

What are the *cores of knowledge* that shape the field of food and nutrition in brazil?

This question implies that there are many dimensions to the process of building answers. In other words, and considering Bourdieu as theoretical reference, each answer will depend on the agent acting on the field, on the interests involved, on financial, scientific, and symbolic capital that is aggregated or planned, on the existing rules, on possible changes that can be anticipated in the near or distant future, on the *habitus* that structure and are structured inside ... Ultimately, on the dynamics and complexity that one can try to understand in social relations, particularly relations of power built within and in construction.

In the continuously changing scenario of science and life, partial and provisional answers set the tone of the work, while corresponding to possible contribution. In this editorial, we intend to bring some contribution from the set of articles published in our journal *DEMETRA: Food, Nutrition & Health*.

In accordance with the principles of professional practice, the National Council of Nutritionists published a survey conducted in 2005, which highlights the existence of six “areas of expertise” in the labor market. Results that regard the sample of this study are as follows:

Table 1. Area of expertise of nutritionists, Brazil, 2005

Area of expertise	Number	Ratio
1. Clinical Nutrition	1,236	41.7
2. Collective Eating	963	32.2
3. Collective Health	262	8.8
4. Teaching and Learning	281	9.4
5. Sports Nutrition	122	4.1
6. Food Industry	110	3.7
Total	2,974	100.0

Source: National Council of Nutritionists. *Professional Insertion of Nutritionists in Brazil*. Brasília: National Council of Nutritionists, 2006. Accessed on April 24th 2013. Available on <http://www.cfn.org.br/eficiente/repositorio/Cartilhas/59.pdf>.

Another similar work has been published in 2011, based on surveys related to the lines of research of graduate programs included in the assessment area of Nutrition in CAPES. On occasion, seven cores of knowledge were identified; they are summarized below.

Table 2. Cores of knowledge that constitute the scientific field of Food and Nutrition and their inclusion within the *stricto sensu* graduate programs included in the assessment area of Medicine II in Capes in 2009, Brazil

Cores of knowledge	Number*	Ratio
1. <i>Food and Nutrition in Collective Health</i>	29	42.0
1.1. Epidemiology and Nutrition (Epidemiological studies on nutrition and nutritional status assessment)	14	20.3
1.2. Food and Nutrition Policies (Studies on policy, planning, and program management of food and nutrition)	9	13.0
1.3. Humanities and Social Sciences in Food and Nutrition (Studies about the culture, economics, education, communication, epistemology, law, sociology, philosophy on food and nutrition)	6	8.7
2. <i>Basic and Clinical Nutrition</i>	24	34.8
2.1. Basic Nutrition (Biochemical, physiological, and genetic studies on nutrition in laboratory animals and human)	14	20.3
2.2. Clinical Nutrition (Clinical studies on the nutrition of humans)	10	14.5
3. <i>Nutrition and Food</i> (Studies on the chemical composition, sanitary quality, and technology of food)	11	15.9
4. <i>Food and Nutrition on Meal Production</i> (Studies on the production and consumption of meals in public and commercial food and nutrition facilities)	5	7.2
Total	69	100.00

Source: KAC, Gilberto; PROENCA, Rossana Pacheco da Costa and PRADO, Shirley Donizete. The creation of the field of "nutrition" in Capes. *Rev. Nutr.* 2011, v. 24, n. 6, p. 905-916.

* There are duplicate records in the above because the same line of research sometimes includes more than one core of knowledge.

An important set of thoughts on the field of Food and Nutrition has been developing since mid twentieth century, especially by authors such as Lucia Ypiranga, Eronides Lima, Maria Lucia Bosi, Francisco de Assis Guedes Vasconcelos, Maria do Carmo Freitas and Ligia Amparo Santos, who are just some of the most cited authors. On the other hand, even if there is some record regarding the areas of expertise on the professional practice of nutritionists or on cores of knowledge that can be identified in research lines of graduate programs, there is practically no other information from descriptive scientific research on groups registered in CNPq, research projects that have been completed or are in progress, dissertations or theses, publications in books or in articles of journals, events such as conferences or symposia, which may encourage more analyzes on the internal composition of the field of Food and Nutrition in Brazil. Notice that the field of collective health has been fruitful in relation to this issue, with many articles and books published and highly cited in the Brazilian literature.

