

BETWEEN REGULATION AND FREEDOM: THE LABOR MARKET OF MUSICIANS IN BRAZIL (2010-2020)

Rodrigo Heringer Costa¹
Ian Prates²

Abstract: The paper analyzes the integration of musicians into the labor market in Brazil, considering discussions on the professionalization of occupations. The research combines quantitative methods – statistical analyses based on data from the 2010 Census and the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-C) from 2012 to 2019 – with qualitative methods, including participant observation and interviews with musicians from the city of Salvador (the capital of Bahia state, Brazil). Findings indicate that although the musician occupation is institutionally recognized as a profession, it has only partially met the requirements for full professionalization, resulting in various consequences for the market integration. Efforts to promote market closure for musicians – via institutional channels – have had a limited impact in areas such as education and professional practice. The conclusion emphasizes the need for public policies to strengthen organizations representing workers in this field, ensuring that the effort to create a less segmented, unequal, and precarious labor market for musicians is led by these organizations, while respecting the field's specific characteristics, values, and nuances. It also highlights the importance of ongoing dialogue with the sector and the active involvement of musicians in policy formulation.

Keywords: Music professionals; Labor market; Brazil; Higher education; Social stratification.

¹ Rodrigo Heringer Costa é Professor Adjunto na Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais – (UFMG). É mestre em Música pela Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), com doutorado em Música pela Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA). Graduado em Ciências Sociais e Música Popular pela Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) –, cursou graduação sanduíche na New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music (Nova Iorque/EUA). Tem experiência na área de Performance Musical e Etnomusicologia e está em contato cotidiano com as seguintes temáticas: música popular, música brasileira, sociologia da música, performance musical, economia da cultura e educação do músico profissional. E-mail: rodrovas@gmail.com

² Ian Prates é Coordenador de Inovação e Pesquisador no Anker Research Institute (ARI) e Diretor da Iniciativa ARI-CEBRAP de Salário Digno no Brasil. Graduado em Ciências Sociais pela Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), mestre e doutor em Sociologia pela Universidade de São Paulo (USP), com período como Pesquisador Visitante na Universidade de Columbia, em Nova York. Colabora com Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT) em temas de trabalho decente e ocupações e com a Organização das Nações Unidas para a Alimentação e Agricultura (FAO) em cadeias de valor sustentáveis. Possui experiência nas áreas de mercado de trabalho, profissões, tecnologia, pobreza, mobilidade social e políticas públicas. Email: iprates@sa-intl.org

ENTRE A REGULAMENTAÇÃO E A LIBERDADE: O MERCADO DE TRABALHO DOS MÚSICOS NO BRASIL

Resumo: O artigo analisa a inserção dos músicos no mercado de trabalho no Brasil, a partir das discussões sobre a profissionalização das ocupações. A pesquisa combina métodos quantitativos – análises estatísticas baseadas em dados do Censo de 2010 e da Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua (PNAD-C) de 2012 a 2019 – com métodos qualitativos, incluindo observação participante e entrevistas com músicos da cidade de Salvador (capital do estado da Bahia, Brasil). Os resultados indicam que, embora a ocupação de músico seja institucionalmente reconhecida como uma profissão, esta atende apenas parcialmente aos requisitos para a profissionalização plena, resultando em diversas consequências para a inserção de seus protagonistas no mercado de trabalho. Esforços para promover o fechamento do mercado para os profissionais da área – por meio de canais institucionais – tiveram impacto limitado em áreas como educação e prática profissional. Como conclusão, enfatiza-se a necessidade de políticas públicas para fortalecer as organizações que representam os trabalhadores deste campo, garantindo que o esforço para criar um mercado de trabalho menos segmentado, desigual e precarizado para os músicos seja liderado por essas organizações, respeitando as características, valores e nuances específicas do próprio campo. Destaca-se ainda a importância de um diálogo contínuo com o setor e do envolvimento ativo dos músicos na formulação das referidas políticas.

Palavras-chave: Profissionais da música; mercado de trabalho; Brasil; ensino superior; estratificação social.

ENTRE LA REGULACIÓN Y LA LIBERTAD: EL MERCADO LABORAL DE LOS MÚSICOS EN BRASIL (2010-2020)

Resumen: El artículo analiza la inserción de los músicos en el mercado laboral en Brasil, a partir de las discusiones sobre la profesionalización de las ocupaciones. La investigación combina métodos cuantitativos — análisis estadísticos basados en datos del Censo de 2010 y de la Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua (PNAD-C) de 2012 a 2019 — con métodos cualitativos, incluyendo observación participante y entrevistas con músicos de la ciudad de Salvador (capital del estado de Bahía, Brasil). Los resultados indican que, aunque la ocupación de músico sea institucionalmente reconocida como una profesión, esta cumple solo parcialmente con los requisitos para la profesionalización plena, lo que deriva en diversas consecuencias para la inserción de sus protagonistas en el mercado de trabajo. Los esfuerzos para promover el cierre del mercado para los profesionales del área — a través de canales institucionales — han tenido un impacto limitado en áreas como la educación y la práctica profesional. Como conclusión, se enfatiza la necesidad de políticas públicas para fortalecer las organizaciones que representan a los trabajadores de este campo, garantizando que el esfuerzo por crear un mercado laboral menos segmentado, desigual y precarizado para los músicos sea liderado por dichas organizaciones, respetando las características, valores y matices específicos del propio sector. Se destaca, asimismo, la importancia de un diálogo continuo con el sector y de la participación activa de los músicos en la formulación de las referidas políticas.

Palabras clave: Profesionales de la música; mercado laboral; Brasil; enseñanza superior; estratificación social.

1. Introduction

This article analyses specific aspects of musicians' integration into the Brazilian labour market, within the context of discussions on the professionalisation of occupations. Drawing on a conceptual framework in dialogue with the sociology of professions, we address key questions for this study: How do musicians in Brazil enter the labour market? Which characteristics align them with, and which distinguish them from, the broader group of professionals and the labour market as a whole?

The study combines quantitative procedures, such as statistical analyses using data from the 2010 Census³ and the 2012–2019 PNADs (National Household Sample Survey), with qualitative procedures, such as participant observation and interviews with musicians, primarily those working in Salvador, the capital of the Brazilian state of Bahia. The qualitative data enabled a more in-depth exploration of themes identified in the quantitative surveys, offering insight into everyday situations.

Finally, the article reflects on the implications of the specific characteristics identified within the musical labour market for public policies aimed at workers in this sector. It also suggests ways to strengthen these policies in a manner sensitive to the field's unique characteristics.

2. Music: occupation or profession?

2.1. Professionals, yes...

The differentiation between “occupation” and “profession” is essential for understanding how institutions affect the organization of the labor market and its outcomes. Much more than a conceptual distinction, it implies observing the institutions that establish rules, define behaviors, and create constraints on individual and collective actions. Not by chance, virtually all occupational classifications and class schemes differentiate professionals as a specific group.

Professions are distinguished from occupations for several reasons, which have been emphasized at various points in the development of sociological theory. They hold specific role models that occupy a key position within the cultural system, as they are associated with behavioral norms such as technical competence, trust, and integrity (Parsons, 1951). Additionally, professions often “prophesy what is right” and claim the legitimacy of authorship in doing so, following a deliberate pursuit of collective social mobility to enhance their status and increase their power within the stratification system (Hughes, 1993 [1965], p. 367).

This collective social mobility project defines the “professionalization process” (Freidson, 1970a, p. 72). Its ultimate outcome is the attainment of legitimate,

³ The 2022 Census – originally scheduled for 2020 – was postponed due to the pandemic, being conducted only in 2022. At the time of submitting this article, and following its resubmission with revisions, the IBGE had not yet released the microdata from the 2022 Census. Sample microdata (i.e. records at the lowest level of disaggregation) allow detailed cross-tabulations by occupation, sociodemographic profile and other variables of interest, as demonstrated in this article. Consequently, the analysis is restricted to data from the 2010 Census.

organized autonomy, which grants professions independence from external authority and the power to invalidate outsiders' assessments. However, this combination of autonomy and authority as a foundation for professional status inevitably relies on the protection and "patronage" of a segment of the social elite, who must be continually convinced of the unique value of the profession's work. Additionally, this is where the higher education system plays a critical role, as it legitimizes the knowledge that underpins professional activity.

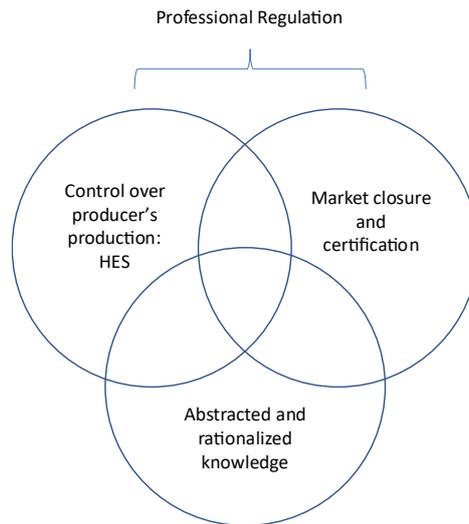
As emphasized by Magali S. Larson (1977), the professionalization process is also a project of domination, in which a specific type of scarce resource – knowledge and skills – is translated into social and economic rewards. This process involves controlling both the production of knowledge and its holders, as well as regulating the supply of services in the market. Control over the production of professionals and market closure are central mechanisms of professionalization. However, while the institutional link between the production of professionals and their respective professions is necessary, it is not sufficient to guarantee a market monopoly. The professionalization process is fully realized when this monopoly is legally sanctioned, that is, when the State formally endorses the provision of services.

In this vein, Bourdieu helps us understand how professionalization is anchored in struggles for positions in a "field," in which different agents compete for the monopoly of defining legitimate competencies and imposing socially recognized classifications. Diplomas and credentials function as institutionalized cultural capital, convertible into symbolic capital (authority) and, under certain conditions, into economic returns, with the state and the educational system playing a central role in the consecration and reproduction of these hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1986).

