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The Brazilian School Feeding Program: social representations of teachers and educational coordinators

Giovanna Angela Leonel Oliveira ^a 

Karine Anusca Martins ^b 

Andrea Sugai ^c 

Estelamaris Tronco Monego ^d 

Abstract

Social representations were identified about school feeding by teachers and educational coordinators nationwide in schools assisted by the Brazilian School Feeding Program. For this qualitative research, 56 educational coordinators and 57 teachers were interviewed, who are involved in food and nutrition Education. The interviews were analyzed using collective subject discourse and interpreted by social representations. The comments were mostly unanimous in all regions of Brazil, and the coordinators presented similar remarks to the teachers. Although the Program incorporates the perspective of school meals as an educational tool, the interviewees reproduce the idea of welfare with food linked to the financial needs of students. It is noteworthy that they do not receive training and do not have a partnership with the nutritionist to include the subject of food in the classroom. In conclusion, this study found that there is a lack of knowledge of their roles as agents of the School Feeding Program.

Keywords: School Meals; Education by Agents; Brazil; Qualitative Research.

^a Universidade de Brasília, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Nutrição Humana, Brasília, DF, Brasil.

^b Universidade Federal de Goiás, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Nutrição e Saúde, Goiânia, GO, Brasil.

^c Universidade Federal de Goiás, Faculdade de Nutrição, Goiânia, GO, Brasil.

^d Universidade Federal de Goiás, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Nutrição e Saúde, Goiânia, GO, Brasil.

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1 Introduction

The Brazilian School Feeding Program (*Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar do Brasil – Pnae*) is Brazil's oldest and widest public food policy (PEIXINHO, 2013). In 2021, the Pnae served 38,532,956 million students enrolled in public school networks nationwide (INEP, 2022). From the perspective of food and nutritional security, this meal offered at school plays an important role in guaranteeing students' learning, growth, biopsychosocial development, and the formation of healthy habits (BRASIL, 2020).

The Program was created in 1955 to prevent hunger and meet schoolchildren's nutritional needs. Later, the Pnae incorporated the perspective of food and nutrition Education. Thus, the Pnae is characterized as a strategy for promoting human rights and healthy eating in the school environment (NOGUEIRA *et al.*, 2016; LIBERMANN; BERTOLINI, 2015). However, the Brazilian reality observed in public schools is still far from the current proposal of the Program's legal frameworks (GABRIEL; GOULART; CALVO, 2015).

The Pnae is managed by the National Education Development Fund (*Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento para a Educação – FNDE*), as part of the Ministry of Education, responsible for transferring public financial resources to the executing entities. States, municipalities, and federal schools responsible for providing school meals and complementing the public financial resources received by the FNDE. A head nutritionist has technical responsibility for the Program and is linked to the executing entity. In addition, the School Feeding Council (*Conselho de Alimentação Escolar – CAE*) is the supervisory board. The CAE is composed of a representative appointed by the executive power; two parents of students, two Education workers, and two members of organized civil society chosen in specific assemblies. The Program is conducted in schools (BRASIL, 2020).

The school community, especially teachers, coordinators, and principals, play an important role as promoters of food and nutrition Education (HÖKKÄ; ETELÄPELTO, 2016). Food and nutrition Education was included in 2018 as a mandatory cross-curricular topic in the Brazilian school curriculum (BRASIL, 2018).

However, food and nutrition Education still has low coverage in the school curriculum (ALMEIDA *et al.*, 2018). In addition, the inadequate qualification of educational professionals involved in school feeding is indicated as one of the operational limitations of the Pnae. Therefore, the present study aimed to

identify, through interviews, the social representations of teachers and educational coordinators about school feeding in schools nationwide assisted by Pnae, which conduct food and nutrition Education actions.

2 Methods

Qualitative research, which integrates the project “Food and nutrition Education actions in the National School Feeding Program,” was conducted by the Collaborating Center of Food and Nutrition of the School (CECANE, in Portuguese) of the Federal University of Goiás. The sampling procedure for selecting the cities visited and the ethical aspects followed are the same as reported by Almeida *et al.* (2018).

2.1 Study participants

For this study, 57 teachers and 56 educational professionals (42 were coordinators and, in their absence, 14 directors) were interviewed in person from elementary schools that conduct food and nutrition Education actions, distributed in all Brazilian regions.

