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## CONTRIBUTIONS TO TRAINING IN NUTRITION IN PUBLIC HEALTH: A QUALITATIVE STUDY IN SERGIPE

Contribuições para a formação em nutrição em saúde coletiva: um estudo qualitativo em Sergipe

Contribuciones a la formación en Nutrición em Salud Pública: um estudio cualitativo em Sergipe

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**Abstract:** Nutritionist's training has been the subject of studies aiming to understand how the teaching process meets the needs of the population, given that the training model centered on the disease strongly influences the training process of health professionals. This study aimed to analyze training in Nutrition at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the state of Sergipe, Brazil, from the perspective of performance in Public Health, using a qualitative method. Coordinators, teachers and internship preceptors from the six active institutions offering training in Nutrition in the state of Sergipe were invited. The Google Forms platform and an instrument specifically designed for the purposes of this study were used. SPSS version 26 was used to analyze the sample characterization data, and content analysis was used for the subjective information arising from the open questions. Nine actors from five HEIs participated in the research. The analysis indicated that the low workload available for disciplines involving Public Health is a challenge for training, as is the lack of institutional support for the development of extramural activities. It was observed that students from private HEIs have earlier contact with Public Health disciplines. The participants' perception that training in nutrition is still based on the biological model went from "important" to "reductionist", proving the complexity of this understanding and the demand for actions that can better clarify this issue, otherwise we will train nutritionists with a reductionist vision and uncritical reflection to face contemporary challenges.

**Keywords:** education; nutritionist; public health.

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**Resumo:** A formação do nutricionista tem sido pauta de estudos, objetivando entender como o processo de ensino tem atendido a necessidade da população, visto que o processo de formação de profissionais da saúde sofreu forte influência do modelo de formação centrado no corpo doente. Esse estudo teve como objetivo analisar a formação em Nutrição das Instituições de Ensino Superior (IES) do estado de Sergipe na perspectiva da atuação em Saúde Coletiva, por meio de método qualitativo. Foram convidados coordenadores, docentes e preceptores de estágio das seis instituições ativas com formação em Nutrição no estado de Sergipe. Foi utilizada a plataforma *Google Forms* com instrumento elaborado especificamente para fins desse estudo. Para a análise dos dados de caracterização da amostra, utilizou-se o SPSS versão 26 e análise de conteúdo para as informações subjetivas advindas das perguntas abertas. Participaram da pesquisa nove atores de cinco IES. A análise indicou que a baixa carga horária disponível para as disciplinas que envolvem a Saúde Coletiva é um desafio para a formação, assim como a falta de apoio institucional para o desenvolvimento das atividades extramuros. Observou-se que os discentes das IES privadas têm contato mais precoce com as disciplinas de Saúde Coletiva. A percepção dos participantes de que a formação em nutrição ainda é pautada no modelo biológico versou de “importante” à “reducionista”, comprovando a complexidade desse entendimento e a demanda de ações que consigam esclarecer melhor essa temática, sob pena de uma formação com visão reducionista e reflexão pouca crítica frente aos desafios contemporâneos.

**Palavras-chave:** educação; nutricionista; saúde pública.

**Resumen:** La formación de nutricionistas ha sido objeto de estudios, con el objetivo de comprender cómo el proceso de enseñanza ha respondido a las necesidades de la población, dado que el proceso de formación de los profesionales de la salud ha sido fuertemente influenciado por el modelo de formación centrado en el cuerpo enfermo. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar la formación en Nutrición en Instituciones de Educación Superior (IES) del estado de Sergipe desde la perspectiva del desempeño en Salud Pública, utilizando un método cualitativo. Fueron invitados coordinadores, docentes y preceptores de prácticas de las seis instituciones activas que ofrecen formación en Nutrición en el estado de Sergipe. Se utilizó la plataforma *Google Forms* con un instrumento diseñado específicamente para los fines de este estudio. Para el análisis de los datos de caracterización de la muestra se utilizó el programa SPSS versión 26 y para la información subjetiva que surge de las preguntas abiertas se utilizó el análisis de contenido. En la investigación participaron nueve actores de cinco IES. El análisis indicó que la baja carga horaria disponible para las disciplinas que involucran la Salud Pública es un desafío para la formación, al igual que la falta de apoyo institucional para el desarrollo de actividades extramuros. Se observó que los estudiantes de IES privadas tienen contacto más temprano con temas de Salud Pública. La percepción de los participantes de que la capacitación en nutrición aún se basa en el modelo biológico pasó de “importante” a “reduccionista”, demostrando la complejidad de esta comprensión y la demanda de acciones que puedan esclarecer mejor este tema, de lo contrario formaremos nutricionistas con una visión. Reflexión reduccionista y acrítica ante los desafíos contemporáneos.