Ultimately, what distinguishes professions, in a strong sense, is the combination of three interrelated dimensions. The first involves the organization of knowledge on a rational and abstract basis, allowing it to be applied to specific cases. The second concerns the institutionalization of this body of knowledge within educational institutions – primarily higher education – where control over the production of professionals takes shape. Finally, the third dimension is the establishment of market closure through certification and regulatory institutions that ensure the monopoly of professional practice.

Therefore, the degree of institutionalization of the profession will depend on the institutionalization of each of these dimensions, as suggested by the figure below.

Figure 1 – Conceptual scheme of professions.



Source: own elaboration (2023).

Additionally, it is important to consider how the International Labour Organization (ILO) classifies professionals within the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). The ISCO is a hierarchical system that organizes occupations into ten major groups at the most aggregated level (1 digit) and 425 distinct occupations at the most detailed level (4 digits). Occupations are categorized based on four levels of required qualifications and specialization for various activities (ILO, 2012).

Table 1 – Levels of Competence associated with major ISCO-88 groups

ISCO-08 Major Groups	Skill Level
1 - Managers	3 + 4
2 - Professionals	4
3 - Technicians and associate professionals	3
4 - Clerical Support Workers	2
5 - Services and sales workers	
6 - Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery workers	
7 - Craft and related trade workers	
8 - Plant and Machine Operators, and Assemblers	
9 - Elementary Occupations	1
0 - Armed Forces Occupations	1 + 2 + 4

Source: ILO (2012).

What unites these professionals is that all occupations within this group are classified as having the highest level of qualification (level 4). They encompass roles that:

typically involve the performance of tasks that require complex problem-solving, decision-making and creativity based on an extensive body of theoretical and factual knowledge in a specialized field. The tasks performed typically include analysis and research to extend the body of human knowledge in a particular field, diagnosis and treatment of disease, imparting knowledge to others, and design of structures or machinery and of processes for construction and production.

Occupations at this skill level generally require extended levels of literacy and numeracy, sometimes at a very high level, and excellent interpersonal communication skills. These

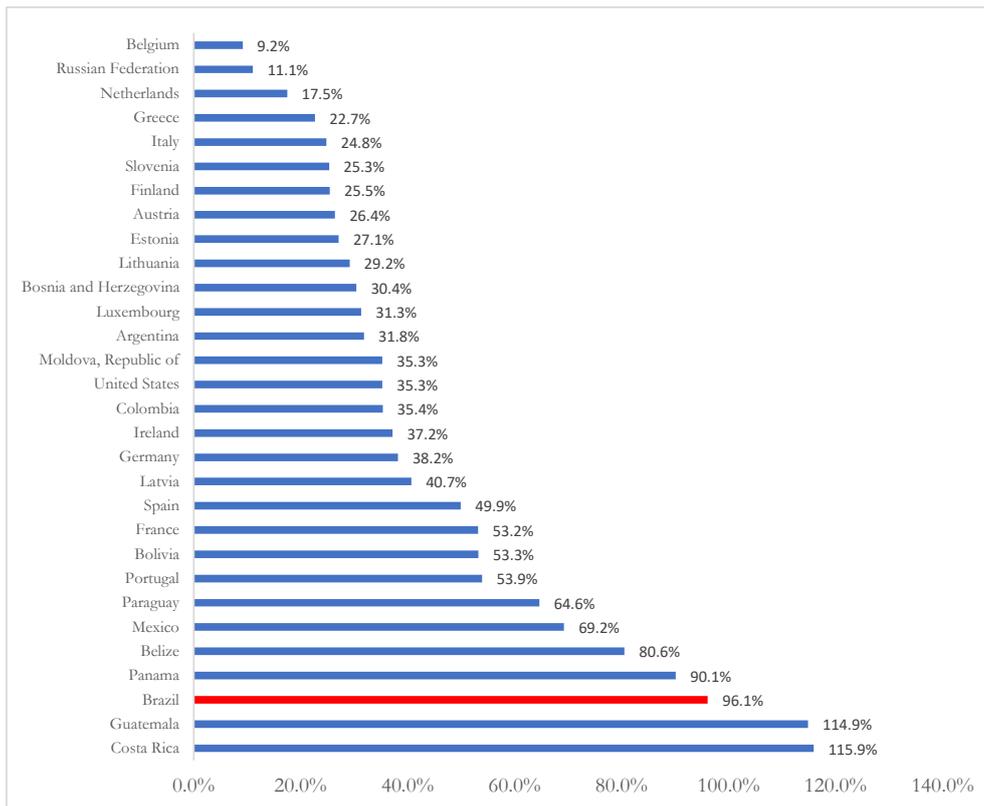
skills usually include the ability to understand complex written material and communicate complex ideas in media such as books, images, performances, reports and oral presentations.

The knowledge and skills required for competent performance in occupations at Skill Level 4 are usually obtained as the result of study at a higher educational institution for a period of 3–6 years leading to the award of a first degree or higher qualification (ISCED-97 Level 5a or higher). In some cases extensive experience and on-the-job training may substitute for the formal education, or may be required in addition to formal education. In many cases appropriate formal qualifications are an essential requirement for entry to the occupation (ILO, 2012, p. 13).

Not coincidentally, there is little controversy regarding the position of professions at the top of the occupational structure, even when referred to as the '(new) middle class' (Mills, 1950) or 'service class' (Goldthorpe, 2000). Despite theoretical disagreements, there is a notable convergence in the relative standing of professions compared to other occupations in class schemes or continuous occupational scales that aim to empirically address this issue (Prates, 2018).

The graph below supports this point, illustrating that professionals earn significantly more than the average income across selected countries in the Americas (South, Central, and North) and Europe. The substantial variation in this income difference—ranging from 9.2% in Belgium to 115.9% in Costa Rica—can be attributed to factors related to the structure and regulation of the labor market in each country, as well as levels of wage inequality. Notably, the average income disparity is much greater in Latin America (75.2%) compared to Europe and the United States (31.0%). Within Latin America, Brazil stands out as the third country with the largest gap between professionals' incomes and the general average (96.1%), following Costa Rica (115.9%) and Guatemala (114.9%).

Graph 1 – Percentage difference of the salary of “professionals” concerning the average salary of the engaged. Selected countries, 2021



Source: ILO (2019).

Music professionals are classified within this large (and privileged) group. At a more detailed level, they are categorized as 'Musicians, Singers, and Composers' (code 2652), which falls under the 'Creative and Performing Artists' group (code 265), itself part of the 'Legal, Social, and Cultural Professions' (code 26), and ultimately belonging to the broader category of 'Professionals' (code 2).

In Brazil, a similar classification framework is used by the Brazilian Classification of Occupations (CBO)⁴, which largely aligns with ISCO's classification principles. Music professionals are placed in Large Group 2, reflecting the same educational characteristics mentioned earlier. The key difference is that music professionals are further divided into two categories: 'Musicians, Composers, Arrangers, Conductors, and Musicologists' (CBO Code 2626) and 'Performing Musicians' (CBO Code 2627). Additionally, the CBO indicates that training for both categories can be informal.

The family's occupations [2626] require specific training in the area, whether formal (conservatories, higher education, etc.) or informal (study with renowned professionals,

⁴ It is important to note that the CBO has no regulatory authority over labor relations. Its function is purely classificatory and descriptive.

for example). The exercise of activities requires experience of more than five years (Brasil, 2010, p. 411)⁵.

The training process of musicians and performers [family 2627] is quite heterogeneous. It may occur in music conservatories, with specialist teachers, or in higher education courses in music, individually or cumulatively. There are also self-taught professionals, some of whom specialize in carrying out their activities in the labor market (Brasil, 2010, p. 413)⁶.

While the occupation of a musician has specific characteristics compared to other professions, particularly regarding institutional ties to training organizations, it remains a type of profession that demands abstract and rationalized knowledge, along with some level of training. In Brazil, for instance, a minimum of five years of experience is required for full practice in the field.

However, it is problematic to classify music and other artistic activities as classical professions. As noted by Eliot Freidson (1970b), professions related to the arts are characterized by a high degree of ambiguity, making them particularly challenging to be assessed within the context dynamic labor markets.

1.2 ... but not too much

If formal education is a central element in the institutional and regulatory definition of professionals in the musical field, the reality is quite different. Formal education is often seen as dispensable, both in documentary and institutional references – generally, no diploma or teaching certification is required for contractors in this area, as will be discussed later – and among musicians themselves. Here, cultural capital in its embodied form proves to be more effective for granting distinctions than its institutionalized counterpart. As Brazilian samba musician Noel Rosa wrote, “Batuque é um privilégio / Não se aprende samba no colégio” [‘Batuque’⁷ is a privilege / You do not learn samba at school] (Rosa; Vadico, 2000), highlighting the gap between the cultivation of musical skills and formal educational processes.

The predominance of embodied cultural and artistic capital over its institutional variant in the hierarchy of individuals within the musical sphere is emphasized by Menger (2014, p. 137), who asserts the importance of 'accumulated experience' in the artistic profession. 'Reputation'—another form of capital that indicates specific skills possessed by musicians—plays a crucial role in

⁵ As ocupações da família [2626] requerem formação específica na área, **seja ela formal** (conservatórios, ensino superior, etc) **ou informal** (estudo com profissionais de renome, por exemplo). O exercício pleno das atividades requer experiência superior a cinco anos.

⁶ O processo de formação dos músicos e intérpretes [família 2627] é bastante **heterogêneo**, podendo ocorrer em **conservatórios musicais**, junto a professores especialistas ou em **cursos de nível superior em música**, de forma **isolada** ou **cumulativamente**. Há, também, **profissionais autodidatas**, alguns dos quais se especializam no exercício das suas atividades, no mercado de trabalho.

⁷ “Batuque” is a multifaceted term that can be understood and interpreted in various ways. For the purposes of this article, one possible definition is to perceive it as a generic term for Afro-diasporic musical practices in which percussion plays a central and structuring role, contributing to an understanding of the meaning of the epithet in context. One such practice is samba, a musical genre closely associated with Brazilian national identity.

distinguishing artists, as it can provide them with a 'virtual economic rent' in a professional landscape that lacks institutional indicators of qualifications and skills."