2.2 Data collect

Data were collected by a team of interviewers composed of trained nutritionists. The collection instrument, a semi-structured script, was developed in a workshop with qualified professionals and later evaluated by two professors and technicians from the FNDE. In addition, a pilot study was conducted in two municipalities of Goiás, chosen for convenience and proximity, but not included in the study.

The visits were previously scheduled by telephone with the local managers of the Pnae in the 57 selected municipalities. On the day of the visit, in a face-to-face meeting with the local manager of the Pnae and the nutritionist in charge, an urban elementary school was chosen, which, according to the nutritionists’ reports, carried out food and nutrition Education. In this school, the educational coordinator (and in their absence the school director) and a teacher indicated by the coordinator were interviewed. Each interview lasted about 20 minutes.

2.3 Analysis of the interview

The interviews were recorded and transcribed in full. The discussions were analyzed by the Discourse of the Collective Subject technique (LEFÈVRE;

LEFÈVRE, 2005), using QualiQuantiSoft software. The process began with the identification of key expressions or literal passages that revealed the essence of the discussions. Next, the key expressions were named synthetically by central ideas. Afterward, the categories that had the same central idea were grouped. Finally, the discourse-synthesis was written in the first-person singular, composed of the key expressions of the same category. The central ideas may not correspond to the same number of subjects of the research, since the same individual can present more than one idea in an interview (LEFÈVRE; LEFÈVRE, 2006).

After the conception of the Collective Subject Discourses, the classification was done according to Orlandi's typology (ORLANDI, 1994). This analysis categorized the discourses as authoritarian (imposition of a single sense, an order), controversial (arguments typical of a critical society), and ludic (tended toward the multiplicity of meanings) (MINAYO, 2014; ORLANDI, 1994).

Next, a parallel was made between the historical and social dimensions of the Pnae in the light of Moscovici's Social Representations. Social representations refer to the thoughts, actions, and feelings that express reality, explaining it, justifying it, or questioning it (MINAYO, 2014; MOSCOVICI, 2015).

3 Results and discussion

The study identified that, in general, the interviewees had little knowledge about food as an educational strategy. The obstacles to the effective participation of these professionals in the promotion of healthy eating in the school environment are the lack of local management guidelines and the lack of articulation with the head nutritionist of the Pnae. Studies have demonstrated that teachers help promote children's healthy eating (AYDIN *et al.*, 2021; HASAN *et al.*, 2021; RATHI; RIDDELL; WORSLEY, 2018; WEYBRIGHT *et al.*, 2018). This is the first study to understand the opinion and involvement of educational professionals, through their own discourse about food and nutrition Education in schools.

The present study found that the coordinators presented categories of central ideas similar to those of teachers. The educational coordinator is a teacher who takes a management position for the educational processes (PLACCO; SOUZA; ALMEIDA, 2012). The educational coordinators are expected to have an extensive understanding of food, in addition to the classroom, given their role in the school. A study that analyzed the perception of healthy eating promotion through a focus group with 22 agents from the school community, including teachers and educational coordinators, also demonstrated that perceptions among these actors were similar (CAMOZZI *et al.*, 2015).

3.1 What they know about school feeding

The authoritarian discourse was listed only in the coordinator’s statements, reporting the school feeding with a simplistic idea, like “food supply, snack, or menu.” The majority of the interviewees made statements that characterized the school feeding. They represent it as “healthy, quality, adequate, safe, varied, nutritious, balanced, planned by a nutritionist, and executed by food handlers;” and/or as a diet to “meet the physiological needs of the students” in a way “complementary to that of the home” with the objective of “contributing to the performance, learning, and development of the school.” There were a few controversial statements, which made the interface between school feeding from “family farming,” the realization of “Food and Nutrition Education” and its recognition as a “Legislatively based Program” (Table 1).

