULTS FOUND IN THE PRESENT RESEARCH AND THOSE DESCRIBED IN THE WORK PUBLISHED BY BAZON ET AL. (2013)

In the work published by Bazon *et al.* (2013), two paths through school are described in regards to the adolescents' experience: one whose mark is the discontinuity in school experiences, with an initial period experienced as positive, but that, in a second moment, begins being qualified as negative (T1); and another whose mark is the continuity, characterized by a mainly negative school experience, all the time, since the beginning (T2). The results found in the present research reiterate those findings, although it presents new data, which allows to better nuance each one of these trajectories and identify subgroups within trajectory I (equivalent to T1).

In the work by Bazon *et al.* (2013), it was noted that adolescents whose data allow describing trajectory T1 displayed, in general, low performance since the beginning. This aspect, initially, seemed to not disqualify the experience in the first school years. Considering that the positive feelings were articulated preponderantly towards interpersonal relationships and towards playful activities. In this study, the same processes were observed, continuing the pattern of trajectory of adolescents in subgroup A. As with the adolescents in subgroup B, a similar process was observed, but the deterioration of the school experience seems to be more related to the expectation of "good behavior" in school; in other words, the fact they were evaluated as undisciplined. It is interesting to note that these teenagers describe

more lively and positive school experiences attached to the first moment of their path when compared to adolescents from subgroup A. They seem to also have a relatively solid and stable perception of their ability to meet academic demands, to learn and do well in school.

According to Bazon *et al.* (2013), the adolescents whose data would allow describing trajectory T1 lived a gradual deterioration of their relationship with teachers. They described the teachers, in this second moment, as lacking in commitment, not making effort to, in fact, teach. They also referred to a hostile school environment, in contrast with the playfulness and friendliness of the first phase, which concurred for the negative appreciation to be generalized towards the school institution as a whole.

Some of these indications are also present in the stories of the 09 adolescents whose data make up the description of School Trajectory I from this present study. However, these aspects (deterioration of teacher-student relationships, demand for better performance or “good behavior”) seem to have not evoked a generally negative appreciation of the school institution as a whole in these adolescents. Even the interviewed teenagers that had evaded report situations where an ambiguity in their feelings towards “school” and the school period prior to the abandonment can be found.

Despite the differences, it is possible to say that the schooling process of adolescents in the T1 trajectory, according to Bazon *et al.*, and those in trajectory I, from the present study, seem to refer to an experience that gradually deteriorates, associated with an increasing distance from the school environment, which ends in evasion as its most radical mark of disbandment.

Onto trajectory T2, Bazon *et al.* (2013) describe that this one refers to a negative school experience, dialectically connected to a feeling of unrest and of “disliking towards the school” that prevails from the beginning until the end of the school period. The interactions between teachers described by the adolescents whose data could describe this trajectory were mostly negative as if teachers and students were rivals. The teenagers indicated feeling lessened by teachers, which they conceived “weren’t interested in the students’ learning.” So it is possible to say that this trajectory shows similarities with trajectory II described in the present study, once that for subgroup C, the negative quality of the school experience stands out throughout their schooling. These teens reported many situations where an incredibly negative perception of teachers prevails.

In the same manner of the adolescents in trajectory T2, the participants in this study (subgroup C) report feeling disrespected by

their teachers, teacher who are perceived as insensitive professionals towards students' difficulties, imposing unreachable obligations, regarding both performance as well as disciplinary behavior. Reports that allowed to detect that being in school provoked unrest and a subsequent wish to be somewhere else were also recurring.

However, as the main difference in comparison to those of the previous study (trajectory T2), the fact that this study's participants in trajectory II remember some positive situations experienced by them in school, such as positive interactions with this or that teacher and the experience of a positive situation connected to their good performance stands out. Because of that, an important point to be considered between the trajectories described in the work of Bazon *et al.* (2013) and the trajectories described in this study is a higher deepening/detailing of the trajectories, probably due to the fact that a higher number of adolescents was investigated, particularities of trajectories T1 and T2 described previously. It is also possible to take into consideration that Trajectories T1 and T2 represent extremes in regards to the possibilities of school trajectories and that, amidst those, there are many more, characterized by many nuances relative to the perception and the feelings concerning school and schooling as the ones found in the present study.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research confirm the main points of the literature, meaning that the low performance, the conflicting relationship with teachers and peers and that severe school punishments, perceived as unfair, are central elements of the school life of a juvenile offender, in Conflict with the Law, as suggest Janosz and LeBlanc (1999). Beyond the importance of these variables, results allow to apprehend the possible relationship among them, in line with what was explained by LeBlanc (2006). According to this author, the low performance promotes the weakening of the school bond through the installment and/or intensification of the feelings of inadequacy and rejection, derived from the frustration before the difficulties in learning the school subjects' contents. Although present in all subgroups of this study, this articulation appeared most vividly in subgroup A.

