


FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGY AND STUDIES ON FEMALE INCARCERATION

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study was to identify the aspects addressed and the contributions of the scientific knowledge produced on female incarceration in the light of feminist criminology. It is a State of the Art research. They were searched in the Scielo, CAPES Portal, and Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD) databases in search of studies that addressed the incarceration of women in the light of feminist criminology. Of the 208 productions found, 13 were included, 10 articles, 01 thesis, and 02 dissertations. It was observed that most of the productions are scientific articles of documentary analysis. Among the authors, women were the largest representatives, the most prominent area of concentration was law and the most studied problem is related to the increase in female incarceration and the association of women with drug trafficking and point to the view of feminist criminology as the most appropriate for the discussions in question, given that it has been opposing the sexism of theories about female criminality that still reinforce stereotypes about the biological inferiority of women. It was evident the need for discussions on the intersectionality that involves female incarceration, as well as the existence of a gap in studies involving access to human rights that confer citizenship on women.

Keywords: Women. Prisons. Criminologies.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a set of characteristics that are usually related to female criminality in studies on women and crimes, such as the low percentages of crimes committed by women among the known global crimes. This assumption led to the distancing of women from criminological studies since there was an understanding that women only committed crimes related to their gender condition, such as abortion and infanticide (Coutinho, 2022).

Female criminality is still a relatively recent topic in the Brazilian legal context, which justifies the need for a closer look at the subject, especially given the complexities of gender relations in the female universe. The specificities surrounding female incarceration arise from the lack of in-depth studies on the presence of women in traditional approaches, in addition to the implementation of public policies aimed at incarceration, reflecting a problem that is directly intertwined with gender issues (Araújo, Silva, 2024).

Even though it is a vast field, with diverse approaches and concepts, the study of Criminology does not seem to have taken into account the discussions about women. There is no unanimity among authors who study criminology about the historical moment of its emergence as a scientific study. And, depending on the criminology in question, it is possible to delimit the understanding of the phenomenon that one wants to study, whether it is focused on the social system or the penal system (Mendes, 2017; Laragnoit, 2020).

About the history of Criminology, Mendes (2017) points to a "Medieval Criminology", considering *The Hammer of the Witches* - one of the most important treatises ever written on witch hunts, having contributed to the repression and death of more than 100 thousand women, written in 1487 by Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, as the fundamental book of modern penal or criminal sciences. "Until the nineteenth century, criminology, except for tangential and sporadic references, no longer dealt with women. It could be said that he no longer needed to deal with women given the effectiveness of the power instituted from the Middle Ages onwards" (p.29).

The birth of Modern Criminology is credited to the Italian physician Cesare Lombroso, who, in 1876, published the book called *The Delinquent Man*, where he formulated the Theory of the Born Delinquent. According to the author, the etiology of the crime is essentially individual, and the criminal is marked by a series of bodily stigmas that are anatomically identifiable. Since his will is determined by biological, psychological, and social factors, the author does not accept the concept of free will (Mendes, 2017).

Based on the assumption that society is harmonious and that its objectives are achieved when the individuals who are part of it share the dominant values and respect the imposed social rules, the Consensual Theories emerge, namely: Chicago School (Criminal ecology or social disorganization); Differential Association Theory; Theory of Anomie and Theory of Delinquent Subculture. In general, for such theories, in case of non-compliance with the rules of society, the individual should be despised, as well as his social reintegration is not accepted (Laragnoit, 2020).

Conflict Theories (*Labelling Approach* or Theory of Social Reaction and Critical or Radical Theory) are based on social change, where it is believed that society imposes rules and values to be followed. Some citizens determine the rules and others comply with them. Such positions can generate conflicts, which in turn are the reason why crimes happen (Laragnoit, 2020).

