

Psychology education to work on social assistance: an integrative review

Formação em Psicologia para atuação na assistência social: uma revisão integrativa

Formación en Psicología para el trabajo en asistencia social: una revisión integradora

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Highlights

There is a need to change psychology education to work on Social Assistance.

Psychology courses have shown insufficient integration of topics related to public policy.

Content on social rights is important in educating psychologists to work in Social Assistance.

Abstract

This study investigates scientific publications on training in psychology for work in the *Sistema Unico de Assistência Social* [Unified Social Assistance System] (SUAS). Based on an integrative review of 21 articles published between 2011 and 2024, the results were organized into two analytical categories: 1) Psychology education according to *Projetos Pedagógicos de Cursos* [Course Pedagogical Projects] (PPCs) and 2) Education from the perspective of professionals, graduates, and teachers. The analysis showed that there are gaps between education and practice, indicating the need for academia to engage more closely with the reality of SUAS from a critical and interdisciplinary perspective. It is concluded that the *Projetos Pedagógicos de Cursos* [Course Pedagogical Projects] (PPCs) need to be reformulated to better align with the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCNs), including content that articulates theory and practice to train psychologists to work in the SUAS context.

[Resumo](#) | [Resumen](#)

Keywords

Training in Psychology. Social Assistance. Pedagogical Projects for Psychology Courses.

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| Introduction

The advancement of public social assistance policy was marked by the consolidation of various regulatory milestones, such as the Organic Law on Social Assistance (LOAS) in 1993, the Política Nacional de Assistência Social [National Social Assistance Policy] (PNAS) in 2004, the Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS), the Basic Operational Norms of the Unified Social Assistance System (NOB-SUAS) in 2005, and the Basic Operational Norms for Human Resources of the Unified Social Assistance System (NOB-RH/SUAS) in 2007. Regarding human resources, in 2011, Resolution No. 17 of the Conselho Nacional de Assistência Social [National Social Assistance Council] (CNAS) ratified the higher education professions that should comprise the reference team for services and pointed out the need to implement multidisciplinary teams to carry out interdisciplinary work in this field, highlighting psychology as one of the categories that must be included in the reference teams and preferably in the management of SUAS.

In 2011, SUAS was also officially endorsed in the legal sphere through the ratification of Law No. 12,435, which provides for the organization of social assistance and updates LOAS (1993). With these regulatory and legal advances, there has been a decentralization and universalization of social assistance services, programs, projects, and benefits, requiring the involvement of professionals with higher education degrees, including psychologists¹ (Federal Council of Psychology [CFP], 2021).

Within the scope of social assistance policy, psychologists work in Basic Social Protection in units such as Social Assistance Reference Centers (CRAS) and in Special Social Protection, at medium and high complexity levels, in Specialized Social Assistance Reference Centers (CREAS) and in Institutional Shelter Units, among others, in both the public and private sectors, providing social protection and developing work from the perspective of social assistance security for individuals and families in situations of vulnerability and/or social risk. Subjectivity has come to be considered a relevant issue in the exercise of citizenship, alongside objectivity, given that citizens are also social subjects with their own particularities that impact social participation and access to and the guarantee of rights (CFP, 2021; Gonçalves, Bock & Sanches, 2024).

According to the Technical References for Psychologists working at CRAS/SUAS (2021), social assistance involves working with entire communities, which requires skills to promote social assistance security. This includes attentive listening, an ethical and respectful attitude, as well as the development of activities such as welcoming, group care, individualized and/or family referral/follow-up, interviewing and/or screening, report writing, participation in social control bodies, home visits, and the development of cultural, educational, recreational, and/or community

¹ This report adopts gender-sensitive language, considering the prevalence of women both as users of the system and in the main professional categories that make up SUAS—psychology, social work, education—which are characterized as female professions.

activities, prioritizing people's participation and understanding of social reality (Santos *et al.*, 2021).

Furthermore, this context requires collaboration with professionals from different fields through networking. The integration between Psychology and Social Assistance has as its main objective to promote well-being and guarantee the rights of the population served, given that social vulnerabilities hinder or prevent access to social assistance rights, thereby favoring social vulnerability (CFP, 2021).