Analyzing the practices of orchestra musicians, Liliana Segnini (2009) emphasizes a perspective on the professionalization process shared by one of her interlocutors: 'The best diploma is the last concert,' stated the soloist musician (2009, p. 183). Gabriela Kronemberger (2016) supports this view by underscoring the diminishing importance of higher education and diplomas in building a musical career, based on her study of musicians in an orchestra in Rio de Janeiro (the capital of the homonymous state in Brazil). Instead, a strong mastery of performance and its demonstration in practical situations play a crucial role as mechanisms for selection and recruitment (Kronemberger, 2016, pp. 15-19).

The limited relevance attributed to teaching credentials is also noted by Costa (2020) in his field research conducted in Salvador, the capital of the state of Bahia, Brazil. Even among the few interlocutors who hold a technical or higher degree in music, there is a common perception that attending a music higher education institution – while offering valuable experiences – has little impact on their success in the labor market.

As a result, obtaining higher education credentials is not viewed as a requirement among musicians and their contractors, nor is it seen as a guarantee of effective performance in the field. This situation accounts for the high number of individuals outside music universities who achieve success, as well as the significant number of university music students who are already professionally active during their studies (Salgado, 2005, pp. 222-231; Kronemberger, 2016, pp. 17-18).

Ultimately, the assessment of skills by field agents is reflected in the daily judgments based on their practical performance (Menger, 2005). No diploma or certificate grants them automatic access to professional environments they wish to enter, although these credentials may serve as indirect facilitators.⁸

Additionally, there exists a gap between the subjective nature of skills and knowledge typically valued in higher education institutions for music education and the rational-objective aspects associated with the abstract knowledge that serves as a reference for higher education professions in modernity (Kingsbury, 1988). In his fieldwork at a music conservatory in the USA⁹, Kingsbury draws parallels between the common devotion found in sacred or religious spheres and that shared by musicians and other participants in this context. He suggests that the environment of the conservatory resembles a religious seminary more than a professional school or university, as training there aligns more closely with the exercise of devotion than with preparation for a conventional career (Kingsbury, 1988, p. 19).

In these contexts, musical practice diverges from rationality in several dimensions: the established sharing of music's sacred value, the understanding of musical practices as superhuman or divine expressions, ritualized performances, the pursuit of execution with 'soul' by those engaged in musical performance, the desire

⁸ The theme will be taken up again later when analyzing the objective dimensions of the labor market in Brazil and its relations with Higher Education in Music.

⁹ As the author valued the anonymity of his interlocutors for ethical reasons, the location of the conservatory in question in the US is not specified, nor is the name of the establishment, which is referred to fictitiously in the study as the Eastern Metropolitan Conservatory of Music (EMCM).

to escape the 'rigidity' of the score, and the conception of serious or non-secular music. This leads to a perception of a close relationship between music education—often conducted in universities and conservatories—and the religious vocation, despite their differing cultural practices (Salgado, 2005, p. 154).

These characteristics stand in stark contrast to the values that define classical professions, which are built on fields of specialization reliant on formal training and anonymous, impersonal certifications designed to evaluate objectively measurable knowledge. Consequently, the very ethos of musical activity serves as a cultural barrier to the systemic logic of rationalization, credentialism, and professional closure.

art was made to act receptacle for the shreds of old cosmic feelings formerly associated with the state and church. Art was becoming a new form of religion that evolved aesthetic contemplation. [...] This religious definition of beauty is increased in power as an ideology because it fit in with the emerging ideology of the Romantic individual pursuing self-awareness and personal experience. Yet to judge beauty, one needed the capacity known at that time as “taste”, an immediate sense for beauty judged independently of reflection. This capacity which could be developed only through immersion in a given culture of art and ideas. (Frederickson; Rooney, 1990, p. 200-201).

Precisely for this reason, artistic professions have only partially developed their connections with training institutions, as well as with regulatory bodies and market closure—two dimensions highlighted in the analytical framework above. Professionals, yes, but not to a significant extent! This unique configuration affects how musicians are integrated into the labor market in Brazil and consequently influences the available options for the regulation (or lack thereof) of the field¹⁰. We will explore this further in the following sections.

3. Research questions and analytical strategy

Given that musicians are considered professionals, albeit to a limited extent, what characteristics draw them closer to, or distance them from, the broader group of professionals and the labor market as a whole? What are the implications for public policies aimed at workers in this sector? The following subsections will address the first two questions, while the last question will be discussed in the concluding section of the text.

We employ a combination of quantitative and qualitative strategies. In the quantitative phase, we utilize data from the Continuous National Household Survey (PNAD-C) from 2012 to 2019, along with the 2010 Census¹¹ to a lesser extent. An

¹⁰ Although the profession of musician has been regulated in Brazil since the 1960s – Law 3,857, of December 22, 1960 – the failure of regulatory institutions to close the market is evident in the country. In addition to the objective difficulties in guaranteeing a monopoly on the professional practice of musicians, the implementation of full regulation of the profession conflicts with values of freedom linked to artistic practice in modernity, which are reproduced and reaffirmed on a daily basis, including by the musicians themselves. This conflict makes it even more challenging to achieve market closure in this area, unlike others whose professional activities are disconnected from the aforementioned liberal premises.

¹¹ The 2010 Census was the last one conducted in the country. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the survey, scheduled to take place every 10 years, did not take place in 2020, delaying the release of data. Due to the time lag, the Census

important challenge in capturing the insertion of musicians into the labor market is related to how occupational information is collected in labor market surveys, including the PNAD-C, which is the primary database used here. Occupational information is only gathered for individuals engaged in the survey period of reference. This means that regardless of how someone identifies their profession as a "musician," if they did not perform any activities corresponding to that profession (or any other) during the reference week, they will be classified as "inactive" or "unemployed." Similarly, a "musician" who worked as a "waiter," "app driver," or "teacher" in the reference week will be categorized under one of those occupations rather than as a "musician."

The second concern is the differentiation between occupation and training. As mentioned earlier, during data collection, an individual's occupation is recorded independently of their training, whether required by law or not. For instance, nothing prevents someone who has not completed high school from declaring themselves a "doctor." Conversely, a person with formal education in music (regardless of whether it is at the higher education level) will not be classified as a "musician" unless they are actively engaged in that role. These two pieces of information reflect different aspects: educational background and occupational status. Therefore, in the quantitative analyses that follow, "musicians" are defined as those who, during the period of reference of the survey, were actively engaged and classified as "Musicians, Singers, and Composers," corresponding to code 2652 of the CBO-Dom.

Initially, we compared musicians to the labor market average and the broader group of professionals concerning their sociodemographic profiles (age, race/color, sex, and education). We also analyzed key labor market indicators, such as income from their main occupation and levels of formalization. In the subsequent phase, we assessed the characteristics of musicians' occupational insertion through three complementary dimensions: the incidence of under-employment, reduced working hours, and the pursuit of secondary occupations.

Under-occupation¹² is a subjective assessment made by workers regarding the gap between their current situation and an idealized, higher-value state. It may reflect dissatisfaction with working hours or a limitation of job opportunities (Machado; Machado, 2010). Indirectly, under-occupation also suggests that the occupation fails to provide favorable working conditions that align with the desires of its practitioners (Ikuta; Monteiro, 2019). Additionally, the existence and prevalence of supplementary (extra) work may result from inadequate income or unsatisfactory working hours related to activities in the music sector.

To explore these themes further, we conducted a cluster analysis¹³ to identify the degree of homogeneity within the group of musicians in terms of their

was only used when it was necessary to cross-reference information about respondents' employment status and higher education qualifications, since the Pnad does not classify respondents' qualifications (it only classifies them according to their level of education).

¹² Under-occupation is a type of work quality indicator obtained through the proportion of employed people who work less than 40 hours a week and are interested in carrying out their functions for longer than the actual work performed during the survey period.

¹³ Cluster analysis is an unsupervised method that groups similar observations based on chosen variables, forming n groups defined by the researcher. The algorithm minimises variation within each group while maximising the difference between them.

sociodemographic composition and occupational integration. This analysis aimed to reveal whether there are “subgroups within the group,” examining the extent to which reasonably homogeneous clusters exist among musicians while also highlighting significant differences between them.

These topics are explored in depth through qualitative research conducted on two fronts. First, we undertook a participant observation process involving 16 field trips, during which we followed the work experiences of four musicians in Salvador¹⁴. With profiles that are sometimes contrasting and sometimes convergent, these musicians engage in ongoing dialogues about the specificities of making music as an occupation. Additionally, we accompanied three of these musicians in their interactions with a virtual platform they identified as crucial for promoting their work – Instagram, which they see as a vital tool for disseminating their contemporary musical practices¹⁵.

We conducted 16 semi-structured interviews with nine musicians, including the four musicians observed during the participant observation process. The fieldwork, encompassing both participant observation and interviews, began in the exploratory phase in the second half of 2016 and extended to virtual monitoring of musical activities in mid-2020. The non-face-to-face approach, which involved a limited number of observations until March 2020, became more pronounced in the subsequent period due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁴ The interlocutors will be referred to here as Mário, Aline, Elias, and Kátia. As this research deals with topics that remain taboo in the music industry and which musicians do not always feel comfortable talking about, we chose to refer to all interlocutors using pseudonyms. The option to use pseudonyms is also justified by the fact that there is no intention, in this document, to personalize or individualize valuations – positive or not. The interest is instead focused on the reflection of broad and abstract socio-musical phenomena based on specific and concrete cases, thus allowing a distanced and non-personified/personalistic treatment of such issues.

¹⁵ Virtual platform whose manifest function is the sharing of photos and videos.