Emerging from the study of social criminology, the *labeling approach* began in the United States around the 60s, criticizing the sociological doctrinal currents of the New Chicago School (Bezerra, Haas, Leite, 2011). Also according to the authors

The *Labelling Approach*, a theory of labeling, stops asking who the criminal is and starts asking who is considered deviant, therefore, the object of study is no longer the "delinquent" and becomes the instances that create and manage delinquency within the penal system. In this way, the deviants are related to delinquents, who after committing crimes are excluded from the social group, and thus are "labeled" for their deviation and become victims of prejudices within the penal system that go beyond the fulfillment of the sentence (2011, p.2).

The emergence of Critical or Radical Theory (Critical Criminology) in the 1970s had in the book *Punishment and Social Structure*, by Georg Rusche and Otto Kirchheimer, one of its fundamental pillars. This work exposes the understanding that prison is linked to politics, that it is a necessity of industrial capitalism, and that the law is a political act (Mendes, 2017; Laragnoit, 2020).

For Weigert and Carvalho (2020), Critical Criminology expanded the field of vision of criminology and dogmatic criminal law by directing its analysis to structural and institutional violence, as well as to the factors of vulnerability and selectivity of criminalization processes. However, they affirm that, when it comes to women, as perpetrators or victims of crimes, the knowledge produced has always been limited to the interpretation of conflicts as the result of an individual and private (micro-criminological) dynamic.

When analyzing the theories mentioned from the perspective of gender, in the context of incarcerated women, the application of theories of social disorganization, social learning, rational choice, social control, and absence of anomie is observed (Araújo, Silva, 2024). In this sense, supported by a critical movement to criminology, the emergence of Feminist Criminology. For Mendes (2017), Feminist Criminology arises from feminist epistemological demands that are not understood by Critical Criminology and do not even obey the theory of Traditional Criminology.

It is born from a feminist perspective in an intersectional way when it comes to issues related to race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, and identity, covering the forms of oppression that are seen in society, which took place in two distinct phases. The first phase was still concerned with sustaining the androcentric perspective of criminology and affirming female conformism, apathy, and domesticity. The second recognized that women's experience began in studies on sex and gender relations as categories (Laragnoit, 2020).

Feminist Criminology recommends an analysis of the criminal justice system, where the criminalization and victimization of women occur under the optimum of women and not based on male values, experiences, and considerations (Mendes, 2017; Laragnoit, 2020). The introduction of gender studies revolutionized feminist analyses applied to criminology, not only questioning its androcentric assumptions but also building a new theoretical paradigm capable of analyzing criminality and the female perspective, which until then had been ignored (Campos, 2014).

Thus, feminist criminology points out that none of the criminological theories developed so far demonstrated the inclusion of gender. The reason for this gap lies in the fact that the problems that other criminological theories sought to solve were based on male questions, in which the answers were generalized to women or the explanations for female criminality resided in gender stereotypes. In addition, with the contribution of feminist criminology, it is found that when women are criminalized, they are considered doubly transgressors, because in addition to having committed a crime, transgressing a norm, and being labeled as a criminal, she has also distorted the social role that was attributed to her and that delimits the attitudes expected of a woman (Coutinho, 2022, p. 62).

However, the gender perspective as the only variable does not embrace plurality and diverse female identities, and is not sufficient to address the imprisonment of women, since criminal selectivity in Brazil and the world does not affect white and black women, poor and rich, in the same way (Germano, Monteiro, Liberato, 2018; Pimentel, 2020).

[...] it is in the historical claims of the various expressions of feminism that the necessary epistemological bases for scientific approaches to the reality experienced by incarcerated women are established, a fundamental path for the interpretation of the political and institutional conditions of female incarceration (Pimentel, 2020, p. 124).

Decolonial studies have highlighted the intersection between gender and race, social class, as well as other markers of discrimination and inequality, which increases the vulnerability of women considered to be from minority groups, especially black and Indigenous women. The development of gender studies has strengthened feminist *advocacy* to promote legal reforms and reforms related to, among other demands, women in prison. "Feminist criminology has criticized the Law and at the same time used it to institutionalize gender equality" (Ávila, 2022, p.01).