Due to its specific nature, working in SUAS requires an understanding of its objectives, including regulations and legislation concerning PNAS, as well as aspects such as overcoming vulnerabilities and strengthening ties within communities, as suggested by Faria (2020) and Santos, Machado, and Sadallah (2020). In this field of disputes, advances, and political and social tensions, it is essential to guide psychologists to act critically and effectively in public policies, aligning themselves with the social commitment of the profession (Bock *et al.*, 2022). To achieve this, it is necessary to overcome the historical process of psychology education in Brazil, which was guided by hegemonic European and North American models, focusing on clinical, privatist, and individual approaches, with a practice detached from social reality (Freitas, 1998; Miez & Silva, 2022).

Since 1996, undergraduate courses in Brazil have been governed by curricula based on the National Curriculum Guidelines for Undergraduate Courses (DCNs), established by the Conselho Nacional de Educação [National Education Council] (CNE) and the Câmara de Educação Superior [Higher Education Chamber] (CES). DCNs are standards that guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of curricula in educational institutions, both in basic education and higher education. These guidelines aim to ensure the quality of education, promote the comprehensive training of students, respect the country's cultural and regional diversity, and ensure consistency and alignment across the various levels and types of education (Brazil, 2004).

The first version of the DCNs for undergraduate courses in Psychology, established by Resolution CNE/CES No. 08/2004, focused on a single terminal degree and pluralistic training, geared toward research and teaching in Psychology. It proposed replacing teaching through the division of subjects and accumulation of information with a model geared toward the development of competencies and skills throughout the course of education (Brazil, 2004). In 2011, the 2004 DCNs were revoked, with an amendment to Article 13 that included standards for the complementary project for the education of psychology teachers (bachelor's degree), with optional participation by students, as a way of complementing the courses (Brazil, 2011).

In 2023, the new Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Program were published. Although social assistance does not appear as one of the structural pillars and is still addressed in a limited manner (through excerpts on public policies), Article 8, paragraph 1, which deals with the basic competencies and profile of a committed psychology professional with a high-quality practice, emphasizes that the set of basic competencies of the psychology professional:

must ensure the possibility of providing psychological services to society in different areas where social demands arise, constituting work contexts in which psychologists are involved (health, education, organizations, work, communities, social movements, sports, justice, among others), whether in the private sector, within the scope of public policies, or in the third sector, intervening at the individual, group, organizational, and societal levels (Brazil, 2023, p. 3).

Considering the importance of undergraduate education as a process for professional practice, as well as the growing involvement of psychologists in public social assistance policy, this study aims to investigate and discuss scientific publications on training in psychology for work in the SUAS. More specifically, identify which elements are highlighted as important throughout these materials for consolidating training in psychology that promotes qualified social assistance.

It is worth noting that this review is associated with the objectives of the research project entitled "Training psychologists to work in social assistance in Bahia: a study from undergraduate to continuing education in SUAS," developed by Práxis – Center for Teaching, Research, and Extension in Social Assistance Knowledge and Practices at UFRB, with support from the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado da Bahia [Bahia State Research Support Foundation] (FAPESB).

Method

This study adopted an integrative literature review (ILR) as its research method. According to Sousa, Bezerra, and Egypto (2023), integrative reviews are qualitative methods of systematic review that gather, analyze, and critique various studies on specific topics and issues. This method "aims to facilitate and improve data collection, extraction, analysis, and synthesis" (Hassunuma *et al.*, 2024, p. 2).

Two databases were consulted for data selection: SciELO (<http://www.scielo.br>) and the Electronic Psychology Journals database – PePSIC (<http://pepsic.bvsalud.org>). These databases were chosen considering that, together, they comprise almost the entirety of indexed psychological production in the country (Cordeiro, 2018). To perform the search, the Boolean operator "AND" was used together with the following descriptors: "social assistance" AND "education" AND "psychology." The PePSIC database allowed searches to be performed via Google Scholar, and this method was chosen because it allowed for slightly broader search results and, consequently, a wider range of texts to be included in the review. The survey resulted in a total of 22,616 publications (Table 1):

Table 1
Survey of publications in databases

Search engine	No. of publications identified	No. of publications selected after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria	No. of articles evaluated	Selected publications
SciELO	31	16	02	02
PePSIC	22.600	940	22	19
Total	22.616	956	24	21

Source: the authors.