Table 2 – Profile of interlocutors during the fieldwork period (2017–2020)

PERFIL DOS MUSICISTAS									
	Mário*	Aline*	Elias*	Kátia*	Leo	Rocio	Túlio	Reginaldo	Teresa
Data de nascimento	05.08.1991	27.04.1992	31.10.1973	08.06.1988	03.02.1997	09.11.1979	13.08.1986	NR	21.01.1969
Sexo	Masculino	Feminino	Masculino	Feminino	Masculino	Feminino	Masculino	Masculino	Feminino
Cor	Negra	Parda	Parda	Negra	Negro	Parda	Negro	Negro	Parda
Orientação sexual	Heterossexual	Heterossexual	Heterossexual	Homossexual	Heterossexual	Heterossexual	Heterossexual	NR	Homossexual
Estado civil	Casado	Solteira	Solteiro	Casada	Casado	Solteira	Casado	NR	Solteira
Número de filhos	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	NR	0
Residência	Águas Claras	Pituba	Bonfim	Massaranduba	Engenho Velho de Brotas	Alto da Sereia (Rio Vermelho)	Rio Vermelho	NR	Rio Vermelho
Cidade de nascimento	Cachoeira Bahia/Brasil	Mata de São João Bahia/Brasil	Salvador Bahia/Brasil	Salvador Bahia/Brasil	Salvador	Calarcá Quindío/Colômbia	Vera Cruz	NR	Porto Alegre RS/Brasil
Escolaridade	Ensino médio	Ensino superior completo	Superior completo	Ensino médio	NA	Pós-graduação	Pós Graduação (Mestrado Profissional)	NR	Superior completo
Formação acadêmica em música/Nível	Não/NA	Sim/Graduação	Não/Graduação em andamento (Composição)	Não	Não	Não/Mestrado em andamento (Etnomusicologia)	Sim/Mestrado Profissional	Sim	Não / Graduação incompleta (Composição e Música Popular)
Instrumento(s) principal(is)	Voz	Voz	Voz e violão	Bateria	Percussão	Quena, charango, violão e voz	Violino	Trompete	Voz
Instrumento(s) secundário(s)	Violão	Violão e piano	Piano, teclado, bandolim, clarinete	NA	Voz, flauta doce	Zamponha	Violão, flauta doce, pandeiro, piano.	NR	Violão
Tempo de atuação profissional no ramo	Desde 2017	Desde 2007	Desde 1998	Desde 2003	Desde 2005	Desde 2010	Desde 2004	NR	Desde 1989
Renda é exclusivamente oriunda da performance musical	Não	Não	Não	Não	Sim	Não	Não	Não	Não
Formações instrumentais com as quais mais se apresenta	Banda/grupo	Duo e Trio	Duo	Banda/grupo	Banda/grupo		Orquestra, banda/grupo, trio e duos	NR	Trio
Gêneros musicais os quais mais executa	Samba, jazz e bossa nova	Vários	MPB e Pop Internacional	Samba e outros gêneros vinculados	Pagode (Groove arrastado)	MPB, Música Latinoamericana	Clássico/ concerto, choro, jazz, forró, MPB	NR	Samba e MPB
Gêneros musicais com os quais mais se identifica	Samba, jazz e reggae	Sertanejo e pop	MPB, música brasileira em geral	Samba	Pagode, música africana	Música Andina, Música popular latinoamericana	Clássico/ concerto, choro, jazz, forró, MPB	NR	Samba e MPB
Bairros onde mais se apresenta	Rio Vermelho, Barra e Nazaré	Pituba, Vilas do Atlântico e Stella Maris	Pituba	Garcia	Fora do estado (cidade de São Paulo)	Imbuí, Ogunjá, rotas de ônibus da orla, Centro e Comércio	Campo Grande, Canela, Santo Antônio Além do Carmo, Rio Vermelho, Barris	NR	Rio Vermelho

*músicos os quais acompanhei em Campo | NR = Não respondeu

Source: Own elaboration.

4. Musicians in the labor market

4.1 Profile, occupational insertion, and segmentation

According to data from the Annual Continuous PNAD, the average number of people engaged as “musicians, singers, and composers” in Brazil from 2012 to 2019 was approximately 123,000. In 2019, this figure rose to 133,000, but subsequently dropped to 125,500 in 2020 and plummeted to 36,200 in 2021. Musicians, along with other artistic professions such as “Creative Interpretative Artists” and “Dancers and Choreographers,” experienced the most significant percentage reduction during this period, highlighting the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts sector. However, in 2022, the sector began to recover, with the number of engaged musicians increasing to 106,000.

When analyzing the data by race, gender, age, and education, it is evident that musicians' demographics closely mirror the average of the Brazilian labor market, with one notable exception: the low participation of women. In contrast, musicians differ significantly from their professional counterparts. Table 1 below outlines these characteristics. The racial composition of musicians shows that 52.2% identify as black, brown, or indigenous, while 22.6% hold higher education degrees. These

figures are much more aligned with the general average (54.5% and 20.4%, respectively) than with those of the professional group, which is predominantly white (36.8%) and highly educated (88.3%), with a female representation of 61.0%.

Table 2 – Sociodemographic profile of musicians, professionals, and workers in general

Occupation	Women	Black, brown and indigenous	Completed higher education	Age (average)
Musician, singers and composers	18,8%	52,20%	22,60%	37
Professionals	61,0%	36,80%	88,30%	41
Total - Average	43,70%	54,50%	20,40%	40

Source: Pnad-C, 2019

These characteristics are partially reflected in terms of labor market insertion. Table 3 below presents labor income and formalization rates musicians in comparison to larger occupational groups.

The monthly income from musicians is very close to the average income from general work in Brazil (R\$2,340 and R\$2,285) and less than half the income of the group of professionals (R\$4,297). It is also noteworthy that the formalization rate of musicians (32.2%) is almost half of the average (62.2%) and much lower than that of professionals (83.1%).

Table 3 – Work income and formalization rate (average and relative), by ISCO-08 occupational groups, musicians highlighted

Occupational Group	Labor Income	Relative labor income	Formalization Rate	Relative formalization rate
Armed Forces Occupations	5.002	2,19	99,6%	1,58
Managers	6.382	2,79	86,6%	1,38
Professionals	4.927	2,16	83,1%	1,32
<i>Music, technicians, and composers</i>	2.340	1,02	32,1%	0,51
Technicians and associate professionals	2.940	1,29	79,9%	1,27
Clerical Support Workers	1.843	0,81	87,9%	1,40
Services and sales workers	1.619	0,71	56,9%	0,90
Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery workers	1.454	0,63	33,4%	0,53
Craft and related trade workers	1.664	0,73	45,9%	0,79
Plant and Machine Operators, and Assemblers	1.870	0,82	66,7%	1,06
Elementary Occupations	1.040	0,46	48,9%	0,78
Total	2.285	1,00	62,9%	1,00

Source: Pnad-C, 2019

Regarding the formalization rate, the low rate observed in the work activities of musicians in the country aligns with the experiences of the interlocutors in this research. During the fieldwork, only one of the nine interviewees, Túlio, fit into the category of 'Employee with a formal contract' and 'Statutory Server'¹⁶ in the music area, making him a formally employed worker. However, he also maintains a regular schedule of other activities, typically informal, that are generally unrelated to his work with the Bahia Symphony Orchestra (OSBA) as a 'CLTista'¹⁷ and with the

¹⁶ Categoria utilizada pelo IBGE e pelo IPEA em suas análises do grau de formalidade do mercado de trabalho. O trabalho com carteira assinada é tido como exemplo de vínculo contratual formal. O vínculo de Túlio na OSBA caracteriza-se, para o IBGE, como de "Empregado no setor público com carteira de trabalho assinada".

¹⁷ 'CLTista' is an informal term used to refer to a formal employment relationship involving a signed contract and governed by the Consolidated Labour Laws, a set of regulations enacted in 1943 to regulate labour relations in Brazil. In addition to his CLT contract, Tulio has another formal employment relationship: he is a federal civil servant at

Federal University of Bahia Symphony Orchestra (OSUFBA) as a federal public servant."

Before [establishing formal work relationships], I already did some paid work at events, you know, corporate ones, and some sporadic work with orchestras here in Salvador. [...] Two and a half years after my contact with the university, I joined the permanent body of a symphony orchestra. This changes my life a lot because from then on I have a fixed, regular salary for the stage and age I was at, quite interesting because it promoted my studies, my trips linked to music, from music, and so things were happening¹⁸. (Túlio)

The alternatives they pursued when accepting jobs with informal characteristics and lacking the security commonly associated with permanent employment were diverse. Kátia is a formalized worker in a different field, while Aline registered as an individual microentrepreneur (MEI¹⁹), but none of the others made any social security contributions.

A while ago, I think [that] 1 year ago, I started to worry about this [informality of work and, consequently, contribution to social security and retirement]. I said: I'm in that area; I don't intend to take a public exam [...]. So, I started to think that old age will come with faith in God. [...] then I signed up for MEI. Furthermore, the MEI automatically collects, right? For a minimum wage. I'm calmer now. I'm a MEI, and suddenly, if my income improves and I can take out a private pension, I can have a higher income... because being a MEI will only guarantee me a minimum wage if I'm not mistaken²⁰. (Aline)

- [Contribute] For retirement, I don't do that.
- Does this make you feel insecure about work? Do you reflect on these retirement issues?

OSUFBA. Although statutory civil servants hold public office and are considered formal workers, they do not follow the working conditions established by the CLT; instead, they comply with specific legal guidelines and statutes.

¹⁸ "Antes [de estabelecer vínculos formais de trabalho] já fazia alguns trabalhos remunerados em eventos, né, corporativos, e alguns trabalhos esporádicos em orquestras aqui em Salvador. [...] Dois anos e meio desse meu contato com a universidade, eu entro para fazer parte do corpo estável de uma orquestra sinfônica. Isso muda muito minha vida porque a partir daí eu tenho uma remuneração fixa, regular, para a fase e a idade que eu tinha, bastante interessante porque promoveu os meus estudos, as minhas viagens ligadas à música, a partir da música, e assim a coisa foi se dando."

¹⁹ In 2008, the federal government of Brazil enacted Law number 128, which established the possibility of registering a CNPJ (National Registry of Legal Entities) for micro-entrepreneurs - individuals. These individuals, classified as Individual Microentrepreneurs (MEI), were henceforth presented with the opportunity to formalize their activities, previously more commonly conducted in an "autonomous" and informal manner. MEIs are provided with certain advantages compared to informal workers, such as access to social security benefits, the possibility of opening a business bank account, facilitated lines of credit, issuance of invoices, and the ability to hire an employee (see <http://www.meibrasil.com/>). Conversely, due to their status as individual entrepreneurs, MEIs are deprived of rights enjoyed by, let's say, workers whose labor regime is linked to the Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT), such as paid vacations and receipt of the 13th salary. The formalization through MEI, therefore, appears to be less beneficial to the worker in terms of the concrete benefits guaranteed to them based on their employment relationship, compared to other forms, like those arising from CLT or statutory regimes, for example.