Thus, it is necessary to recognize fundamental rights as a requirement to guarantee the dignity of the human person. However, this movement has proven to be somewhat complex, since the "exercise of citizenship presupposes the construction of an ideal subject" (Mayora, Garcia, 2013, p.157). For women, the complexity in question seems even denser and present only in the formal field established by law, but not applied to practice (DORVILLÉ, 2020).

In other words, vulnerable subjects who suffer real violations of rights by the State and society, such as injuries to economic and social rights, become potential violators of strong rights of more protected social subjects (Mayora, Garcia, 2013, p.168).

The social phenomenon related to the increase in female incarceration in the "complex Brazilian socio-historical and cultural scenario" (Pimentel, 2020, p.129), must be analyzed beyond gender issues. Such an analysis must add factors such as race, class, among others, and various structural aspects that influence the full exercise of citizenship (Mendes, 2017). Thus, the present study aimed to identify the aspects addressed and the contributions of the scientific knowledge produced on female incarceration in the light of feminist criminology.

METHOD

Starting from the guiding question: "What aspects are addressed and the consistency of the scientific knowledge produced about female incarceration in the light of feminist criminology?" we sought to carry out bibliographic research of the State of the Art

type, according to Romanowski and Ens (2006). For the authors, conducting a review of the knowledge produced on the subject "is an indispensable step to trigger a process of qualitative analysis of the studies produced in the different areas of knowledge. This type of study is characterized by being descriptive and analytical" (p.43).

To carry out the research, the following procedures were necessary: definition of keywords or descriptors to direct the searches, location of the collections, establishment of criteria for the selection of the material that makes up the *corpus* of the state of art, collection of research material, reading of publications for the elaboration of synthesis, considering the theme, objectives, problems, methodologies, and conclusions, organization of the study report composing the systematization of the syntheses and analysis and elaboration of the conclusions (Romanowski, Ens, 2006).

THE STATE OF THE ART OF STUDIES ON FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGY AND FEMALE INCARCERATION

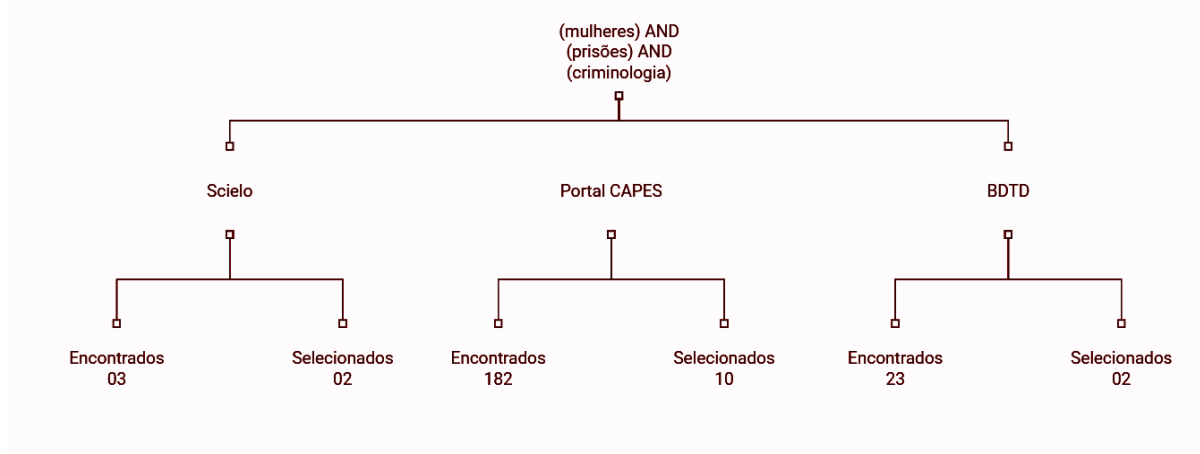
The search for scientific productions was carried out in the scientific portals *Scientific Electronic Library Online* (Scielo), CAPES Journal Portal, and Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD), based on a search strategy composed of the controlled descriptors in Portuguese "Women", "Prisons" and "Criminology", using the *Boolean* operator AND and adapted according to each of the portals proposed for the study. This search took place between August and September 2021 and updated in November 2023.