**Palabras clave:** educación; nutricionista; salud pública.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Given the growing number of undergraduate courses in Nutrition and a challenging epidemiological reality, training in Nutrition has been the subject of several studies, aiming to bring the recommended guidelines, professional profile, and population demands closer together (Amaral, 2023). The debate comes from the professional training process in health (Braccialli; Oliveira, 2011), which has been strongly influenced by the biomedical and welfare model centered on disease (and no longer adequately meets contemporary health demands, which are chronic in nature and determined by the population's lifestyle) (Pereira, 2019).

Poor nutrition is one of the main risk factors related to the global burden of disease worldwide and was the leading risk factor for deaths in 2017 (Bortolini *et al.*, 2020; Stanaway *et al.*, 2018). In Brazil, in 2015, poor nutrition was the risk factor that contributed the most to years of life lost, even more than alcohol, drugs, smoking, and physical inactivity (Bortolini *et al.*, 2020).

The National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) for the undergraduate nutrition programs aims to train nutritionists to be generalists. According to the DCN, this training style qualifies professionals to work in the promotion, maintenance, and recovery of nutritional status and the prevention of diseases in individuals or communities, considering social reality, and providing knowledge to develop competencies and skills in a wide variety of contexts (Brazil, 2001).

Among the nutrition areas, Public Health fosters debate and opens countless possibilities for nutritionists to be involved in the social approach (Mota *et al.*, 2020). It also covers the Unified Health System's (SUS) Primary Health Care (PHC), which is responsible for providing all levels of health care (promotion, prevention, maintenance, and recovery) in a single environment (Costa, 2021), as well as coordinating SUS health care (Aguar, 2023).

In the state of Sergipe, a thousand undergraduate vacancies in Nutrition are offered annually in five Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Those are available at one public institution with two campuses and four private institutions (INEP, 2022). Despite the potential of the sample universe and the importance of nutrition training for the population health, there are no records of research on this subject in the state.

Given the different realities of the population and the current nutritional epidemiological profile of individuals, we complement the need for training that can adequately address the different contexts and levels of health care, as suggested by DCN, provided by the SUS and evidenced in the practice of PHC. Thus, the aim of this study was to analyze Nutrition training in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the state of Sergipe from the perspective of Public Health, using a qualitative method.

## 2 THEORETICAL REFERENCE

### 2.1 Training of Nutritionists

The Nutrition course began at the National Institute of Nutrition in 1926, in the city of Buenos Aires, and was pioneered by the Argentine physician Pedro Escudeiro (Souza *et al.*, 2018). In Brazil, it began in the 1940s, with Clinical Nutrition and Collective Food as the main areas of knowledge and practice (Fernandes; Pontes, 2020).

The nutritionist's profession is regulated by the Law No. 8,234 of September 17, 1991, which defines that professional practice is exclusive to holders of undergraduate degrees issued by undergraduate schools in Nutrition, accurately registered and recognized by the Ministry of Education (MEC). In addition, they must be regularly registered within the council of their region of practice in order to carry out the activities of the profession (Brazil, 1991).

According to the Federal Council of Nutritionists (CFN), nutritionists can work in six areas: Collective Food, Clinical Nutrition, Collective Health, Teaching, Food Industry, Sports Nutrition, and Marketing in Food and Nutrition (Brazil, 2018). This range of activities reveals the prominent position of nutritionists, who work across different sciences and contribute to the population health, either individually or collectively, based on the ethical grounds of the profession (Federal Council of Nutritionists, 2004).

The training of nutritionists, as well as other health professionals, has raised debates about the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process and professional practices (Aguar; Costa, 2015). It comes from the training process of health professionals, which in the 20th century was strongly influenced by the American training model, the Flexnerian model. It refers to individual-mediated medicine and to biologism. It emphasizes the basic sciences, oriented towards individual care, centered on disease. This model carries a paradigm for explaining the health-disease process and brought consequences for health training (Braccialli; Oliveira, 2011).