The first stage of the database search resulted in 31 publications identified in SciELO and 22,600 in PePSIC. After this stage, the following inclusion criteria were considered for the selection of publications: full-text articles; published in Portuguese between 2011 and 2024 (the year 2011 was chosen considering the publication of the first update of the National Curriculum Guidelines, and it should be noted that articles published up to May 2024—the month in which the bibliographic survey was completed—were included). The following exclusion criteria were adopted: duplicate publications, publications that did not adhere to the theme of this paper (social assistance work), and publications that corresponded to theses/dissertations/monographs or abstracts in Annals. The decision not to include theses/dissertations/monographs and abstracts from conference proceedings is justified by the greater ease of access and circulation of scientific articles. In addition, the articles underwent a peer review process, which tends to reinforce their relevance to the field. Considering the criteria listed above, 16 publications were selected from SciELO and 940 from PePSIC.

The selected publications were evaluated based on the title, abstract, and keywords. This process resulted in two articles in the SciELO database and 22 articles in PePSIC. After this stage, the 24 evaluated articles were read in full, and only those that directly addressed education in psychology for working in the SUAS were selected, resulting in two articles in the SciELO database and 19 in the PePSIC database. Thus, at the end of the search, a total of 21 articles were included in the analysis.

In the third stage, a preliminary, exploratory reading of the selected articles was conducted, and the publications were subsequently organized in a binder created in *Microsoft Excel*. This procedure aimed to provide an "overview" of the studies, considering the following information: reference, title, authorship, year of publication, region, study type, objective, main theme, theoretical framework, methods, results, discussion, conclusions, and other relevant details. Next, a comparative and critical analysis of these data was carried out, which sought to present the academic debate surrounding education in psychology for working in the SUAS.

| Results and discussion

Regarding the methods used in the articles, most (n:20) are qualitative, and only one (n:1), Rodrigues and Fioroni (2022), was developed using a quantitative method. Of the total, two (n: 2) are essentially theoretical articles (Silva & Carvalhaes, 2016; Romagnoli, 2012).

Thus, the sample consists of nineteen (n: 19) empirical articles and two (n: 2) theoretical articles. Documentary analysis is present in ten (n: 10) studies; the others rely on field and bibliographic research, and one experimental study. As for the purposes, the results show that exploratory and explanatory research predominates.

The findings of the review indicate that empirical research has focused on investigating the topic with graduates of undergraduate psychology courses, student interns, university professors, and professionals working in social assistance services such as CRAS and CREAS, with a predominance of participants working at CRAS.

Table 2

Distribution of the sample according to article title, authors, year, journals, and region.

Title	Authors and Year	Journal	Study region
Psicologia e Deficiência: análise da formação e inserção de psicólogos nos serviços de Assistência Social	Luz and Gesser (2023)	Quaderns de Psicologia, 25 (3)	South
Contribuições para uma Formação em Psicologia Integrada à Política de Assistência Social	Hüning and Oliveira (2022)	Psicologia: Ciência e Profissão (2 v. 42)	Northeast
Formação e atuação de egressos da Psicologia UFSCar: um recorte para as políticas públicas sociais	Rodrigues and Fioroni (2022)	Gerais: Revista Interinstitucional de Psicologia, 15(1)	Southeast
As políticas públicas e atuação para o SUAS na formação do psicólogo no Paraná	Silva and Simcic (2021)	Revista de Psicologia, 12 (2)	South
Formação em psicologia e o campo da desigualdade social: um estudo documental	Salvatori and Gomes (2021)	Revista e-Curriculum, 19 (2)	South
Formação acadêmica e atuação do psicólogo no Sistema Único de Assistência Social	Carollo and Albanese (2020)	Pesquisas e Práticas Psicossociais, 15(4)	South
Psicólogos nas Políticas Públicas de Assistência Social: atuação em CRAS e interface com a formação acadêmica.	Menz and Camargo (2020)	Psicologia Argumento, 38 (101)	South
Desencontros entre identidade, formação e prática: a psicologia na assistência social de Nova Friburgo	Luz et. al. (2020)	Revista RBBA – Revista Binacional Brasil Argentina: diálogo entre as ciências, 09 (2)	Southeast
Potências do encontro entre formação e campo da Assistência Social para pensar outra prática psicológica	Oliveira et al. (2018)	Psicologia Política. 8 (41)	Northeast
Psicologia na assistência social: um campo em formação	Cordeiro and Curado (2017)	Psicologia & Sociedade (29)	Southeast
Psicólogos no Sistema Único e Assistência Social (SUAS): Considerações acerca da Formação Profissional em Instituições Públicas do Estado do Paraná	Litenski; Souza (2017)	Emancipação, 17(1)	South
Discursos sobre família e a formação para o trabalho social no Centro de Referência da Assistência Social.	Costa; Alberto (2017)	Pesquisas e Práticas Psicossociais 12 (1),	Northeast
Serviço escola de psicologia e as políticas de saúde e de assistência	Gomes and Dimenstein	Trends in Psychology / Temas em Psicologia,	Northeast