To select the sample, the following inclusion criteria were used: productions indexed in the selected scientific portals, with full texts and free of charge. No temporal and language filters were applied. Productions that did not address feminist criminology and/or criminology and feminism within the context of female incarceration were excluded. For a better visualization of the selection process, containing the total number of productions resulting from the search strategy and the final number, after applying the inclusion criteria and selection strategies, Flowchart 1 was constructed.

The proposed search strategy made it possible to obtain 197 productions in 2021 and 208 in 2023. Of these, 28 fit the inclusion and selection criteria. The eligibility of the productions occurred after reading in full and those that were repeated were analyzed only once, thus leaving 13 productions (Flowchart 1), 10 articles, 01 thesis, and 02 dissertations.

In the stage of critical analysis of the productions, the full reading was carried out and a synoptic table was prepared (Chart 1) containing the topics of interest: title, type of study, authors, journal, year, country of publication, and place of study, problem in focus. Chart 2 highlights the area of knowledge, the proposed objectives, the problems in focus, and the conclusions of the scientific productions on female incarceration in the light of feminist criminology.

Flowchart 1 – Selection of productions based on the search strategy in scientific portals, Alagoas, 2025.



Source: Prepared by the authors, 2025.

Chart 1 – Synthesis of scientific productions according to the characteristics of the publication, Alagoas, 2025.

PC *	TITLE	DESIGN OF STUDY	AUTHORS	PERIODICAL/YEAR	COUNTRY OF PUBLICATION/ STUDY SITE	PROBLEM IN FOCUS
1	Critical Criminology, Feminism and Intersectionality in Addressing the Rise of Female Incarceration	Article / Essay Interpretive	- Idilva Maria Pires Germano - Rebeca Áurea Ferreira Gomes Monteiro - Mariana Tavares Cavalcanti Liberato	Psychology: Science and Profession / 2018	Brazil	Increase in female incarceration and its causes
2	Addressing the Diversity of Prison Settings in Prison Research: Lessons from My Fieldwork with Women in Three Prisons in Spain	Article / Reflective Essay	- Ana Ballesteros-Pena	Cadernos page / 2019	Brazil / Spain	Methodological and ethical issues in the social sciences, and specifically in criminology and prison research

3	For love or pain? A feminist look at incarceration of women for drug trafficking	Dissertation / Documentary study	- Luciana de Souza Ramos	Repository of the Faculty of Law of the University of Brasilia / 2012	Brazil	Intensification of the incarceration of women for drug trafficking in Brazil
4	From work to prison: criminalization and female incarceration in Santa Catarina (1950-1979)	Dissertation / Documentary study	- Camila Damasceno de Andrade	Repository of the Federal University of Santa Catarina / 2017	Brazil	The processes of criminalization of women in the state of Santa Catarina
5	"The mere life of the obscure ones": on victimization and the Criminalization of women	Article / Monographic method	- Paula Dürks Cassol - Maria Beatriz Oliveira da Silva - Priscila Valduga Dinarte	Law and Praxis / 2018	Brazil	Feminist criminology and the Processes of victimization and criminalization of women
6	Feminist contributions to studies on women's imprisonment	Article / Documentary and analytical	- Daniela Tiffany Prado de Carvalho - Claudia Mayorga	Feminist Studies / 2017	Brazil	Emphasis on the need to analyze the female prison context from feminist theoretical frameworks
7	Criminality and female imprisonment: an analysis of the gender issue	Article / Reflective analysis	- Marlene Helena de Oliveira França	Artemis Magazine / 2014	Brazil	The context of imprisonment as a measure of punishment and the treatment given to men and women over the years
8	Feminist Criminology with Critical Criminology: Theoretical perspectives and converging theses	Article / State of the art	- Mariana de Assis Brasil and Weigert - Oak Hall	Law and Praxis / 2020	Brazil	The zones of convergence and conflict between feminist criminologies and critique of the research that have as their object the criminality and criminalization of women
9	Women and Drug Trafficking: Imprisonment and Feminist Criminology	Article / Reflective Analytical Study	- Monica Ovinski de Camargo Cortina	Feminist Studies / 2015	Brazil	The phenomenon of high rates of female imprisonment in Brazil and its relationship to