Therefore, the DCN for higher education courses in Nutrition, through the MEC, publishes guidelines on the expected profile of the nutritionist professional, the competencies and skills to be performed, aiming at the promotion, maintenance, and recovery of the individual's health.

This higher education aims to graduate professionals with skills and competencies in health care, decision-making, communication, leadership, administration and management, and continued education (Brazil, 2001).

Similar to other health professions, the DCN for Nutrition guides the development of educational projects based on the model of developing competencies and skills with an emphasis on health care at the individual and collective levels. In this sense, it is worth rethinking whether the current training of nutritionists allows these competencies and skills to be developed, judging on the content and teaching practices presented in the courses' pedagogical projects, including the insertion of these activities in the health network, especially at the collective level (Fernandes; Pontes, 2020).



According to the DCN, nutritionists' training must ensure the completion of mandatory curricular internships, under faculty supervision and with the participation of nutritionists from accredited locations. The minimum workload for the supervised curricular internship is 20% of the total workload of the undergraduate course in Nutrition, based on the specific opinion of the Higher Education Chamber of the National Education Council (Brazil, 2001). At this point, students have their first practical contact with at least three areas of professional practice: Clinical Nutrition, Social Nutrition, and Nutrition in Collective Food Services (Brazil, 2001).

Emphasizing Social Nutrition, also called Public Health Nutrition, the subject of this study, the DCN claims that contact with practice is brief, which may compromise practical learning. In this area, internship sites are where students can perform actions related to public policies, primarily health and food and nutrition policies, developing activities related to nutritional care and, when possible, the practice of nutritional diagnosis, both individual and collective, planning of health actions, health education and food and nutrition education activities, among other actions that may occur within this field of practice (Brazil, 2001).

In addition to the practice of nutritional and health care, the Consensus on Skills and Competencies of Nutritionists states that, in the field of Public Health, professionals are competent to work in the management of the three levels of government—municipal, state, and federal—whether in the management and coordination of programs, projects, and actions or in public administration (Brazil, 2013).

The Course Pedagogical Project (PPC), guiding documents for practices and methodologies developed in the academic environment, must ensure the inclusion of students in the SUS during their training process, seeking to expand their knowledge of Primary Health Care regardless of the mandatory internship (Guedes, Silva; Garcia, 2017). The Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), for example, gained prominence with its pedagogical project, which inserts students into the community from the beginning of the course (Santos *et al.*, 2005). The health campus of the Federal University of Sergipe (UFS), in Lagarto city, operates through active teaching-learning methodologies, emphasizing Problem-Based Learning, integrating students into the fields of practice from the beginning of their undergraduate studies. The curricular change in the PPC of the Nutrition course at the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) also achieved greater integration of students into the health network (Das Neves; Sousa; Vasconcelos, 2014).

The study by Lima *et al.* (2017) shows that teachers at an HEI in Pernambuco consider the interdisciplinary proposal important for student training. Also in the Northeast region, Menêzes (2015) highlights the area of Public Health among the areas of interest in final course projects, which are more significant in the context of public institutions. Even with the evolution of the Public Health area, in the study by Aguiar and Costa (2015), the authors highlight that 72.7% of nutritionists do not feel capable

of reflecting the economic, political, social, and cultural reality of the territory they work in.

Accordingly, good training becomes a prerequisite for professionals to work effectively, treating individuals holistically and fulfilling their social objective (Souza *et al.*, 2018). Currently, according to records from the Ministry of Education, Brazil has 815 HEIs offering on-site undergraduate courses in Nutrition, of which 68 are public institutions and 747 are private (INEP, 2022). According to the CFN, there are 158,803 nutritionists in Brazil, with 17.7%, approximately 28,109 of them, working in Public Health (Federal Council of Nutritionists, 2021).

Also, there are 52 private higher education institutions offering distance learning courses in nutrition, including 18 universities and 34 university centers. According to data from the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP), even with democratized access, the number of graduates in 2020 is lower than the number of places offered. This could be considered a disadvantage of distance learning, as it requires students to be autonomous, organized, and able to plan and concentrate by themselves (INEP, 2022; Lapa; Pretto, 2010).

However, inherent to education are public policies, whose precariousness can be prevented if planned and executed assertively, aiming to improve the education system and promoting the valorization of teachers (Lino, 2012).