social	(2016)	24 (4)	
Formação em psicologia em uma universidade pública e suas repercussões nas competências do trabalho em políticas públicas	Beato and Ferreira Neto (2016)	Psicologia em Revista, 22 (2)	Southeast
As políticas sociais nos fundamentos dos projetos pedagógicos dos cursos de Psicologia	Seixas <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Psicologia Escolar e Educacional, 20 (3)	Northeast
Relato de experiência da aproximação do CREPOP-RS ao meio acadêmico: formação em psicologia e políticas públicas.	Torres and Ecker (2016)	Revista Subjetividades, Fortaleza, 16 (3)	South
As políticas sociais nas disciplinas dos cursos de graduação em Psicologia no Brasil	Seixas, Costa <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Psicologia em Pesquisa UFJF, 10 (1)	Northeast
Psicologia e políticas públicas: Impasses e reinvenções	Silva and Carvalhaes (2016)	Psicologia; Sociedade, 28(2)	South
As Políticas Sociais na Formação Graduada do Psicólogo no Piauí	Silva and Yamamoto (2013)	Psicologia: Ciência e profissão, 33 (4)	Northeast
O SUAS e a formação em psicologia: territórios em análise	Romagnoli (2012)	ECOS – Estudos Contemporâneos da Subjetividade, 1 (2)	Southeast
Contribuições da graduação em psicologia e serviço social para inserção de profissionais na política de assistência social no município de Porto Alegre (RS-BRASIL)	Prates, <i>et al.</i> (2011)	Revista Plaza Pública (Argentina), 4 (6)	South

Source: the authors.

The articles identified were published between 2011 and 2024. It should be noted that 2016 had the highest number of publications (n: 6), whereas the other years had only one publication. This result reveals that although researchers are paying attention to the topics of "education in psychology" and "professional preparation for working in social assistance," there is still no robust body of work that covers all regions of the country. The region with the highest number of studies is the South (n:9), followed by the Northeast (n:7) and finally the Southeast (n:5), while the Central-West and North regions, according to our research, have no studies. Although it is possible to identify a certain theoretical reference by professor and researcher Oswaldo Yamamoto to the theme, the results indicate that there are no specific research groups or authors with a tradition of researching the theme of education in psychology for social assistance.

Most studies do not explicitly state their theoretical and methodological basis. Among the studies that highlighted the theoretical aspect, it can be observed that the research is in the field of Social Psychology with an emphasis on Socio-Historical Psychology and the perspective of historical-dialectical materialism, while fewer studies appear from the perspective of Discourse Analysis and Institutional Psychology.