For LeBlanc and others, the relationships between students and teachers and their peers, when negative, also have an important effect on their performance and on their social behavior in school. The chances of an adolescents' being sanctioned/punished increase in

this situation; which, in turn, weakens the link between the school and the student even further (JANOSZ & LEBLANC, 1999; WYNNE & JOO, 2011). Sanctions were described by the teenagers in this study as frequent and signified by them as very negative. The most remarkable reports about how punishment contributed to a negative perception of the school were made by students from subgroup C, although they are present in the reports of teenagers from all subgroups. Studies describe that, before a weak school-student link, a possible consequence of punitive disciplinary practices in educational institutions is evasion (ROCQUE & PATERNOSTER, 2011; WEERMAN, 2010). This process was very clear in teenagers from subgroup A.

About this youngsters' school experience, the research identified that, beyond performance, another aspect that seem to determine the former is the perception the students have of their teachers or the relationship they establish with them. The study by Ashkar and Kenny (2009) had already noted that poor relationships with teachers seem to favor learning difficulties and the reduction of motivation to learn. The stories of the youngsters interviewed by Ashkar and Kenny demonstrate little respect to school authority and a higher difficulty in the relationship with teachers, proportional to the observed teaching style, characterized as authoritarian. In the interviews done for the present study, notably the ones made up subgroup C, whose school trajectories were shown to be remarkably negative, it was possible to observe how the strictness of rules and the punitive and authoritarian style of the teachers, perceived as such, were counterproductive. Both the teens interviewed by Ashkar and Kenny as well as the ones from this research revealed resentment towards their teachers for not acknowledging their efforts and for being insensitive to their difficulties regarding their academic development.

The literature also shows that young offenders, in general, tend to have disengaged from school commitments; in part due to a profound feeling of discouragement, associated with the tense relationship with teachers – because they didn't feel comfortable to make questions, to ask or receive academic help – and/or because of the teaching practices applied, considered “boring” (ASHKAR & KENNY, 2009). These findings were also observed in the reports of the teenagers interviewed in this study in describing interactions where they felt the professionals didn't acknowledge their difficulties and transmitted the academic content without really worrying about the effective learning on the students' part.

It must be noted, however, that the teens here studied describe the teachers in whom they acknowledged efforts to create conditions

for the students' learning in a positive manner. Sander et al. (2010) had already mentioned that the most often cited as a positive characteristic in the student-teacher relationship by offending students is the attention received by these professionals. In the research done by Ashkar and Kenny (2009), the youngsters benefitted more from the adults that spend the time to listen to them individually instead of applying conventional interventions and/or punishment. In this study, the adolescents also positively valued the teachers in whom they could perceive competence to deal with "bad behavior" regarding school discipline though dialog, being more comprehensive, in contrast with the more strict, that applied punitive methods of control.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In summary, the study in question met what the scientific productions here reviewed suggest, while also increasing knowledge in the theme, contributing to fill the gap relative to the research in the area, investigation of the school experience of adolescents in conflict with the law, based on the information offered by the teenagers themselves, in their perception. The results obtained through this study, in general, reiterate the findings of the work published by Bazon *et al.* (2013), where two patterns of schooling trajectories are described when discussing the teenagers' experiences. Also, the current study promoted a higher deepening/detailing of such trajectories. New data allowed the learning of nuances in each trajectory pattern and also the identification of subgroups within trajectory I. Regarding that, the discussion of the results reveals aspects pertinent to the reflection about the conditions that can guarantee a good schooling experience, a protecting factor towards the school-student link, which, in turn, is a factor of protection against the offending engagement of adolescents. (COSTA & ASSIS, 2006; LILJBERG *et al.*, 2011; VAN DER LAAN *et al.*, 2009).

The qualitative nature of the study made possible a deepened understanding of the school experiences of adolescents in conflict with the law. However, more data is needed for the generalization of the results, provided that, in future studies, it would be interesting to also focus on the trajectories of teens that evade school without, however, becoming involved in law-offending practices, so that then conclusions about the specific segment of the offenders can be drawn.

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NOTES

¹ According to Fontanela and Magdaleno Junior (2012), the saturation criterion in research methodology is based on the assumption that when qualitative data are collected, materials (in this case, psycho-cultural meanings) are transferred from their original environment (in which the psychic and sociocultural particularities of individuals or groups manifest themselves) to another one (that of the researcher). The researcher, through a continuous process of data analysis, started early in the collection process, observes the repetitions and looks for the moment when something substantially new appears, considering each one of the topics addressed (or identified during the analysis) and the group of respondents. Obviously, the researcher is not neutral and performs this analysis taking into account the questions posed to the interviewees, which reflect the objectives of the research, and a theoretical matrix that provides this researcher with a different view on the particularities. When in the data, there is no longer anything that is relevantly new, which indicates inconsistencies with what has been observed in the interviews, it is considered that saturation has been reached (Fontanela, Ricas & Turato, 2008). At this point, the researcher considers the possibility of discarding the most recently collected data, because they no longer contribute to the intended theoretical elaboration. In research, it is common to use as an indicator the repetition of the data to infer this redundancy and decantation (Denzin, Lincoln, 1994).

² CAAE: 30185214.4.0000.5407

³ <https://sed.educacao.sp.gov.br/Boletim/BoletimEscolar>, recovered on May 31, 2017.

⁴ With the approval of Law 11.274, the nomenclature of the seriations of primary education was changed from “series” to “years”. In the case, as the participants repeatedly used the term “series”, it was decided to adopt this mode of reference for the description of the adolescents’ schooling.

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