## 2. 2 Nutrition in Public Health

The term Public Health has been used since the 1970s with the aim of creating a scientific field with methodological approaches that prioritize the social aspect (Nunes, 1996). It is undoubtedly an ideological and social movement that contributed to the consolidation of the SUS. Nutrition in Public Health, also in line with this emphasis on social factors, is divided into three subareas: Policies and Programs, Primary Care, and Health Surveillance (Brazil, 2018).

The National Food and Nutrition Policy (PNAN) is the guiding and imperative document for training in this area. In 2019, this policy celebrated 20 years since its first publication, being an important tool with the goal to improve health conditions, emphasizing on food and nutrition for the Brazilian population, highlighting the nutritional care organization.

Food and Nutrition Education (FNE) is also a field of knowledge that deserves to be promoted in the context of Nutrition and Public Health. Although Food Nutrition navigates all areas of nutrition, it focuses more on Public Health, as it is a strategy widely used in activities related to health education, with an emphasis on sharing information about healthy eating practices through a pedagogical, educational, and active approach that is mainly linked to behavioral change (Brazil, 2012; Fernandes; Pontes, 2020).

EAN actions gained greater prominence from 2008 onwards with the Family Health Support Center (NASF) development (Cervato-Mancuso *et al.*, 2012). Since the NASF was established, the number of nutritionists working in PHC has increased

significantly, thereby expanding the population's knowledge about access to, supply, and food choices. Research shows that the presence of nutritionists at this level of health care tends to positively influence users' lifestyles, especially when the approach is taken collectively (Sousa, 2017; Amaral, 2023).

The field of EAN is intrinsically linked to Food and Nutritional Security (FNS), the Human Right to Adequate Food (HRAF), and health promotion (Brazil, 2012), which are expected to yield broad results in terms of healthier living, considering cultural aspects, habits, customs, and sustainability (dos Santos; dos Santos, 2021). Over the last few decades, Brazil has undergone a food transition, represented by increased consumption and access to ultra-processed foods, characterized by high energy density, fats, salt, and sugars, and low in fiber and micronutrients (Barros *et al.*, 2021), which directly affect FNS and the HRTF, due to the decrease in the population's overall health.

It can be inferred that nutritionists' care needs to be assertive and safe. Thus, there are several challenges within the role of nutritionists in public health, from training, limited time for training, supply and infrastructure limitations and management support. Space limitations hinders users' access to locations that offer SUS care services (Mota *et al.*, 2020; Vieira; Matias; Queiroz, 2021).

Considering these persistent challenges, the Ministry of Health (Brazil, 2022a) published the 2nd version of the Organization of Food and Nutrition Care in Primary Health Care Matrix, aiming to organize essential actions for food and nutrition care, providing a basis to support these procedures. With this, it is expected to gradually overcome the challenges identified in the field of Public Health through public policies and perceptions of professionals working in the training of new professionals.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive, cross-sectional, with direct data collection, and qualitative in nature. The research universe comprised Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that offer undergraduate courses in Nutrition in the state of Sergipe, Brazil, in the face-to-face modality.

Data collection procedures were carried out using an *online* tool, *Google Forms*. Course coordinators were invited to participate and send a formal invitation to course instructors responsible for subjects related to training in Public Health Nutrition and to Public Health internship preceptors to participate in the research through their respective *e-mail addresses*. The participation of teachers and preceptors was the subject to the coordinator's perception of the professionals working in Public Health Nutrition and, consequently, to the sending of the research invitation to them.

The characterization of the participants was analyzed using *IBM SPSS Statistics* 26.0, through descriptive statistics. The analysis of textual corpus with qualitative information regarding perception was based on the content analysis proposal by Bardin, Reto, and Pinheiro (1977), carried out in three stages: pre-analysis, through a floating reading for greater appropriation of the research corpus; exploration of the



material, with definitions of the units of record and thematic axes; and, finally, interpretation of the content, following Bardin's principles: mutual exclusion, homogeneity, relevance, objectivity, fidelity, and productivity (Bardin; Reto; Pinheiro, 1977; Mendes; Miskulin, 2017). From this perspective, an in-depth reading of the material was carried out to establish the categories, resulting in a textual corpus with all the information extracted. The participants' statement identification was transformed into codes and standardized for the female gender, to guarantee anonymity.

The research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Sergipe (CEP-UFS), with opinion No. 5,719,837/2022.

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Five out of six HEIs in the state of Sergipe that offer the Nutrition course in person participated in the research, corresponding to 83.3% of participation by HEIs. The participants (n=9) included course coordinators (n=4), teachers (n=4), and an internship preceptor (n=1). Four of those participants were linked to private HEIs, three to public HEIs, and two worked in both.