						the crime of drug trafficking, from the perspective of feminist criminology and the feminization of poverty
10	Invisible women: the link between the massive pretrial incarceration of women and the "war on drugs" from the perspective of gender vulnerability	Article / Bibliographic and documentary review	- Maria Patrícia Vanzolinil - Maria Luiza Bortoloto Moratall	Law and Justice Journal: Socio-Legal Reflections / 2020	Brazil	The growing phenomenon of the provisional incarceration of women, establishes a connection with the selective politics of the 'war on drugs', from the perspective of feminist criminology.
11	Discourses on the feminine in the Brazilian penitentiary question: an analysis based on gender relations	Thesis / Documentary analysis and bibliographic research	- Ana Caroline Montezano Gonsales Jardim	Repository of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul	Brazil	Discourses on the feminine in the Brazilian Penitentiary issue
12	Punitive Power and Feminism: Paths of Feminist Criminology in Brazil	Article / analytical study	- Fernanda Martins - Ruth M. C. Gauer	Law and Praxis / 2020	Brazil	The path developed for the construction of feminist criminology that is developing in Brazil and its possible relations with punitive power.
13	Invisible and Illicit Work: critical and feminist criminological reflections on the increase in the incarceration of women for drug trafficking in Brazil	Article / analytical study	- Carla Benitez Martins	Law and Praxis / 2020	Brazil	The phenomenon of the increase in the incarceration of women in the last fifteen years and the conjunction of determining factors of the punitive wave in this period

*Scientific production. **Source:** Prepared by the authors, 2025.

Table 2 – Synthesis of scientific productions according to the area of knowledge, proposed objectives, and conclusions, Alagoas, 2025.

PC *	AREA OF KNOWLEDGE	GOALS	CONCLUSIONS/FINAL CONSIDERATIONS
1	Psychology	To present and discuss the criminalization of women, from an intersectional perspective, highlighting the intersection of gender, race-ethnicity, poverty, and other sources of subordination as central to understanding mass incarceration today, especially female incarceration, as well as confronting it.	The intersectional gaze illuminates the complex biographical situations and daily experiences of oppression that affect about 45 thousand women in Brazilian prisons.
2	Political Science, Public Administration, and Sociology	To reflect on methodological and ethical issues that have progressively emerged in prison research, contributing to this debate from a feminist approach, considering the particularities of the Spanish prison context.	By sharing research experiences and recognizing the role of emotions in social research, we can learn from each other and strengthen the toolkits available, contributing to the construction of social research as a genuinely human activity engaged with social justice.
3	Right	To understand the reason for the intensification of the incarceration of women for drug trafficking in Brazil.	Drug trafficking functions as an informal/illicit labor market that enables women to keep fulfilling socially constructed tasks as being specifically theirs, as well as to achieve a place for financial autonomy and social empowerment. However, as a complex reality, it can also be seen that this place reproduces the same gender inequality and creates new situations of vulnerability and discrimination, especially in the prison environment.
4	Right	To describe and analyze the path to the massive insertion of women in the labor universe, emphasizing the influence of a diversity of factors that complexify this phenomenon, passing through the spheres of family, schooling, and sexuality and paying attention to the specificities of the trajectories of black and white women, marked in a very different way by coloniality.	It is observed that the selective logic of criminalization processes has been extended to women in a unique way, which is related to male criminalization, but brings specificities that cannot be disregarded. Female imprisonment is also conditioned by the social organization of gender, turning with greater rigor against those infamous, clumsy, and unruly women, who contradict the social roles imposed on them.
5	Right	To verify the place of women in criminology and their processes of victimization and criminalization, intending to demonstrate the place of women in criminology, as well as the absence of women in law, mainly, emphasizing the development of feminist (critical) criminology regarding victims and perpetrators of crimes.	For a long time, women were treated as a derisory object of study, as they were not considered subjects of rights, having both their criminalization and victimization linked to biological and psychological determinisms, and it was only after the adoption of gender by criminology and the emergence of a feminist (critical) criminology that women began to be seen as objects of study. And also as a producer of knowledge.