²⁰ "Há um tempinho, acho [que] há 1 ano atrás, eu comecei a me preocupar com isso [informalidade do trabalho e, consequentemente, contribuição à previdência social e aposentadoria]. Eu falei: tô nessa área aí, não tenho pretensão de fazer concurso [...]. Então, eu comecei a pensar: a velhice vai chegar, com fé em deus. [...] aí eu fiz o MEI. E fazendo o MEI automaticamente recolhe, né? Pra um salário mínimo. Eu tô mais tranquila. Tô pagando MEI, de repente, se em algum momento minha renda melhorar e eu puder fazer uma previdência privada, que eu possa ter uma renda maior... porque fazendo o recolhimento do MEI vai me garantir só um salário mínimo, se eu não me engano."

– I reflect on this [...] it's a kind of self-indulgence on my part, you know? Because I should have done this a long time ago. [...] Make a payment, in this case, to contribute²¹. (Elias)

– Another question I have to ask you related to the musical works you have been doing is if you pay any tax for your work. Do you contribute as an individual microentrepreneur, for example, INSS?

– No, nothing... [The money I receive] It's a minimal amount to make contributions in this way, you know? If we pay INSS, we have no money for other "more important" things, quotes²². (Mario)

PNAD data also indicate that, in addition to the formalization rate, the stability of occupational insertion is another factor that differentiates musicians' labor market experiences from those of the average worker. While only 3.8% of non-musicians engage in a secondary occupation, this percentage rises to 28.9% among musicians. Additionally, the incidence of under-occupation among musicians is nearly 1 in 3 (27.2%), compared to just 7.6% for the overall workforce.

A possible explanation for this situation is that musicians with primary careers work extra hours in music to fulfill personal interests, while those primarily focused on musical work often seek supplementary activities due to unsatisfactory working hours or income.

The notion that working in music is enjoyable for those involved was further supported by field experiences for this research. Nevertheless, the interlocutors consistently emphasized that the pleasure associated with music-making does not negate its work nature. This individual pleasure linked to making music is also highlighted in the literature (Salgado, 2005, pp. 250-252; Requião, 2010, pp. 153-154; 2019).

Playing [is rewarding]. Enjoying the vibe of the crowd playing along with you, filling in the gaps in the music, that's all cool. Notice things there that you don't know, but others do. Or, you don't have it easy but are looking there, trying to keep up. I think this is all really cool²³. (Mario)

I usually say that music is a job that liquefies any sadness and anguish you may be experiencing [...] So would I say that music is work? Yes, it is! However, it's also an exciting way to exist²⁴. (Túlio)

²¹ "– [Contribuir] Para aposentadoria, isso eu não eu faço.

– Isso te gera alguma insegurança em relação ao trabalho? Você reflete sobre essas questões relativas à aposentadoria?

– Eu reflito sobre isso [...] é uma espécie de comodismo de minha parte, sabe? Porque já era pra eu ter feito isso há muito tempo. [...] Fazer pagamento, no caso, de contribuir."

²² "– Uma outra pergunta que eu tenho para te fazer relacionado aos trabalhos musicais que você tem feito é se você paga algum tipo de imposto pelo trabalho que faz. Você contribui como microempreendedor individual por exemplo, INSS?

– Nada, nada.... [O dinheiro que recebo] É uma quantia muito pouca para fazer contribuições dessa forma, sabe? Se a gente acabar pagando INSS, fica sem dinheiro nenhum para outras coisas 'mais importantes', entre outras"

²³ "Tocar [é gratificante]. Curtir a vibe da galera tocando junto com você, preencher os espaços da música, isso tudo é legal. Observar coisas ali que você não sabe, mas outros sabem. Ou você não tem uma facilidade, mas está olhando ali, tentando acompanhar. Acho tudo isso muito legal."

²⁴ "Eu costumo dizer que a música, que ela é um trabalho que liquefaz qualquer tristeza e angústia que você possa estar vivendo [...] Então eu diria que música é trabalho? Também! Mas é também uma forma interessante de existir."

I love music [...] I would say that's everything – everything – that I do in music; I love it²⁵. (Elias)

In addition, the average weekly working hours for musicians (29.4) are significantly lower than the average for the overall workforce (39.7), resulting in a difference of 10 hours per week, or 25%. A considerable number of professional musicians work only a few hours or even near zero, indicating a strong market trend towards intermittent work (regular zero hours) and variable remuneration, often being paid per project or service rendered (zero usual remuneration). In an industry where a substantial portion of work occurs without acknowledgment of its labor significance, there is evidence of tasks related to the core activities of musicians and composers being performed unpaid. This includes work related to scheduling performances, studying and training, promoting shows, and production tasks. These findings are corroborated by both the experiences of the interlocutors and the existing literature (ILO, 2014, pp. 21; Packman, 2011, pp. 435).

we work on our own. Running after a show is also on its own²⁶. (Mario)

in a more fixed event, for example, if I'm going to have a wedding, then there is a whole conversation with the groom, with the bride: "What would you like to hear at the parents' entrance?" [...] Then, sometimes, they don't know what to put on, and you suggest songs, right? You say: "At Daniel's entrance, this song is cool here," and sometimes they don't know which instruments will be cool. You say: "At the bride's entrance, there will be a nice entrance, many people do, these things [...] I, for example, [have to] make a contract and send it. (...) I went to do my recital, you have to deal with the theater schedule and bureaucratic things, which have nothing to do with your performance as a singer, but because you are an independent artist, you have to deal with these things. [...] we sometimes have to deal with bureaucratic [issues]. It's a little stressful. [...] we can't dedicate ourselves to the main thing, for example, our precious function... for example, singing, right? Sometimes you even put it aside. Or, sometimes, you arrive for the recording of a clip extremely tired, with dark circles under your eyes, because the night before you didn't sleep, solving a thousand management things there for the clip to happen, for example²⁷. (Aline)

the disclosure issue is under me because I must always be on top. [...] who is not seen is not remembered. [...] For people to know me, who follow my work or who like²⁸ (Kátia)

²⁵ "Eu amo a música [...] Eu diria que é tudo – tudo mesmo – que eu faço na música, eu amo"

²⁶ "a gente trabalha por conta própria. Correr atrás de show também é por conta própria."

²⁷ "num evento mais fixo, por exemplo, se eu for fazer um casamento, aí tem toda uma conversa com o noivo, com a noiva: 'Ah, que vocês gostariam de ouvir na entrada dos pais?'. [...] Aí, às vezes, eles não sabem o que botar e você sugere músicas, né? Você fala: 'Ah, na entrada do Daniel, fica legal essa música aqui', e às vezes eles não sabem quais instrumentos ficarão legais. Você fala: 'Ah, na entrada da noiva vai ter uma entrada bacana, muita gente faz, essas coisas [...] eu, por exemplo, [tenho que] fazer um contrato e mandar. (...) Eu fui fazer meu recital, você ter que lidar com pauta de teatro, com coisas burocráticas, que não tem a ver com a sua performance como cantora, mas que, por você ser uma artista independente, você tem que lidar com essas coisas. [...] a gente tem que lidar, às vezes, [com questões] burocráticas. É um pouco estressante. [...] a gente não consegue se dedicar pro principal, por exemplo, que é a nossa função preciosa... por exemplo, cantar, né? Às vezes você deixa até de lado. Ou às vezes você chega para a gravação de um clipe extremamente cansada, com olheira, porque na noite anterior você não dormiu, resolvendo mil coisas da gestão ali do clipe acontecer, por exemplo."

²⁸ "a questão da divulgação eu faço, porque eu tenho que estar sempre em alta. [...] quem não é visto, não é lembrado. [...] Para as pessoas saberem, que acompanham meu trabalho ou que gostam"

- In the work you do as a singer, you...
- I also direct the band. And there is also a brother mine who he is the owner with me. He also plays. [...] we schedule rehearsals, we do everything, it's... It is shared²⁹. (Leo)

The monthly income of musicians is comparable to the average income of the overall workforce, despite a significantly lower daily wage. This leads to the conclusion that musicians earn approximately 40% more per hour than the average worker. In other words, the hourly labor value of musicians exceeds that of occupations that are similar or even more formalized. Therefore, their work is not necessarily devalued; rather, it is poorly compensated due to a combination of substantial unpaid work and an unstable, fragmented labor market, likely characterized by an excess supply and few entry barriers.

The need for greater demand among the research participants emerges as a barrier to their professional fulfillment solely as singers or instrumentalists. Aline expresses that “if she could” (if there were sufficient demand), she would focus exclusively on her singing, as she values musical performance highly. However, she is compelled to seek additional employment to supplement her income.

- Thinking about your practice, what do you think was the most difficult [...], or what has been difficult, for you to make a living with music?
- Field. Places to work. [...] It's not everywhere you can, [that] you have access, you know? You send the material; they stop responding. It's challenging, very difficult indeed³⁰. (Mario)

In my case, I teach singing lessons but... I like (giving) singing lessons, but if I could, I would only act as a singer. It's something I do to supplement my income, so to speak. So I think my greatest difficulty – me, Aline – is financially speaking, right? I would like to... suddenly perform in more events, more weddings³¹. (Aline)

The education level of musicians in the labor market closely mirrors that of Brazilian workers overall. In 2019, 20.4% of all employed individuals and 22.6% of musicians had completed higher education. Additionally, no significant differences in educational attainment were observed between formal and informal musicians. Statistical independence tests reject the hypothesis that educational differences exist between these two employment categories.

Table 4 – Percentage of musicians with Higher Education Diploma, by race/color

²⁹ “– No trabalho que cê faz de cantor, você...