Based on the reading and analysis of the selected scientific publications and the objectives outlined for this study, the data were organized into two categories: "Psychology education according to Projetos Pedagógicos de Cursos [Course Pedagogical Projects] (PPCs)" and "Psychology education from the perspective of professionals, graduates, and teachers." It should be noted that this organization does not presuppose that the studies belong exclusively to a single category, nor does it attempt to exhaust the complexity of the works analyzed. It is a methodological choice made by the authors to systematize the predominant content in the reviewed material, recognizing that some studies address more than one category and contribute to the review in a relational way, even though they were primarily analyzed in only one of them.

| Education in Psychology according to the PPCs

Documentary analysis using PPCs is the approach most studies analyzed take to investigate training in psychology and its application in social policies. We identified nine (9) studies that mention the need for change in PPCs, although some already point to new perspectives for psychology courses: Silva and Simcic (2021); Salvatori and Gomes (2021); Cordeiro and Curado (2017); Litenski and Souza (2017); Beato and Ferreira Neto (2016); Seixas, Coelho-Lima *et al.* (2016); Silva and Yamamoto (2013); Seixas, Costa *et al.* (2016); Prates, Closs, Santos, Carbonari, and Lartigau (2011). Of these, only three articles—Litenski and Souza (2017), Silva and Simcic (2021), and Prates *et al.* (2011)—focused on social assistance, while the others addressed social policies in general, including the SUAS. Litenski and Souza (2017) stated that the education of psychologists provides a foundation for working in social assistance, especially through the disciplines of Social and Community Psychology. However, they acknowledged that the curriculum is insufficient for the preparation of Psychology professionals, since the syllabi do not explicitly address PNAS content, highlighting a mismatch between the adaptation of Psychology curricula as recommended by the DCNs—and their updates—in relation to social demands.

The study by Prates *et al.* (2011) investigated the curricula of the two professional categories most prevalent in SUAS, Psychology and Social Work, highlighting the need to propose subjects that address SUAS-related content. They highlighted that undergraduate psychology courses at the higher education institutions (HEIs) surveyed in their study have prioritized offering elective courses related to social assistance, which has led to a significant increase in demand among psychology students for courses offered by Social Work programs in their search for educational parameters that support work in the SUAS. Thus, an interdisciplinary training strategy is identified, while pushing for a curriculum review, as pointed out by Menz and Camargo (2020), since psychologists face challenges in their education due to a lack of specific preparation to work in the SUAS.

Only two articles in this category conducted nationwide research covering public and private educational institutions (Seixas, Coelho-Lima *et al.*, 2016; Seixas, Costa *et al.*, 2016). Both are derived from the same expanded research that

investigated nationally the place that social policies occupy in the theoretical and political foundations of undergraduate Psychology PPCs in Brazil, using documentary analysis to research 40 PPCs. Overall, the results indicated a significant movement toward updating undergraduate psychology curricula.

According to Seixas, Coelho-Lima *et al.* (2016), subjects related to health are present in all HEIs, those related to education in 55%, while among the least present are those related to Social Assistance. The study also revealed that three dimensions of the curricula stand out in terms of the integration of social policies into psychology education: "(...) the professionalizing bias, the marked presence of health and quality of life promotion, and the association with the issue of psychologists' social commitment" (p. 443).

In addition to investigating whether psychology education covers topics related to social policy, there was a concern to produce knowledge about how this integration occurs. Studies by Silva and Yamamoto (2013) and Seixas, Coelho-Lima *et al.* (2016) criticized the technical-practical focus that this process of integrating social policies into education has received, as well as the prevalence in psychology courses of health promotion as the basis for professional practice, noting a greater availability of subjects related to health policy.

Seixas, Costa *et al.* (2016) analyzed courses related to social policies and found that less than 10% of the courses taught integrated topics related to social assistance policies. Silva and Simcic (2021) also emphasized that "there is little concern on the part of psychology courses in the state of Paraná to offer, in initial training, subjects that propose to discuss public policies as an independent and specific debate" (p. 83).

The results of the studies analyzed in this category unanimously point to the need for greater alignment between academic education and practices in the SUAS, since, as stated by Seixas, Costa *et al.* (2016), social policies must be integrated into psychology curricula to provide the basic conditions for professional practice. The integration between theory and practice is another recurring perspective in studies, such as in Cordeiro and Curado (2017) and Beato and Ferreira Neto (2016), who advocated practical experiences aligned with knowledge of demands arising in the territory, to foster the capacity to develop innovative practices and creativity, valuing ethical principles and the demands and needs of the community. The defense is for critical and reflective training that provides support for the professional skills necessary for working in public policy. The inclusion of supervised internships and integrated practices is considered a response to training gaps (Cordeiro & Curado, 2017; Carollo & Albanese, 2020; Menz & Camargo, 2020).