6	Right	<p>To analyze prison institutions for women based on the experiences of prisoners, seeking to understand and question the imperatives of selectivity and control that characterize our penal system.</p>	<p>The study of prisons from a feminist perspective does not only reveal a theoretical choice but also makes explicit an ethical, academic, and political position. By developing research with women in prison from a feminist perspective, we will be able to face the invisibility that falls on female imprisonment and advance in the understanding, based on the experience of prisoners, about how different mechanisms of oppression operate that end up culminating in the deprivation of freedom.</p>
7	Sociology and Law	<p>To approach crime and violence from a feminine perspective and all the imbrications that these phenomena carry.</p>	<p>Research shows that the study of criminality committed by women is more difficult than that of men, not only because they commit fewer crimes, but because the reduced number implies greater difficulties in research. Regarding the issue of punishment, we observed that it has a close relationship with the gender issue, that is, some penalties are directed exclusively to women.</p>
8	Right	<p>To present the state-of-the-art research that has as its object the criminality and criminalization of women and to delimit the themes and problems of investigation of feminist criminologies and criticism to later identify the zones of convergence and conflict.</p>	<p>Although the relationship between critical criminology and feminist criminologies is, in many ways, extremely tense, notably on the epistemological and political-criminal planes (a theme that will be the object of the sequence of this study), the counter-orthodox perspective is the lowest common denominator that allows important alignments and very fertile exchanges in the deconstruction of this (positivist) rationality that translates into the legitimization of class violence, of gender and race.</p>
9	Right	<p>To analyze the female imprisonment in Santa Catarina for the crime of drug trafficking, combined with the indicators of social vulnerability of women, from the perspective of feminist criminology, resignifying the reading of the so-called feminization of poverty to understand the criteria of criminal selectivity of women for prison.</p>	<p>The factors related to the feminization of poverty are preponderant to compose the set of selectivity criteria that the penal system uses to define its female prison clientele. In this sense, the difficulties in supporting their children alone, without the participation of parents or other adults, and the difficulty of entering the formal labor market, even because of their few years of schooling and the lack of technical/professional training, are reasons pointed out by the women themselves for entering drug trafficking, combined with the lack of options to reconcile the care of children and income generation.</p>

10	Right	To understand gender as a relevant paradigm in the criminalization of women inserted in drug trafficking networks, as well as being determinant of the supporting hierarchical position that relegates them.	Gender vulnerability is shown to be a relevant element that enhances the process of criminalization of marginal women, since they deny access to possibilities of living under the law, by prostrating themselves as an obstacle to the formal labor market and the exit of the figure of woman "from the home".
11	Social services	To investigate what are the discourses produced and activated by the Brazilian State in the proposition of penitentiary policies aimed at women, under the analytical focus of gender relations.	Even after almost a century of the institution of women's prisons in Brazil, in discursive terms and normative concepts based on gender relations, there are still enunciative regularities that point in the direction that the penal execution of women and the proposition of policies in such a context is mediated by stereotypes and normative concepts around gender relations, by which, the female body is produced from motherhood.
12	Right	To point out what is recognized as some initial paths of the thought of "feminist criminology" in Brazil.	Criminology in Brazil is established as knowledge produced, subordinated, and carried out by Law, despite its transdisciplinary spectrum. Critical production is seen as the result of contamination by extra-legal problems, however normally directed to be reduced to mere questions and, above all, legal answers.
13	Right	To collaborate with the analysis of the multiple determinants of the vertiginous increase in the incarceration of women for drug trafficking from the dialogue between critical criminological thinking and Marxist feminist theories.	The more privatization and deregulation, the more free work of women in the domestic and family sphere, the more women with reduced working hours to handle domestic work, and the greater our concentration on informal and outsourced work and, as a logical consequence, starting to participate even more in illegal networks (trafficking of women and drugs).