– Eu também dirijo a banda. E tem também um brother meu, que ele é dono junto comigo. Ele também toca. [...] a gente marca ensaio, a gente faz tudo, é... É dividido”

³⁰ “– Pensando na sua prática, o que você acha que foi o que mais dificultou [...], ou que tem dificultado, para você viver de música?

– Campo. Lugares pra trabalhar. [...] Não é todo lugar que você consegue, [que] você tem acesso, sabe? Você manda material, eles deixam de responder. É muito difícil, muito difícil mesmo.”

³¹ “No meu caso, dou aulas de canto mas... eu gosto de (dar) aulas de canto, mas, se eu pudesse, eu só atuaria como cantora. É uma coisa que eu faço pra completar a renda, digamos assim. Então eu acho que a minha maior dificuldade – eu, Aline – é financeiramente falando, né? Eu gostaria de... de repente fazer mais eventos, fazer mais casamentos”

Group	Higher education completed
White	28,8%
Black and indigenous	17,0%
Formal workers	32,1%
Informal workers	20,1%
All musicians	22,6%
Other professions average	20,4%
Brazilian workers	20,4%

Source: PNAD-C, 2019

It is impossible to draw definitive conclusions about the objective influence of a Higher Education diploma in Music on labor market insertion and its implications in Brazil based solely on PNAD-C data. This limitation arises from PNAD-C limitation to capture the field of study. However, some pertinent insights can be gleaned from the available information.

The rejection of the hypothesis regarding educational divergence between formalized and non-formalized musicians, with higher education as a turning point, indicates the low relevance of a higher education diploma (in any field) for working as a musician in Brazil. This finding suggests a certain homogeneity in the educational profiles of both formal and informal workers, which is atypical in the broader labor market. Furthermore, it implies that musicians may have less incentive to pursue higher education to formalize their employment relationships.

The data highlight the unique nature of musicians' institutional integration, as companies and institutions – both public and private – play a significant role in the formalization of workers in the Brazilian labor market. In contrast, a comparison with a traditional “higher education” professions such as Law reveals important characteristics regarding the relationship between professional activity and university education among graduates in both fields, as shown in the following Census data from 2010.

Table 5 – Field of study of Higher Education Diploma of those employed as musicians (left) and Occupation of those with Music Higher Education diploma (right)

Field of study of Higher Education Diploma of those employed as musicians	%	Occupation of those with Music Higher Education diploma (left)	%
Music and Performing Arts	30,8%	Other Music Teacher	15,5%
Business and Administration	9,4%	Musicians, Singers and composers	12,0%
Teacher	8,4%	Other occupations	7,2%
Journalism	5,6%	Primary School Teacher	7,1%
Marketing	5,6%	Other Arts Teacher	5,8%
Law	4,2%	Actors	5,3%
Educational Sciences	2,6%	High School Teacher	2,7%
Language Teacher	2,3%	Kindergarden Teacher	2,5%
Special Teacher	2,3%	Office clerks	1,9%
Accounting	2,2%	Film and theater directors	1,8%
Audiovisual Technicians	2,0%	Professors	1,4%

Source: National Census, 2010

Table 6 – Field of study of Higher Education Diploma of those employed as lawyers (left) and Occupation of those with Law Higher Education diploma (right)

Field of study of Higher Education Diploma of those employed as lawyers	%	Occupation of those with Law Higher Education diploma (left)	%
Law	91,4%	Lawyers	42,4%
Business and Administration	1,6%	Other	11,4%
Unknown	1,1%	Professors	6,0%
Accounting	0,5%	General Clerks	2,8%
Educational Sciences	0,5%	Paralegal technicians	2,5%
Economics	0,3%	Public Managers	2,2%
Marketing	0,3%	Accountants	1,4%
Specific Teacher	0,3%	Policeman and woman	1,2%
Language teacher	0,2%	Shop merchant	1,2%
Medicine	0,2%	Wholesale managers	1,1%
Engineering	0,2%	Secretaries (general)	1,0%

Source: National Census, 2010

Table 5 reveals a heterogeneous educational background among musicians with completed higher education (in any field). Observations indicate that, even among graduates working in the field, only 30.8% hold a university degree in Music. In contrast, when comparing these figures with those of lawyers, a significant discrepancy emerges: 91.4% of legal professionals report having training in their area. This figure is likely underestimated due to research limitations, as one can only practice law in Brazil after obtaining a relevant university degree.

Among those with a higher education degree in Music, only 12% work as musicians, singers, or composers. This finding supports the hypothesis of insufficient demand for workers in the field, leading graduates to pursue alternative main occupations, such as music teaching, or to seek employment in unrelated areas. From this information, two key conclusions can be drawn: i) Obtaining a diploma in Music has limited relevance for working in the field, as the majority of graduates come from other academic backgrounds; ii) Obtaining a degree in Music provides a precarious guarantee of employment in the field, as the vast majority of Music graduates work in areas unrelated to their roles as musicians, singers, or composers.

Among the interviewed musicians, whether they had university experience in the field or not, there was a recurrent perception that attending a Music University—while providing meaningful experiences for those involved—had little impact on musical performance beyond the confines of the institution or on the success of their pursuit of music as a profession (with the possible exception of Aline).

What is done here [At the UFBA School of Music] is focused on classical music and, mainly, contemporary music. In the popular music course, it's contemporary music. This has absolutely no function for my work, right? In what I do at the bar, at the pub³². (Elias)

Okay, I'm not recording music at the Uni, but for me, it's my profession, right? [...] I've been doing it for a long time, and I've still been getting this knowledge from books and some people, even if they don't have certification. A lot of knowledge is still lacking in the academic [field], but I think I feel that I am a professional in what I do. At least, I intend to do it well³³. (Rocio)

³² “O que se faz aqui [na Escola de Música da UFBA] é voltado para música erudita e, principalmente, a contemporânea. No curso de música popular, é música contemporânea. Isso não tem absolutamente função nenhuma pro meu trabalho, né? No que eu faço no bar, no barzinho.”

³³ “Tudo bem, eu não estou gravando musica na academia, mas, pra mim, é minha profissão, né? [...] Eu faço já faz

This is an academic question, right? Academic musicians have – I think –, in general, this imagery that we are [playing] on the street because we had no other option. Because we don't get the academic knowledge they have. But I think that music, whoever makes music, if he's a real musician, does it to be heard. And if we are waiting for a concert or an "X" presentation... First: a concert, for example, by a symphony, or, I don't know, there will be a very specific audience to listen to. [...] While, if you really want to be heard by people in general, there's no better scenario than the street, you know?³⁴ (Rocío)

– Did you manage, outside these contexts, to have a more formal study? Something from the Music School, Conservatory, those things, right? – No, no. In fact, my school has always been [the] cell phone. You're looking at the computer; I'd go to the *LAN house* to watch the videos. Because [I] didn't have the opportunity to go to the presentations then. Then I went, and I always thought of that as a study, too, right? I went, always looking. In fact, people say "sucking" here. Like, you post a video, people watch, and people say: "– Oh, you're sucking, right?" Here it is like that³⁵. (Leo)

Not that we earn better [for going through the University of Music], because, at the end of the day, nobody wants to know if you graduated or not when you go to play at an event. But I think this puts you in a better position, knowing that you are a professional and prepared like a nurse is prepared to be there in the hospital providing care; that's cool³⁶. (Aline)

It is interesting to note how Aline identifies with the nursing profession, where teaching credentials (technical or higher) are essential for entering the labor market in Brazil, in order to assert a greater level of professionalism in her musical performance. She believes that attending a music university "puts you in a better position" from the musician's perspective, rather than from that of external observers. In general, the participants in this research, while acknowledging the relevance of formal education for musical performance, do not consider it a prerequisite for mastering the craft.

Of course [I would like to dedicate myself more to music]. That was precisely the reason for trying the Graduation [in Music] course, to improve this issue. Also, a dream of doing a project in my neighborhood, you know? That would also be a way to remove children from specific environments. Exposing children to certain musical stimuli, because what

muito tempo e ainda tenho pegado esses conhecimentos dos livros, de algumas pessoas, ainda que não tenham certificação. Muitos conhecimentos faltam ainda, no [âmbito] acadêmico, mas eu acho que eu sinto que sou profissional no que eu faço. Pelo menos é meu interesse que seja bem feito. (Rocío)"

³⁴ "Essa questão acadêmica, né? Os musicistas acadêmicos têm – acho –, em geral, esse imaginário que a gente está [tocando] na rua porque não teve outra opção. Porque não conseguimos esses conhecimentos acadêmicos que eles têm. Mas eu penso que a música, quem faz música, se é músico de verdade, faz para ser escutado. E se a gente ficar esperando um concerto, ou uma apresentação 'X'... Primeiro: um concerto, por exemplo, de uma sinfônica, ou, sei lá, vai ter um público bem específico pra escutar. [...] Enquanto, se você quer ser escutado mesmo, pelas pessoas em geral, não tem outro cenário melhor que a rua, entendeu?"

³⁵ "– Você chegou a, fora desses contextos, ter um estudo mais formal? Uma coisa de Escola de Música, Conservatório, essas coisas, não? – Não, não. Na verdade, minha escola sempre foi [o] celular. Tá olhando aí, computador, ia pra *lan house* pra olhar os vídeos. Porque [eu] não tinha oportunidade de ir pra show naquela época. Aí eu ia e sempre achei aquilo dali como um estudo também, né? Ia, sempre olhando. Na verdade, a galera fala aqui 'sugando'. Tipo, você posta um vídeo a galera tá olhando, a galera fala: '– Ah, cê tá sugando, né?'. Aqui é assim."