However, the study by Salvatori and Gomes (2021), based on more recent documentary research, found a more promising perspective on education for work in social assistance, although the hegemonic model has not yet been overcome. The authors concluded that there is a growing number of research and internship activities in SUAS and that the relevance of practices (such as internships) and

ongoing research makes it possible "for social inequality to be addressed in psychology undergraduate courses" (p. 885).

The analysis of the PPCs conducted by the authors of the studies surveyed revealed weaknesses and challenges in the training of psychologists, including insufficient content on public policies, specific knowledge of social rights, and cross-cutting themes in the SUAS, such as human rights and people with disabilities (PCD). However, changes have already been noted in curricula and educational dimensions, such as the offering of courses on SUAS-related topics and internships that enable the connection between theory and practice. These changes do not yet cover a large part of undergraduate courses and do not occur in a linear fashion, let alone be a reality in all regions of the country. In this regard, as pointed out by Seixas, Coelho -Lima *et al.* (2016)

argue that the next step in advancing the education of psychologists is to defend an ethical-political project, collectively built among all actors involved in the constitution and execution of higher education policies for psychology, toward a proposal that points toward overcoming capitalist society. (p. 444).

The need to review and update the psychology curriculum is strongly emphasized, with a view to improving the link between theory and practice. Studies have shown that the gap in preparation for working in social policy is related to the disconnect between the scientific and professional dimensions. Thus, analysis of the articles in question highlights that, based on the most recent publications, it is imperative that psychology education programs address issues related to social vulnerability, such as social risks and isolation (Santos *et al.*, 2021; Faria, 2020, and Santos, Machado & Sadallah, 2020).

In the same vein, we highlight, in dialogue with normative and conceptual frameworks such as PNAS (2004), the importance of incorporating critical studies of the institution of the family to overcome family-oriented policies and practices that may reinforce moralistic and hygienist perspectives. Furthermore, interdisciplinarity, coordination between disciplines, and recognition of the importance of public policies for promoting the population's access to Psychology services and social rights are essential for a more critical education, aligned with social demands, capable of developing theoretical and methodological skills for historical and political analysis, as recommended in the DCNs recently approved by Resolution CNE/CES No. 1, of October 11, 2023. In addition to emphasizing the preparation of professionals through the integration of theory and practice, the guidelines highlight the need to encourage the autonomy of Psychology students in practical and theoretical activities, which requires a review of academic curricula.

Psychology education from the perspective of professionals, graduates, and teachers

This category includes studies that have investigated the topic of training in Psychology and Social Assistance, considering research conducted directly with professionals who work in the SUAS and/or teachers who develop practical courses

or internships on the topic of the SUAS. Thus, this category aims to discuss the most identified characteristic in this review, namely: the volume of studies interested in analyzing psychology training directly related to professional practice in the SUAS. We identified the studies by Luz and Gesser (2023), Hüning and Oliveira (2022), Carollo and Albanese (2020), Menz and Camargo (2020), Oliveira *et al.* (2018), Cordeiro and Curado (2017), Costa and Alberto (2017), Romagnoli (2012), Gomes and Dimenstein (2016); Luz *et al.* (2020); Silva and Carvalhaes (2016); Rodrigues and Fioroni (2022); Torres and Ecker (2016).

The study by Costa and Alberto (2017) examined how Psychology and Social Work professionals at Social Assistance Reference Centers view families and their education when working with this population. It was found that there are gaps in education, especially regarding the theme of the family institution and its multiple arrangements in contemporary society, with a focus on traditional family structures and a tendency to stigmatize non-traditional families, leading to "professional practices that are hygienist, welfare-oriented, eugenicist, and pathologize everyday life" (p. 193). Thus, it is clear that the complexity of working in SUAS and other public policies requires education that goes beyond operational standards, incorporating an understanding of user-specificities and social policies.