Table 1 - Central ideas of the coordinators and teachers about “what they know about school feeding,” according to the types of discourses. Brazil, 2018

Central ideas		Classification		
Category	Description	n	%	Orlandi
Educational Coordinators				
A	Healthy, quality food	22	23	Ludic
B	School feeding/menu/food	19	20	Authoritarian
C	Supplementation of household food	15	16	Ludic
D	Important for performance, learning, and development	12	13	Ludic
E	Food and Nutrition Education	11	12	Controversial
F	Government program and student’s rights	7	8	Controversial
G	Meets the needs of students	6	6	Authoritarian
H	Acquisition of food from family farming	2	2	Controversial
Total		94	100	
Teachers				
A	Healthy, balanced, safe, varied, and/or nutritious food	25	28	Ludic
B	Menu prepared by the nutritionist	17	19	Ludic
C	Need to supplement/replace household food	13	14	Ludic
D	A constantly evolving government-funded program	13	14	Ludic
E	Food and Nutrition Education	12	13	Controversial
				Continue

Continuation

Central ideas		Classification		
Category	Description	n	%	Orlandi
F	Important for development, learning, and school achievement	9	10	Ludic
G	Partially acquired from local suppliers	2	2	Controversial
Total		91	100	

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2018

In analyzing the agents' understanding of what school meals are, discourses are anchored in the Program's legislation in different historical and political contexts. The idea of "partially satisfying the nutritional needs of pupils" (category G of the coordinators) and school feeding as "supplementation of household nutrition" (category C of the coordinators and teachers) are anchored in the Program's 1955 legislation (BRASIL, 1955) (Table 1). This view may be linked to the experience of these agents as reality indicates that the food offered for free by the government can be the only daily meal of schoolchildren and is the main reason to guarantee the student's attendance in classes (LEME; PHILIPPI; TOASSA, 2013). This conception of the social need for school feeding was also observed in a study with 26 educational coordinators and directors of 13 public schools in São Paulo in 2013 (CERVATO-MANCUSO *et al.*, 2013). This shows that food policy is conceptually immersed in the historical roots of social inequalities and that this perception may interfere with its universalization and objectives (MARTÍNEZ; PINHO, 2016).

The central ideas mentioned most by the coordinators and teachers connected feeding with the biomedical aspect of health. In these discourses, the agents mentioned that school feeding includes the use of "varied, safe foods that respect healthy food culture, traditions, and eating habits" (BRASIL, 2020) (category A of the coordinators and teachers); respecting "the nutritional references" (BRASIL, 2020) (category A of the teachers). In addition, these statements are anchored in the current guidelines of the Program's legislation. The agents report the objective of school feeding, which is to contribute to the "growth and development of students and to improving school performance" (BRASIL, 2020) (category D of the coordinators and F of the teachers) and that the school feeding menu should be prepared by the "nutritionist" (BRASIL, 2010) (category B of the teachers) (Table 1).

The most reflexive, critical, and controversial discourses, which were a minority, are very close to the social sciences, law, and political dimensions, structuring axes in the Pnae theory according to the current legal framework (BRASIL, 2020).

Since 2006, this includes the actions of “Food and Nutrition Education in the teaching and learning process”(BRASIL, 2006a, 2009, 2013) (category E of the coordinators and E of the teachers) as a priority axis for the promotion of healthy eating in schools (Table 1). This mandate was reinforced in 2009 with the legal framework in force for the Pnae (BRASIL, 2020). The legal framework included strengthening of socio-cultural dimensions, symbolic, affective, and sensorial values of feeding, food, and eating, as well as the valorization of the different expressions of identity and food culture, and the strength and breadth of regional eating habits in an attempt to ensure Food and Nutrition Security (AMPARO-SANTOS, 2013).

In addition, the 2009 legal framework required that at least 30% of the financial resources transferred to the local authority by the Ministry of Education be “acquired from family farming, from food produced locally” (BRASIL, 2020) (category H of the coordinators and G of the teachers) (Table 1). It is noteworthy that only the agents in the Northern and Central-Western regions of Brazil proposed this idea. These data show a divergence from a literature review, in which the Southern region had a higher percentage of food purchases from family agriculture for school feeding (71.3%) and the Central-Western region the lowest percentage (35.5%). The authors related this to the fact that the Central-Western region is characterized by industrial farming and the Southern region has a larger organization of family farmers (SARAIVA *et al.*, 2013).