³⁶ "Não que a gente ganhe melhor [por ter passado pela Universidade de Música], porque no final das contas quando você vai tocar num evento ninguém quer saber se você é formado ou não. Mas eu acho que isso te coloca numa posição melhor de você saber que você é um profissional, de que você é preparado como um enfermeiro é preparado para estar ali no hospital fazendo um atendimento, isso é bacana."

happened to me was a matter of enchantment, you know? Having contact with that music³⁷. (Mário)

[I learned to play] With lessons, private lessons. I wasn't self-taught; it was class. I took these two courses, and much time passed... I've always been a street musician, right? I never went to any college to study music in depth. I also did a music workshop here at UFBA for six months³⁸. (Kátia)

The statements above highlight the perceived dispensability of formal education for pursuing a career in music. Mário, for instance, performs professionally in bars and concert halls in Salvador without any musical training in formal educational institutions. Kátia, despite having limited experience in regular music courses, does not need to prove her education to work in the field. Aline's university experience at the UFBA School of Music has little connection to her daily work—except for her teaching practice—though she remembers her time there as a significant "life experience." Elias, who identifies as self-taught, was already working as a singer and guitarist long before he began his university studies in Music. He had no exposure to private lessons, music schools, or preparatory courses until the age of 42, prior to enrolling in the composition course at UFBA. Of the nine interviewees for this research, including Teresa, a musician and businesswoman, only three have completed academic training (undergraduate degrees) in music. Additionally, Elias is currently pursuing his undergraduate degree, while Rocío is working on a master's degree in the field.

A diploma can serve as a form of cultural capital for professionals in other fields, such as engineering, where it validates their qualifications in a job interview. In this context, the diploma represents institutionalized cultural capital, distinguishing individuals based on the privileges its possession confers. For instance, a student can declare themselves a nurse after completing their studies in that field, allowing them to work professionally. Similarly, a historian can produce technical reports for a private company, a journalist can work for a major national TV station, and an aviation technician can fly a commercial plane only after demonstrating their qualifications through relevant certificates and diplomas. However, as previously discussed and reinforced by the research participants, this is not the case in music.

To demonstrate their mastery of musical performance, musicians must showcase their skills through practice. No diploma or certificate grants them automatic access to professional environments they wish to enter, although such credentials may serve as indirect facilitators.

There is someone, a friend, who is playing in a bar, in a restaurant, and he says to me: "—Look, Elias, how are you? Have you been playing a lot?" I: "—Boy, no. I've got a day

³⁷ "Claro que sim [gostaria de se dedicar mais à música]. Foi exatamente esse o motivo de tentar o curso de Licenciatura [em Música], pra aprimorar essa questão. Também um sonho de fazer um projeto no meu bairro, sabe? Que também seria uma forma de tirar as crianças de determinados ambientes. De expor as crianças a determinados estímulos musicais, porque o que aconteceu comigo foi uma questão de encantamento, sabe? Ao ter o contato com aquela música."

³⁸ "[Aprendi a tocar] Com aula, aula particular. Não fui autodidata, foi aula mesmo. Fiz esses dois cursos, passou muito tempo... eu sempre fui músico de rua, né? Nunca entrei em faculdade nenhuma pra estudar a fundo a questão da música em si. Fiz uma oficina de música também aqui na UFBA, durante 6 meses."

off; I haven't played on Saturdays" "– Ah, boy, then do the following: go to the restaurant where I'm playing, such restaurant, like this," he gives all the tips. "– It's just that Saturday, there, the restaurant owner is looking for someone to play" "– Oh, really? That's good." "– So go there, but to be a cool thing, what do you do? You can go on the day I'm playing." "– And what day are you playing? On Friday? Ok, then. I'm going there on Friday." I go that day when the colleague is playing, and I sing two or three songs so that the restaurant owner – or manager, whoever is responsible, whoever is going to hire –that this person sees so, that he has the idea that I really play. This has happened to me a lot. So what happens? Firstly, when you do that presentation there, a "canjinha"³⁹, the public reacts. You can usually be applauded; if people like it, they love it. And that's what counts, right? People stand: "– Wow, people liked this guy. So, I'm going to invite him to play here."⁴⁰ (Elias)

I went to do backing vocals for the song *Um amor puro* by Djavan. There is a colleague of mine called Diogo, a great friend. Then Jaime heard and called me when I was leaving. He said: "– Look, I liked your voice. I thought it sounded like Chet Baker's voice and whatnot and all. Do you work with someone with this music issue and such?" I said: "No." Then he gave me his home address and told me to show up on the scheduled day, but I don't remember what day⁴¹. (Mario)

after that, an exciting thing happened: being able to play with Baby Consuelo. We manage to put together an arrangement, [...] which was the opening of the 2014 carnival, together with the Orquestra Sinfônica da Bahia. But in this song, *Brasileirinho*, the arrangement consisted of the violin, Oludum, and Baby. It was the three of us. (...) We set it up, and it was something, like, apothecotic. It was there, at Farol da Barra. People loved it; they freaked out. And then my journey began. Then I worked with Luiz Caldas; I started working with Saulo (Fernandes⁴²)...⁴³ (Túlio)

The data analyzed thus far significantly contribute to understanding certain aspects of musicians' integration into the labor market in Brazil. However, they also reveal a distinctive characteristic of the occupation: its internal division. This is

³⁹ "Canja" is an emic expression widely used to refer to musicians' participation in other artists' shows. Usually short in duration, it allows its protagonists to showcase their accumulated artistic capital (musical skills) to the audience and potential employers.

⁴⁰ "Tem alguém, um amigo, que tá tocando num bar, num restaurante, e ele diz pra mim: '– Olhe, Elias, como é que tá? Você tem tocado muito?'. Eu: '– Rapaz, não. Eu tô com um dia ai livre, não tenho tocado nos sábados', '– Ah, rapaz, então faz o seguinte: vai lá no restaurante onde eu tô tocando, o restaurante tal, assim, assim', dá todas as dicas. '– É que sábado, lá, o dono do restaurante tá querendo alguém pra tocar", "– Ah, é? Que bom, massa'. '– Então vá lá, mas, pra ficar uma coisa legal, o que é que você faz? Você pode ir no dia que eu estou tocando'. '– E qual o dia que você tá tocando? Na sexta feira? Então pronto. Eu vou lá na sexta'. Eu vou naquele dia que o colega está tocando e canto umas duas ou três músicas, pra que o dono do restaurante – ou gerente, quem quer que seja responsável, quem vai contratar –, que essa pessoa veja, pra que ela tenha a ideia do que que eu toco. Isso já aconteceu bastante comigo. Então, o que que acontece? Primeiramente, quando você faz aquela apresentação ali, que é uma 'canjinha', o público já reage. Geralmente você pode ser aplaudido, se as pessoas gostarem, adorarem. E isso é o ponto que conta, né? As pessoas ficam: '– Poxa, desse cara aí o povo gostou. Então, vou chamar ele pra tocar aqui.'"

⁴¹ "Fui fazer *backing vocal* da música *Um amor puro*, de Djavan. Tem um colega meu, chamado Diogo, um grande amigo. Aí Jaime ouviu e me chamou, quando eu tava indo embora. Falou: '– Olha, eu gostei de sua voz. Achei parecido com a voz de Chet Baker e não sei o quê, e tal. Você trabalha com alguém, com essa questão de música e tal?'. Eu falei: '– Não'. Aí ele me deu o endereço da casa dele e me disse para aparecer no dia marcado, que eu não lembro qual foi o dia."

⁴² Renowned Brazilian singer

⁴³ "depois disso, aconteceu um fato interessante que foi poder tocar com a Baby Consuelo. A gente consegue montar um arranjo, [...] que era a abertura do carnaval de 2014, junto com a Orquestra Sinfônica da Bahia. Só que nessa música, que era o *Brasileirinho*, o arranjo, ele se constituía do violino, do Oludum e Baby. Éramos nós três. (...) A gente montou e foi uma coisa, assim, apoteótica. Foi ali, no Farol da Barra. As pessoas adoraram, piraram. E daí começou a minha caminhada. Depois trabalhei com Luiz Caldas, comecei a trabalhar com Saulo (Fernandes)..."

evidenced by the results of the cluster analysis, which identified a strongly polarized group composed of two opposing subgroups characterized by differing socioeconomic traits and labor market integration.

Table 6 – Results of Cluster Analysis, characteristics of groups 1 and 2

Characteristics	Group 1	Group 2
Black, brown and indigenous	61%	31%
Woman	17%	21%
Age (average)	35,00	40,00
Completed Higher Education	14%	33%
Average working hours	16,00	48,00
Formalization rate	15%	45%
Average monthly wage	2000,00	3050,00
Underemployment rate	46%	7%
Group size	68%	32%

Source: PNAD-C, 2019

Group 1, representing 68,0% of musicians in 2019, exemplifies the precarious nature of the music market. This group is younger, with an average age of 35 years, predominantly Black and Indigenous (60,7%), and has a low female representation (only 17,2%). Additionally, only 14,3% of its members possess a completed higher education degree. In contrast, Group 2 has a higher average age of 40 years, is primarily white (only 31,1% Black and Indigenous), includes a slightly greater proportion of women (21,1%), and boasts one-third of its members with higher education.

The occupational insertion of these two groups is markedly different. Members of Group 1 work an average of only 16 hours per month, have a formalization rate of just 15,1%, experience a 45,6% under-occupation rate, and earn an average monthly income of BRL 2.000. In contrast, Group 2 members work an average of 48 hours per week, have a formalization rate nearing 50,0%, experience a mere 6,6% under-occupation rate, and earn an average monthly income 52% higher than Group 1, at BRL 3.050.

It is reasonable to hypothesize that the typical representative of Group 1 is the ordinary, anonymous musician who lacks significant media exposure, spending their life performing in bars, restaurants, and small to medium-sized events. This musician typically works only 20 hours a week and must seek additional employment in other fields. Conversely, the typical member of Group 2 is likely an orchestra musician or, to a lesser extent, a studio musician involved in audio and audiovisual productions or associated with large musical groups and media placements, who works full-time with a more formalized employment relationship. Based on the field experiences and interviews conducted for this research, it is evident that most interlocutors are affiliated with the first group, demonstrating high rates of under-occupation, supplementary work, and informality in their daily practices.

The hourly earnings of Group 1 are double those observed for Group 2, highlighting the socio-economic vulnerability and instability of Group 1's professional insertion. Furthermore, this precarious situation leads to a significant amount of unpaid work that is not counted as part of the total hours worked. For instance, if Group 1 were assigned the same volume of hours worked as Group 2,

their hourly wage would decrease to one-third, making it 50.0% lower than that of Group 2.