*Scientific production. **Source:** Prepared by the authors, 2025.

It was observed that most of the productions are scientific articles of documentary analysis and, even though temporal and language filters were not applied, only one production was carried out with data from outside Brazil and only three of them are more than five years old. The journals/places of publication were presented, respectively: Psychology: Science and Profession, Cadernos Pagu, Repository of the Faculty of Law of the University of Brasilia, Repository of the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Law and Praxis, Feminist Studies, Artemis Journal, Law and Justice Journal: Socio-legal Reflections and Repository of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul.

Among the authors, women were the largest representatives, the most prominent area of concentration was law and the most studied problem is related to the increase in female incarceration and the association of women with drug trafficking, as in Scientific Production 09 which pointed out that the difficulties in supporting children alone, without a support network, and the difficulty of entering the formal labor market, are reasons pointed out by the women themselves for entering drug trafficking.

In addition, some studies have made comparisons between feminist and critical criminology in their analyses (01, 08, 12, and 13) and point to the view of feminist criminology as the most appropriate for the discussions in question, given that it has been opposing the sexism of theories about female criminality that still reinforce stereotypes about the biological inferiority of women.

About the themes analyzed, the intersectionality and feminization of poverty were present in the analyses of the scientific productions found, directly or indirectly. Scientific Production 1 states that "the criminalization and mass incarceration, especially of young, black, and poor women, explain the conditions that led to the exponential increase in the female prison population in Brazil" (Germano, Monteiro, Liberato, 2018, p.30).

Productions 4 and 10 analyze the selective logic of criminalization processes and how women are affected in this context. The persecution of the less favored classes in society, stamped in police operations as well as in politics, strengthens exclusionary societies. It is important to highlight that in Brazil, other problems such as the absence of a real rights-based treatment policy, as provided for in the Penal Execution Law of 1984, and issues related to gender end up promoting a true barbarism of Human Rights and, consequently, the return to society (Souza, 2016).

The type of crime that most involved women in the Brazilian context appeared in productions 3 and 13. Drug trafficking continues to be the source of several analyses, not only by researchers but also by official agencies in the country. Data from the Brazilian Public Security Yearbook - ABSP (2022) and the National Survey of Penitentiary Information - InfoPen Women (2018), point to the expansion of the incarceration of women for crimes related to drug trafficking.

Women live in a chain of oppressions, which lead to situations of fragility and vulnerability, understanding the nature of crimes and the intersectionality in which women deprived of liberty are inserted collaborate to formulate analyses about the flows of the criminal justice system, from its police phase to the phase of penal execution, and its

patterns of selectivity, evidenced in the preponderance of some types of crimes as well as to think about more assertive public policies for prevention, as well as for a more equitable society (Araújo, Silva, 2024; Brazil, 2018).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Female incarceration reveals a series of social complexities that the State is still unable to fully address. The type of crime, the racial profile, the age group, and, in particular, the one analyzed in this article, the gender, reveal what is called female criminality. With a growing trend in the historical series, crimes committed by women bring externalities that still need many studies to be understood.

Among them, is the issue of the family, as women become pregnant, gestate, give birth, and breastfeed while they are still re-educated. In the face of so many challenges to the construction of these women's citizenship, can the feminist criminology approach shed a different light? Are there enough studies that can identify in detail the complexity that involves female incarceration?

Based on the findings of this analysis on the state of the art of scientific productions on female incarceration in the light of feminist criminology, it was observed the need for discussions on the intersectionality that involves female incarceration, the contexts of women's lives, as well as the profile of the selectivity of public policies in force. A gap was also evident in studies involving access to human rights that confer citizenship, as well as the exercise of citizenship by women.

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