Few interviewees critically reflection that school feeding is not just an offer, but a political dimension of “the right to school feeding” (BRASIL, 2020) (category F of the coordinators) (Table 1). These interviewees had a more mature and expanded discourse about school feeding. The right to food arises from popular participation and is recognized by the Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security in 2006, and in 2009, it became one of the principles of the Pnae (BRASIL, 2006b, 2009). Then in 2010, food was included as a human right in the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, by amendment number 64 (BRASIL, 2010b). This incorporation of the human right to adequate and healthy food in the Pnae signal a process of paradigm shift and less perception as a welfare policy but rather as a benefit of human rights and citizenship (BARBOSA *et al.*, 2013; SIQUEIRA *et al.*, 2014).

3.2 The role of school feeding in the educational process

Preference was given to ludic discourses, which characterized school feeding as “healthy, balanced,” which “satisfies the needs of the students, complementing the diet of the home,” to contribute to the “performance and learning” at school. The interviewees made less controversial discourse relating “Food and Nutrition Education” as an articulator of school feeding in the educational process (Table 2).

Table 2 - Central ideas of educational agents on “the role of school feeding in the educational process,” according to types of discourses. Brazil, 2018

Central ideas		Classification		
Category	Description	n	%	Orlandi
Educational Coordinators				
A	Contributes to learning, development, and performance in school	31	42	Ludic
B	Supply necessities, complementing the home diet	25	33	Ludic
C	Promotes actions of Food and Nutrition Education	19	25	Controversial
Total		75	100	
Teachers				
A	Contributes to performance, learning, and performance in school	39	44	Ludic
B	Supplies necessities, complementing the home diet	28	32	Ludic
C	Promotes Food and Nutrition Education	19	22	Controversial
D	Provides healthy and balanced nutrition	2	2	Ludic
Total		88	100	

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2018

About the role of school feeding in the educational process, teachers and educational coordinators presented similar central ideas on the “what they know about school feeding” question. Most of the interviewees considered feeding also as an action to be passed through the educational process. In less controversial discourses, educational agents also took on the role of “educator,” “conscientious,” “encouraging,” and accept the responsibility of “teaching and practicing healthy eating habits” referring to “Food and Nutrition Education practices” (category C of the coordinators and teachers) (Table 2). Similar results were found in a study in a city in Paraná State, with 24 collaborators (ten students, nine parents, and five teachers), which investigated the role of the school from the view of these collaborators, and concluded that teachers based their practices on “teaching,” “transmitting,” or “informing” (SILVA, 2012). With this, food has also been recognized as a tool to promote healthy eating habits, maintain health, and achieve learning.

3.3 The interface of central and local management in the educational process

Most of the educational coordinators provided ludic discussions that the main orientations received by the management of the Program centered on the “incentive for actions about Food and Nutritional Education directly to the coordinators or the students” (27%). However, they reported through ludic discourse that management guides other members of the school community on “menu recommendations” (13%) or “good food handling instructions” (29%), both through the nutritionist or, to a lesser extent, guidelines directly to the students (3%) in specific activities. However, almost half of the educational coordinators mentioned an authoritarian discourse of “not receiving any guidance” from management on the application of food as an educational component (22%). The less spoken statements were controversial in that, although they received no guidance, they presented “organizing content on their own” (6%) (Table 3).

Most of the teachers presented the authoritarian discourse of “not receiving directions” from the Department of Education (35%). When this guidance was carried out, the channel was the Education Department, the nutritionist, or school feeding counselors. The teachers referred, through ludic statements, to being guided by the Secretary of Education on the “promotion of healthy eating” (17%), as well as “receiving teaching materials” (6%). They also reported that the school received “specific management guidelines for food handlers” (6%) about good handling practices; that the “nutritionist guides the teachers through a project” (25%), occasional activities and actions, and “sends the menus” (25%); and the School Feeding Council provided a more “administering” action than orientation (3%) (Table 3).

Table 3 - Central ideas of the educational agents on “the guidance received from the Department of Education,” according to the types of discourse. Brazil, 2018

Central ideas		Classification		
Category	Description	n	%	Orlandi
Educational Coordinators				
A	Good practices for the preparing and handling of food for food handlers	20	29	Ludic
B	Guidelines that encourage Food and Nutrition Education	19	27	Ludic
C	Not receiving guidance	15	22	Authoritarian