Female participants were majority (77.8%), with a mean age of 35.6 years ( $SD=\pm 8.8$ ). Most of them (55.6%) stated that they had a *stricto sensu* postgraduate degree, of which 44.4% were affiliated with private HEIs and 11.2% with public HEIs, with an average length of training of 13.4 years ( $SD=\pm 8.8$ ). The average length of teaching experience was 7.6 years ( $SD=\pm 5.8$ ), and 77.8% had professional experience besides teaching. The historical context of teacher training in Brazil is based on a strong pedagogical background, limiting external experiences, which are important to the teaching-learning process (Ottoni *et al.*, 2022).

The study's respondents depended on the coordinators' willingness to invite teachers and on the teachers' willingness to respond when duly invited. This was a deliberate decision by the researchers, who expected to understand how Public Health Nutrition is observed by those responsible for the course. Thus, the participation of all course coordinators (n=7) was expected, representing the universe of invited institutions, and not only the teachers who teach the subject of Nutrition in Public Health, but also those with complementary roles, composing a more comprehensive training, as stated in the invitation.

In this perspective, it is important to emphasize that qualitative research focuses on the contextualization of the research object, and not its quantification (Ceron *et al.*, 2020) and representativeness, considering that the subject carries an internal socio-historical context that comes from a social context external to him (Minayo, 2017).

The small number of responding teachers (n=4) and the fact that they are responsible for very specific curricular components (Social Nutrition, Nutrition in Public Health, and Food and Nutrition Education) suggests that teachers of related components, which are fundamental to the training of Nutrition in Public Health, were either not invited, showing a reductionist view of this area, or did not want to



participate in the research. Nutritional Assessment, Epidemiology, and Psychology are examples of curricular components that make up this area, among many others (Brazil, 2013).

Even though the low participation was not due to a lack of invitations, the reductionist view was confirmed when participants were asked about the mandatory and elective subjects that make up the training of nutritionists in the area of Public Health at their respective institutions. It was found that 100% of respondents highlighted the specific discipline of Public Health, 77.7% Food and Nutrition Education, and 66.6% Supervised Internship in Nutrition in Public Health and Epidemiology. The Extension and Ethnic-Racial disciplines were listed only by teachers from private HEIs (Table 1). The curricularization of extension is a recent legislation and offers students an experience that can contribute to training that meets the current demands of the population (Garcia; Pesce; Munhoz, 2021).

Table 1 - Compulsory and elective subjects for nutritionist training

Subjects	n (%)
Nutrition in Public Health/Social Nutrition	9 (100)
Food and Nutrition Education	7 (77.7)
Supervised Internship in Social Nutrition; Epidemiology	6 (66.6)
Extension Courses; Food and Nutrition Security; Professional Ethics in Nutrition	2 (22.2)
Ethnic-Racial; Anthropology; Health Policies and Strategy; Community Teaching Practices; Diet Therapy I and II; Nutrition in Geriatrics; Nutritional Assessment; Maternal and Child Nutrition; Food and Nutrition Surveillance	1 (11.1)

Source: own elaboration

Based on the respondents' content analysis, the answers in the textual corpus emerged in two categories: Teaching Challenges and Public Policy Challenges.

Regarding teaching, the following challenges were presented: *"institutional and departmental support"* (P1), which ranges from the number of hours available for Public Health courses to better engagement in field activities and definition of curriculum parameters. There is an express need to expand Public Health in nutritionist training curricula. To this end, the proposal to update the new DCN, which has been under debate for years, will allow flexibility in the offering of subjects. In addition, it will enable higher education institutions to become more closely aligned with the local context (Brazil, 2022b; Ottoni *et al.*, 2022). Another challenge presented by the participants is a reflection of the teachers' training, making it necessary to "prepare our teachers so that the content and experiences of subjects

such as Nutrition in Geriatrics, Maternal and Child Nutrition, and Diet I and II are not restricted to the scope of Clinical Nutrition" (C2).