Psychology professionals seek specialization; however, unlike social work professionals, the courses do not deal with social policies, thus maintaining a more traditional training focused on assessment and clinical care, as has been the case since the undergraduate internship (Costa & Alberto, 2017). Cordeiro and Curado (2017) emphasized that training should go beyond the clinical model and address social inequalities because "psychology courses continue to pay very little attention to Social Assistance policy" (p. 3). They also raised pertinent questions about interdisciplinary training, as did Gomes and Dimenstein (2016). It should be noted that even though social workers have training that focuses on the in-depth study of social policies or even specialization in the social area, this does not translate into critical and ethical action. Therefore, they are not exempt from acting in a manner contrary to that proposed in the PNAS, since welfare practices have been identified in both professional categories:

Social workers also use the discourse of the dysfunctional family. Still, paradoxically, the interdiscourse of the socio-family matrix and the discourse of the institutionalized family in Social Assistance Policy have also been identified (Costa & Alberto, 2017, p. 202).

As highlighted in the previous category, studies in this category also point to the predominance of education for clinical practice (Gomes & Dimenstein, 2016; Carollo & Albanese, 2020), as well as advocating the need to overcome this focus (Menz & Camargo, 2020; Carollo & Albanese, 2020). Rodrigues and Fioroni (2022) concluded in a study with graduates that, although internships cover SUS and SUAS, the focus is mainly on the clinical area, meaning that areas such as Social Assistance continue to be neglected. Added to these formative dimensions is the need to prepare to work with issues that cut across the SUAS, such as people with disabilities. Thus, in addition to concerns about social protection, it is important to highlight that professionals must be prepared to address a wide range of issues that

arise in their daily work at SUAS, providing tasks for both initial formation and continuing education (Luz & Gesser, 2023). Despite this gap, the study by Salvatori and Gomes (2021) identified that some changes brought about since the 2011 DNCs have had an impact on the incorporation of issues inherent to public policies, such as social inequality.

The irregular offering of courses and cross-cutting themes focused on public policy in psychology education results in a lack of theoretical and methodological input for working in the SUAS, favoring uncritical and apolitical practices (Luz *et al.*, 2020; Silva & Carvalhaes, 2016). We advocate education that is continuously in dialogue with practice, involving students, teachers, and professionals. It is essential that teachers also keep up to date with public policies (Torres & Ecker, 2016), so that education promotes new knowledge about the inclusion of Psychology in this field and deconstructs obsolete practices in the face of current social demands (Oliveira *et al.*, 2018). It is hoped that the link between education and intervention will encourage students and professionals to actively participate in educational processes (Hüning & Oliveira, 2022).

Along the same lines, Cordeiro and Curado (2017), Gomes and Dimenstein (2016), and Romagnoli (2012) argued that training should be promoted through a two-way movement, i.e., that the University should reach out to SUAS through internships, extension programs, and research, and that SUAS should also consider the University as a dimension for preparing students and workers. Gomes and Dimenstein (2016) reinforced the criticism that the University does not engage with SUAS and SUS. In addition, they emphasized that Psychology School Services (*Serviço Escola de Psicologia* [SEP]) prepare students for private practice, thus postulating that this educational space needs to reinvent itself so that psychologists have the critical and political tools to work in public policy and respond to contemporary demands.

Unlike other authors, Romagnoli (2012) proposed transdisciplinarity as a formative axis because it enables connections between different disciplines, knowledge, and practices, promoting a dialogue that encompasses academic knowledge as well as the arts, technology, and, significantly, popular knowledge. The practice of transdisciplinarity in the field of social assistance occurs by respecting the multidetermination of reality and the need for constant dialogue with other disciplines and specialties, such as public policies, aiming to qualify interventions and avoid analyses based on prejudices against users. A review of studies involving professionals, graduates, and teachers highlights gaps in Psychology education and the urgent need for curricular reform to align it with the principles of social policies, especially those of the PNAS. This demand is recognized by both those who have studied traditional subjects, such as Social Psychology, and those who have experienced innovative proposals, such as thematic internships (Litenski & Souza, 2017; Cordeiro & Curado, 2017). The findings align with PPC analyses, indicating a need to update, including mastery of SUAS legislation.