Continue

Continuation

		Central ideas		Classification
Category	Description	n	%	Orlandi
D	Guidance on the menu for food handlers	9	13	Ludic
E	No guidance, but obtain information themselves or the school	4	6	Controversial
F	Orientation directly to students	2	3	Ludic
Total		69	100	
Teachers				
A	Not receiving guidance	23	35	Authoritarian
B	Nutritionist guidance through menu, projects, and lectures	16	25	Ludic
C	Guidance for Teachers to Encourage Healthy Eating	11	17	Ludic
D	Received the curriculum from the Secretary of Education	5	8	Ludic
E	Guidelines for food handlers	4	6	Ludic
F	Received didactic material from the Secretary of Education	4	6	Ludic
G	Supervision by Councils	2	3	Ludic
Total		65	100	

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2018

The fact that they “did not receive guidance from management,” as reported by teachers and educational coordinators in authoritarian discourses (category C for the coordinators and A for the teachers) (Table 3) is a reality found in other Brazilian studies. A study with the directors of two state schools in the state of Paraná in southern Brazil identified training challenges for the agents in the Pnae implementation and management process. In the results, one of the directors mentioned that the school had received training, but it did not cover every school community, and another manager reported having had guidance only through information transfer meetings from Pnae management (LIMA; OLIVEIRA; GUARDACHESKI, 2016). An evaluation of the municipal management of the Pnae, in the capitals of the Southern region of Brazil, verified that only one of the three capitals carried out training on Food and Nutrition Education with part of the teachers (GABRIEL; GOULART; CALVO, 2015). A study on the evaluation of Pnae management in the ten municipalities of Santa Catarina, in Southern Brazil, evidenced poor performance in monitoring and pedagogical performance since nine cases

reported no educational projects that extensively involved schoolchildren, and only two trained teachers in Food and Nutrition Education (GABRIEL *et al.*, 2014). The results of these studies corroborate the findings of the present study. In an expanded view of the role of agents in the Pnae, a study with 118 educational coordinators from 79 municipalities in the northeastern Brazilian states of Bahia and Sergipe pointed out that, although they seemed to be informed about the importance of food and nutrition, they reported a lack of continuing Education and theoretical-methodological constructions that support the actions of Food and Nutrition Education (SANTOS *et al.*, 2012). Thus, the Education Departments need to review their actions and improve the implementation of the Program, especially regarding the inclusion of Food and Nutrition Education in the school context.

However, the discourse of the educational coordinators less frequently demonstrated that they received “no guidance, but obtain information themselves or do not receive guidance on their account” (category E of the coordinators) (Table 3). A documentary analysis on the intersection of Food and Nutrition Security with the national curricular parameters evidenced that each state includes topics related to food and nutrition in the didactic material. However, it is somewhat up to the educators to select the content, the appropriate strategy, and its constant updating. This is not available to all professionals and, therefore, still depends on the initiative of each teacher (FIORE *et al.*, 2012).

3.4 The partnership between the nutritionist and the school

The educational coordinators had a greater variety of joint actions with nutritionists than the teachers did. These coordinators reported in ludic discourses that “nutrition and food Education actions” (23%) occurred more often when a partnership with the nutritionist occurred, followed by the “sending of menus” (6%), “good food handling practices” (5%), and “questionnaires and food week” (5%). Without joint actions, the justifications were “lack of communication” (13%), “interest” (8%), “time” (5%), “planning” (5%), and “human resources” (3%). On the other hand, the teachers reported that they only perform “Food and Nutrition Education actions” with the nutritionist (39%), and when they do not do it, the reasons in most cases with authoritarian discourses are “lack of communication” (17%), “planning” (10%), “time” (7%), or even “human resources” (7%) (Table 4).

Table 4 - Central ideas of the educational agents on “the partnership with the nutritionist in school feeding,” according to types of discourses. Brazil, 2018

Central ideas	n	%	Classification
			Orlandi
Educational Coordinators			
Food and Nutrition Education Actions	23	38	Ludic
Good practice menu/actions	4	6	Ludic
Actions with the food handlers/school feeding coordinator	3	5	Ludic
A food questionnaire	3	5	Ludic
Specific actions during feeding week	3	5	Ludic
No, for lack of communication	8	13	Ludic
No, because they do not give importance to the issue	5	8	Ludic
No, due to lack of time	3	5	Authoritarian
No, because they think it is not the coordinator’s role	3	5	Ludic
No, due to a lack of planning	3	5	Ludic
No, for lack of human resources	2	3	Controversial
No, they do not know what to say	1	2	Authoritarian
Total	61	100	
Teachers			
Food and Nutrition Education Actions	23	39	Ludic
Do not perform and cannot explain why	12	20	Authoritarian
Do not perform due to lack of communication	10	17	Ludic
Do not perform due to lack of planning	6	10	Authoritarian
No, due to lack of time	4	7	Authoritarian
No, because of the lack of a professional	4	7	Ludic
Total	59	100	