Regarding public policies, the dismantling that has been taking place in recent years has led to numerous challenges in this field. According to a respondent, "[...] the recent dismantling of public policies focused on social rights, despite the prospect of reversal, still has repercussions" in the field. Another challenge is "the lack of nutritionists in the minimum team required for the family health strategy" (C2). These aspects support the need for nutritionists in Primary Health Care, in order to support, participate in, and implement policies and programs focused on food and nutrition (Costa, 2021). These gaps "make it difficult to visualize the positive effects of policies, which has repercussions in internship fields and practical *classes*, for example" (C4). Public programs and policies contribute to the consolidation of the comprehensive role of nutritionists in the field of Public Health, and to know about these programs and their ramifications is essential, as in the case of the PNAN, which provides guidance on food and nutritional care.

Students at private HEIs have earlier contact with subjects in the field of public health, although the respondents' opinions may have differed due to differences in understanding the subjects that make up public health training. Early contact provides undergraduates with teaching practices that enable the approximation of theory and practice, in addition to reflecting a critical and reflective perception of current scenarios (Das Neves; Sousa; Vasconcelos, 2014; Garcia; Pesce; Munhoz, 2021).

Regarding the assessment of interdisciplinarity in Public Health training, more than half of the participants claimed that it is still very limited in their institutions and needs to be expanded, mainly due to the attitude of the teachers themselves, who, according to participant C2, "are still very stuck in their own boxes". The content that makes up training in Public Health is organized into different curricular components that make up the undergraduate nutrition program, such as anthropology, sociology, epidemiology, public policy, nutritional assessment, and others. "The cross-cutting nature of Public Health knowledge is experienced in other areas, in disciplines other than Public Health."

Regarding the positive aspects of interdisciplinarity, the extension projects, created as a result of curricularization, were highlighted for enabling the involvement of teachers from different disciplines. However, to be interdisciplinary, it is essential to integrate these disciplines and the responsible professionals for it (Garcia; Pesce; Munhoz, 2021).

Regarding the participants' perception of biological training, a reality of very mixed perceptions was observed. Positive and negative points were highlighted by the participants: (D8) "we can no longer treat diseases, especially nutritional ones, in a biological way"; (E5) "it is a type of training that does not consider the whole person, and when only biological aspects are considered, the actions taken often do not meet the necessary demands of users". On the other hand, one participant (P3)

pointed out that she considers it “[...] fundamental, as it strengthens the fundamental parameters of nutrition science”. The simplicity and single causality brought about by the biological model make professional practices reductionist, given a population with such diverse needs and realities. It is therefore essential to consider the biopsychosocial context in which the individual is inserted (Amaral, 2023). The complexity of this understanding and the demand for actions that can better clarify this issue among teachers is fundamental, as we train nutritionists with a limited vision and little critical reflection on contemporary challenges, including crucial issues such as food systems, food security, sustainable consumption, human rights, and conflicts of interest, among others.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The research provided an initial analysis of the nutrition teachers’ perception at HEIs in Sergipe, contributing with important reflections on training and, consequently, on the role of nutritionists. The use of qualitative research is noteworthy, as it favored an in-depth analysis of the participants’ discourses, bringing to light aspects that are subject to change. It found that nutrition training in the state is reductionist and limited in terms of public health. The scenario presented by the participants proved challenging, both in relation to the difficulties of teaching itself and to local and national public policies. These challenges have repercussions for the teaching-learning process and, above all, for professional practice. Although they should be resolved by the public authorities and/or professional bodies, it is important that these demands are signaled and mobilized by the professionals themselves, considering the importance of this area for public health.

It is a priority to review hegemonic pedagogical practices and strengthen new perspectives on teaching and learning. The curricularization of extension provides training that brings scientific knowledge closer to the popular, capable of promoting social transformation. Furthermore, it is essential to monitor the results of the revised and recently published DCN for Nutrition (Brazil, 2025), as well as to support institutions in the development of extramural practices, improving the training scenario for future nutritionists to meet the needs of the population. The importance of ongoing studies on this topic is noteworthy, since it is necessary to monitor the dynamics of student generations and the health demands of the population, in addition to the fact that the training of these professionals is expanding considerably.

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## Contribuições das Autoras

**Marília Prudente Freire Lessa** – Conceitualização, Metodologia, Curadoria dos dados, Investigação, Análise formal, Visualização, Escrita – rascunho original, Redação – revisão e edição.

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## Declaração de Conflito de Interesse

Os autores declaram que não há conflito de interesse com o artigo "Contribuições para a formação em Nutrição em Saúde Coletiva: um estudo qualitativo em Sergipe".

## Disponibilidade de Dados

Os conteúdos subjacentes ao texto da pesquisa estão disponíveis no artigo.

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