Therefore, our research highlights that SUAS workers and teachers who already focus on social policy issues in Psychology education recognize the gap in the skills

and abilities required for the development of social policy work. Thus, the articles analyzed show that there is a consensus regarding the need for change in Psychology curricula, with a view to enhancing educational dimensions that are more closely connected to the demands of social policies. Such changes have the task of breaking with a formation that has historically been alien to reality, as pointed out by Freitas (1998) and Miez and Silva (2022).

| Conclusions

The review showed that psychology education in Brazil faces challenges in integrating with public policies, especially in the SUAS. The articles analyzed indicate the need to reformulate the PPCs, expanding the capacity of curricula to support the practice of professionals within this system. It includes a greater emphasis on topics such as public policy, SUAS, social rights, inequality, disability, family, and territory. It is also important to strengthen internships and outreach activities focused on SUAS, with a view to providing more critical and comprehensive education that is aligned with expressions of inequality and social and political transformations.

This review did not include final course papers, dissertations, or theses, which is a limitation considering the scarcity of articles and the lack of a tradition of research on the subject. Future studies using multi-method or quantitative approaches covering all states are suggested to provide a national overview of psychology courses and enable comparative analyses. This approach would enable broader knowledge of the PPCs, promoting the updating of actions and supporting bodies such as CNE/MEC in the formulation/revision of the DCNs, considering regional and HEI-specificities.

It can be concluded that current education is insufficient for the theoretical and practical demands of Social Assistance and public policy, which makes it urgent to update PPCs with content on public policy, especially social assistance, as well as topics such as family, social and racial inequality, and social rights, with a view to training professionals who are better equipped to work in this field and in various social contexts. Furthermore, it is also important that psychology education takes into account the new and complex expressions of social demands generated by the changes in society and the world of work that have occurred in the 21st century. The use of digital technologies, greater cultural diversity in different regions caused by global migration movements, and the precarious nature of work—driven by growing political pressure to relax labor laws—are some of the dimensions that need to be considered in psychology education in order to establish an ongoing dialogue between academia and the context of professional practice.

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Resumo

Este estudo investiga publicações científicas sobre a formação em Psicologia para atuação no Sistema Único de Assistência Social (SUAS). A partir de uma revisão integrativa de 21 artigos publicados entre 2011 e 2024, os resultados foram organizados em duas categorias analíticas: 1) Formação em Psicologia segundo os Projetos Pedagógicos de Cursos (PPCs) e 2) Formação na perspectiva de profissionais, egressas/os e docentes. A análise evidenciou que há lacunas entre formação e prática, indicando a necessidade de maior aproximação da academia com a realidade do SUAS numa perspectiva crítica e interdisciplinar. Conclui-se que é necessária a reformulação dos Projetos Pedagógicos de Cursos (PPCs) para alinhar-se melhor às Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais (DCNs), incluindo conteúdos que articulem teoria e prática para formar psicólogas/os para atuar no contexto do SUAS.

Palavras-chave: Formação em Psicologia. Assistência Social. Projetos Pedagógicos dos Cursos de Psicologia.

Resumen

Este estudio investiga publicaciones científicas sobre la formación en Psicología para trabajar en el Sistema Único de Asistencia Social (SUAS). A partir de una revisión integradora de 21 artículos publicados entre 2011 y 2024, los resultados se organizaron en dos categorías analíticas: 1) Formación en Psicología según los Proyectos Pedagógicos de Cursos (PPC) y 2) Formación desde la perspectiva de profesionales, egresados y docentes. El análisis puso de manifiesto que existen lagunas entre la formación y la práctica, lo que indica la necesidad de una mayor aproximación de la academia a la realidad del SUAS desde una perspectiva crítica e interdisciplinaria. Se concluye que es necesario reformular los Proyectos Pedagógicos de los Cursos (PPC) para alinearlos mejor con las Directrices Curriculares Nacionales (DCN), incluyendo contenidos que articulen la teoría y la práctica para formar psicólogos que actúen en el contexto del SUAS.

Palabras clave: Formación en Psicología. Asistencia Social. Proyectos Pedagógicos de los Cursos de Psicología.

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