Source: Compiled by the authors, 2018

The discourses of the educational actors demonstrated the approach of the nutritionist as a collaborative agent in the implementation of the feeding actions in the school. The educational coordinators presented more diversified central ideas than the teachers, probably because they have a management position at the school and more communication with the nutritionist. The coordinators’ statements elucidated the role of the nutritionist as an inspector, to be present at the school “looking at the food,” to verify its “quality.” These ideas are part

of the first legislations of the Pnae, in 1994, in which the nutritionist had only the role of prescribing menus for school feeding (BRASIL, 1994), and later in 2000, the nutritionist became an adviser for the purchase of food (BRASIL, 2000). Then in 2006, the nutritionist became the technical head of the Pnae (BRASIL, 2006c). In 2009, a more comprehensive performance was assigned, making the nutritionist responsible for coordinating the actions of Food and Nutrition Education (BRASIL, 2009, 2013). The quality of school feeding is the responsibility of the nutritionist in charge; however, as the policy has been consolidated, their functions have been expanding.

Thus, the most widely held ideas of both agents are in the current legislation (BRASIL, 2020) of partnerships to carry out “Food and Nutrition Education actions” (category A coordinators and teachers) (Table 4). In the results of the quantitative stage of the research, when investigating the accomplishment of Food and Nutrition Education actions, it was observed that the nutritionist acts predominantly in the coordination and execution of the actions. However, the teacher, the educational coordinator, the local manager of the Pnae or the director of the schools were also mentioned. The development of Food and Nutrition Education requires reciprocal collaboration among coordinating teachers, principals, and nutritionists (SILVA *et al.*, 2017).

Nevertheless, when there is no joint action with the nutritionist, the justifications of teachers and educational coordinators were similar. A study conducted in the city of São Paulo, in which ten workshops were held with nutritionists, directors, educational coordinators, and teachers, observed that the relationship between professionals was also distant. When they developed a few interdisciplinary activities, the main difficulties highlighted by the authors were the lack of communication and the lack of knowledge of the community about the participation of the nutritionist in the school environment. When the nutritionists were interviewed, they recognized the importance of their role in the school but justified a greater demand of time in the management of the Program (JUZWIAK; CASTRO; BATISTA, 2013). This corroborates the findings of the present study, in which most interviewees highlighted the “lack of communication” between Education professionals and the nutritionist. In a study carried out in Bahia and Sergipe, 118 educational coordinators reported difficulty in communicating between educational coordinators and nutritionists, claiming work overload and lack of time for joint planning of activities (SANTOS *et al.*, 2012).

Note that the justification of the “lack of professionals” for not doing joint actions with the nutritionist (Table 4) was present only in the dialogues of the agents in

the Northern and Northeastern regions. This is corroborated by the literature, in which the Northern region had the lowest percentage of municipalities covered by registered nutritionists (59.0%), and the Southern region had the highest number (85.0%) (CHAVES *et al.*, 2013). In addition, another study found that the Southeastern region, especially the State of São Paulo, included the highest concentrations of nutritionists (53.7% and 28.5%), compared to other Brazilian regions (VASCONCELOS; CALADO, 2011). Thus, a bottleneck exists in the interlocution between the agents, and the activity of planning educational actions about food and nutrition should be more the responsibility of the nutritionist and from a biomedical perspective (SANTOS *et al.*, 2012).

Food was strongly associated with the concept of health built through the biomedical model and an initial Education of these agents to act in school feeding. To do this, it is necessary to train the educational agents along with other PNAE agents, as proposed in the study of the Collaborating Center on School Food and Nutrition of the Federal University of Bahia, which indicated the relevance of increasing the training of the students and guiding them toward healthy eating practices (SANTOS *et al.*, 2012).