In contrast, Group 2 exhibits a significantly more stable professional insertion, as evidenced by their higher volume of hours worked and formalization rate, which, while still low, is three times that of Group 1. This stability contributes to the lower hourly wage observed in Group 2, as their activities—such as rehearsals, production, scheduling, and other tasks not directly linked to artistic performance—are compensated and recognized as part of their work.

5. Conclusion: The challenges of training and regulation and the role of public policies

Based on the discussions above, the activities that define music as an occupation closely resemble those typically associated with professional status; however, they remain ambiguous and inconclusive. Among the three indicative dimensions of a successful process of professional institutionalization – (1) the organization of knowledge on a rational and abstract basis; (2) the institutionalization of this body of knowledge in educational institutions, which materializes the exclusivity of training for its practitioners; and (3) market closure through oversight and regulatory institutions to ensure the monopoly of professional practice – only the first dimension has fully achieved.

Although technical and higher education institutions in music, such as conservatories and colleges, have established themselves in the modern world, they have yet to successfully subordinate the professional performance of musicians to the attainment of certificates and diplomas issued by them. Additionally, there is often a disconnect between the values and skills imparted by these formal educational institutions and those demanded by the labor market, a gap noted in both the literature and the experiences shared by the interlocutors of this research.

Regarding "market closure," another dissonance emerges between the characteristics of classical professions and the realities faced by musicians in their work. The musical field in Brazil has yet to establish what Larson refers to as a "cultural authority" that would confer status and privileges upon musicians. As a result, various initiatives aimed at regulating the profession and securing a monopoly on professional activity within the field encounter significant resistance, both externally and internally.

This reality is evident in Brazil's low rates of unionization⁴⁴ and the limited connection of musicians to the Order of Musicians of Brazil (OMB⁴⁵), which lacks legitimacy among these professionals (Mendonça, 2003). The lyrics of a song recorded by the group Mundo Livre S/A—"Muito Obrigado" – illustrate the

⁴⁴ As an example of this assertion, it is worth noting that, in direct communication established in 2020 with the then director of the work of the Union of Musicians of the State of Rio de Janeiro (SindMusi) – Luciana Requião – we were informed of the existence of 9994 musicians registered in the institution throughout the state. A significant portion was not current with the entity's financial contributions.

⁴⁵ The Order of Musicians of Brazil (OMB) is a Brazilian federal autarchy endowed with legal personality under public law. It was established by Law 3,857 of December 22, 1960, with the purpose of preserving, overseeing, and regulating the profession of musician in Brazil.

resistance to institutionalizing training processes and regulating musical practices by the very agents within the field. Such conflicts reflect what some authors describe as a “permanent state of dialectical tension between the exercise of power and the practice of artistic freedom” (Kronemberger, 2016, p.14).

Thank you very much - Who needs order to mold? / Who needs order to paint? / Who needs order to sculpt? / Who needs order to narrate? Who needs order? / Now a little fable / They told me about a distant forest / Where a sad story took place / In the time when birds could talk / The vultures, proud creatures, but without singing talent / Decided, even against nature, that they would become great singers / They opened schools and imported teachers / They learned do re mi fa sol la ti / They ordered diplomas and arranged tests among themselves / To choose which of them would rule over the others / From then on, they created competitions and invented pompous titles / Every little vulture apprentice dreamed of one day becoming an illustrious vulture / In order to be called Your Excellency / Decades passed until the pathetic harmony of the vulture maestros / Was shaken by the invasion of the forest by chattering canaries / Who sang in chorus with festive parakeets and serenaded with thrushes / The old, ruffled vultures twisted their beaks and summoned the canaries, parakeets, and thrushes / For a rigorous inquiry / “Where are your competition documents?” they asked / And the poor birds looked at each other in fear / They looked at each other in fear / They had never attended singing school because singing came naturally to them / Their singing was so natural that they never bothered to prove they could sing / They sang naturally / "No, no, no, that's not right. Singing without the proper documents is a disrespect to order!" / Shouted the vultures / And, in unison, they expelled the harmless birds from the forest / Who dared to sing without permits / Moral of the story: in the land of certified vultures, you cannot hear the songs of thrushes / In the land of certified vultures, you cannot hear the songs of thrushes / Who needs order? / Who needs order to dance? / (Samba) / Who needs order? / Who needs order to tell stories? / Who needs order? / Who needs order to invent? / Who needs order? / Gonzagão, Morengueira / need what? / Dona Selma, Adoniran / don't need it! / Chico Science, Armstrong / need what?? / Dona Ivone, Dorival / don't need it!⁴⁶ (Fred ZeroQuatro *et al.*, 2003)

The song implicitly references the OMB in its opening lines, synthesizing the dominant values within both the musical and professional spheres. Making music,

⁴⁶ “Muito obrigado - Quem precisa de ordem pra moldar? / Quem precisa de ordem pra pintar? / Quem precisa de ordem pra esculpir? / Quem precisa de ordem pra narrar? Quem precisa de ordem? / Agora uma fabulazinha / Me falaram sobre uma floresta distante / Onde uma história triste aconteceu / No tempo em que os pássaros falavam / Os urubus, bichos altivos, mas sem dotes para o canto / Resolveram, mesmo contra a natureza, que haviam de se tornar grandes cantores / Abriram escolas e importaram professores / Aprenderam dó ré mi fá sol lá si / Encomendaram diplomas e combinaram provas entre si / Para escolher quais deles passariam a mandar nos demais / A partir daí, criaram concursos e inventaram títulos pomposos / Cada urubuzinho aprendiz sonhava um dia se tornar um ilustre urubu titular / A fim de ser chamado por vossa excelência / Passaram-se décadas até que a patética harmonia dos urubus maestros / Foi abalada com a invasão da floresta por canários tagarelas / Que faziam coro com periquitos festivos e serenatas com sabiás / Os velhos urubus encrespados entortaram o bico e convocaram canários e periquitos e sabiás / Para um rigoroso inquérito / "Cadê os documentos de seus concursos?", indagaram / E os pobres passarinhos se olharam assustados / Se olharam assustados / Nunca haviam frequentado escola de canto pois o canto nascera com eles / Seu canto era tão natural que nunca se preocuparam em provar que sabiam cantar / Naturalmente cantavam / "Não, não, não assim não pode. Cantar sem os documentos devidos é um desrespeito à ordem!" / Bradaram os urubus / E, em uníssono, expulsaram da floresta os inofensivos passarinhos / Que ousavam cantar sem alvarás / Moral da história: em terra de urubus diplomados não se ouve os cantos dos sabiás / Em terra de urubus diplomados não se ouve os cantos dos sabiás / Quem precisa de ordem? / Quem precisa de ordem pra dançar? / (O samba) / Quem precisa de ordem? / Quem precisa de ordem pra contar? / Quem precisa de ordem? / Quem precisa de ordem pra inventar? / Quem precisa de ordem? / Gonzagão, Morengueira / precisa o quê? / Dona Selma, Adoniran / precisa não! / Chico Science, Armstrong / precisa o quê?? / Dona Ivone, Dorival / precisa não!”

synonymous with freedom and spontaneity, is represented by birds (thrushes and parakeets) that possess an innate talent for singing. The playful chorus of festive parakeets contrasts sharply with the artificiality of educational and regulatory institutions, which are depicted as vultures. These institutions, with their pompous titles and inappropriate inquiries, are seen as assigning falsified skills to individuals who do not possess them naturally.

In its concluding stanza, the song pays homage to significant figures in Brazilian and American music – such as Luiz Gonzaga, Moreira da Silva, Selma do Côco, Adoniran Barbosa, Louis Armstrong, and Dorival Caymmi – highlighting their successes as free birds who have no need for bureaucratic certificates. The lyrics exemplify the failure of the professionalization efforts related to the profession of musicians.

The failure to professionalize the musical occupation in accordance with the prerequisites for controlling production and establishing a monopoly over the craft has significant repercussions for musicians' insertion into the labor market. Notably, when comparing certain characteristics of musicians' work with other professions categorized under "Professionals of Science and Arts", it is evident that musicians earn an average income less than half that of their counterparts (BRL 2.340 versus BRL 4.927). Additionally, musicians have a formalization rate of only 32,2%, with just 22,6% holding a higher education diploma. In contrast, the formalization rate among professionals in other fields reaches 83,1%, and 88,3% possess a university degree.

However, the labor market for musicians is strongly segmented. Cluster analysis reveals two distinct groups. The first group is younger (average age 35 years), more representative of Black and Indigenous populations (60,7%), and has a lower female representation (only 17,2%). This group comprises only 14,3% of individuals with complete higher education, along with significantly higher rates of under-occupation (45,6%) and informality (84,9%) compared to the second group.

Conversely, the second group has an average age of 40 years, is predominantly white (only 31,1% identify as Black or Indigenous), features a slightly higher female representation (21,1%), and includes one-third of professionals with higher education. This group also exhibits much lower rates of under-occupation (6,6%) and a higher formalization rate (45,4%). Moreover, their average monthly income is 52% greater than that of the first group, at BRL 3.050 compared to BRL 2.000.

On the other hand, does this imply that greater regulation of the music profession is desirable? Not necessarily, and this conclusion requires careful consideration. Firstly, increased regulation does not inherently lead to improved working conditions. Historically, both in Brazil and abroad, the regulation of higher education professions has often been used by occupational groups more as a means of preserving privileges than as a mechanism for promoting equity (Prates, 2018). Secondly, the issue may not revolve around "more or less regulation" of the profession itself, but rather about the capacity to enforce the fundamental principles that govern labor relations in Brazil, particularly under the normative framework of the Consolidation of Brazilian Labor Laws (CLT).

Public policies aimed at strengthening organizations that represent workers in the music sector must be implemented to ensure that the quest for a less segmented, unequal, and costly labor market is led by the workers themselves. For the principles of the CLT to permeate the work experiences of musicians while respecting the specificities, values, and idiosyncrasies of the field, it is crucial to maintain ongoing dialogue with the sector and ensure the active participation of its stakeholders in formulating governmental actions. This approach would create conditions conducive to innovative and collaborative political efforts, effectively addressing the detrimental characteristics of the labor market in the music industry.

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