4 Conclusion

Educational coordinators and teachers understand school feeding as an educational tool; however, they consider this subject a secondary responsibility of their role in the school. Thus, it is perceived as a peripheral tool in public Education. This translates into vertical management and insufficient political coverage for the awareness of educational agents about their importance in the Program.

Although the issue of hunger and the fight against poverty has been part of Brazil's political agenda in the last decade, advances in the implementation of Pnae legislation have not been sufficient to operationalize the Program to create specific actions available for this issue and raise more awareness of these educational actors. As a consequence, there is little or no support for articulating effective proposals regarding Food and Nutrition Education (Figure 1a).

Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar: representações sociais de professores e coordenadores pedagógicos

Resumo

Objetivou-se identificar as representações sociais sobre alimentação escolar por professores e coordenadores pedagógicos de escolas em todo o país atendidas pelo Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar. Pesquisa qualitativa, em que foram entrevistados 56 coordenadores pedagógicos e 57 professores, entre aqueles que executavam o programa de Educação alimentar e nutricional. As entrevistas foram analisadas pelo discurso do sujeito coletivo e interpretadas pelas representações sociais. Verificou-se que os discursos em todas as regiões do Brasil foram unânimes e os coordenadores apresentaram discursos semelhantes aos dos professores. Embora o Programa incorpore a perspectiva da alimentação escolar como instrumento pedagógico, os entrevistados reproduzem a ideia assistencialista da alimentação vinculada à carência financeira de alunos. Ressalta-se que eles não recebem treinamento e não há parceria com nutricionista para incluir o tema alimentação em sala de aula. Conclui-se que, há um desconhecimento de seus papéis como agentes do Programa de Alimentação Escolar.

Palavras-chave: Alimentação Escolar. Educação. Pesquisa Qualitativa.

El Programa Brasileño de Alimentación Escolar: representaciones sociales de docentes y coordinadores educativos

Resumen

Se identificaron representaciones sociales sobre alimentación escolar por parte de docentes y coordinadores educativos a nivel nacional en escuelas asistidas por el Programa Brasileño de Alimentación Escolar. Para esta investigación cualitativa se entrevistó a 56 coordinadores educativos y 57 docentes, quienes se encuentran involucrados en la Educación alimentaria y nutricional. Las entrevistas fueron analizadas utilizando el discurso colectivo del sujeto e interpretadas por representaciones sociales. Los comentarios fueron en su mayoría unánimes en todas las regiones de Brasil y los coordinadores presentaron comentarios similares a los profesores. Si bien el Programa incorpora la perspectiva de la alimentación escolar como herramienta educativa, los entrevistados reproducen la idea de bienestar con alimentación ligada a las necesidades económicas de los estudiantes. Llama la atención que no reciben capacitación y no tienen alianza con la nutricionista para incluir el tema de alimentación en el aula. En conclusión, este estudio encontró que existe un desconocimiento de sus roles como agentes del Programa de Alimentación Escolar.

Palabras clave: Alimentación Escolar. Educación. Brasil. Investigación Cualitativa.

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Information about authors

Giovanna Angela Leonel Oliveira: Masters in Nutrition and Health at the Universidade Federal de Goiás. Doctoral candidate in the postgraduate program in Human Nutrition at the Universidade de Brasília. Contact: giovannaangela@gmail.com

Karine Anusca Martins: Doctorate in Health Science at the Universidade Federal de Goiás. Professor in the Department of Nutrition and postgraduate programs in Nutrition and Health and Health Education at the same university. Contact: karine_anusca@ufg.br

Andrea Sugai Mortoza: Doctorate in Social Policy at the Universidade de Brasília. Professor in the Department of Nutrition at the Universidade Federal de Goiás. Contact: andreasugai@gmail.com

Estelamaris Tronco Monego: Doctorate in Health Science at the Universidade Federal de Goiás. Professor titular emeritus at the Department of Nutrition and postgraduate programs in Nutrition and Health at the same university. Contact: estelamaris.monego@gmail.com

Contribution of the authors: Giovanna Angela Leonel Oliveira - Conception and elaboration of the article, data analysis, and writing of the text. Karine Anusca Martins - Conception of the article, active participation in data analysis, and revision of the final writing. Andrea Sugai Mortoza - Active participation in data analysis and revision of final writing. Estelamaris Tronco Monego - Project coordinator, active participation in data analysis and review of final writing.

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