Given that scenario of lack of empirical data, we seek to bring some contribution to the debate, considering the articles published in our journal *DEMETERA*. We conducted a survey on the published topics based on their classification in the cores of knowledge for graduate program lines of research in Brazil.

Table 3. Published topics in DEMETRA: *Food, Nutrition & Health* distributed according to cores of knowledge that constitute the scientific field of Food and Nutrition 2006-2012

Cores of knowledge	Number*	Ratio
1. Food and Nutrition in Collective Health	34	46.6
1.1. Epidemiology and Nutrition (Epidemiological studies on nutrition and nutritional status assessment)	10	13.7
1.2. Food and Nutrition Policies (Studies on policy, planning, and program management of food and nutrition)	9	12.3
1.3. Humanities and Social Sciences in Food and Nutrition (Studies about the culture, economics, education, communication, epistemology, law, sociology, philosophy on food and nutrition)	15	20.5
2. Basic and Clinical Nutrition	20	27.4
2.1. Basic Nutrition (Biochemical, physiological, and genetic studies on nutrition in laboratory animals and human)	13	17.8
2.2. Clinical Nutrition (Clinical studies on the nutrition of humans)	7	9.6
3. Nutrition and Food (Studies on the chemical composition, sanitary quality, and technology of food)	5	6.8
4. Food and Nutrition Meal Production (Studies on the production and consumption of meals in public and commercial food and nutrition facilities)	14	19.2
Total	73	100.0

* There are duplicate records in the above because the same article may sometimes be included in more than one core of knowledge.

First, let's call attention to the fact that the result of the classification of articles published in our journal presents a quite distinct profile from that identified for the professional practice of nutritionists, as tables 1 and 2, when compared, suggest. The labor market follows different rules than those that are characteristically established in academic schemes, and even more when it comes to scientific research.

Predominant employing sites for nutritionists are those with collective eating (or food and nutrition meal production) and clinical nutrition. Such job placement, when in the private sector, implies heavy loads of work time, which practically prevents the search for training in teaching and research.

Nevertheless, we found significant production of articles in our journal coming from the core of knowledge that we have identified here as Food and Nutrition Meal Production. From our perspective, they are expertise articles that may represent efforts to find new positions in the field, perhaps by some form of integration into the academic life □ since it is possibly considered as prestigious, well paid, and less demanding. Women trying to accumulate financial, and symbolic capital, even at the cost of much extra effort? One possibility to be verified.

As scientific journals and graduate programs make up the same territory in the training of researchers and in the building of knowledge, finding similar profiles in them, as shown in tables 2 and 3, when compared, suggests that *DEMETRA* is proving to be relevant and active in the world of science, and that it may be a representative sample of what occurs within them. Thus, we may consider that the similarity of results from the two surveys reinforces the view that the inner constitution of the field of Food and Nutrition in Brazil may be described in a reasonably appropriate manner. However, there is an urgent need for further studies, including studies that can be more specific to each of these cores of knowledge.

Let's now turn to another classification that directly affects power disputes, social relations, and the distribution of multiple capital across the entire field of Food and Nutrition. For decades, the internal order of this field has been described and institutionalized through the Table of Fields of Knowledge in CNPq, as follows:

Chart 1. Field of Nutrition and its areas in the Table of Fields of Knowledge

Field and areas codes	Field and area
4.05.00.00-4	Nutrition
4.05.01.00-0	Biochemistry of Nutrition
4.05.02.00-7	Dietetics
4.05.03.00-3	Nutritional Analysis of Population
4.05.04.00-0	Physiological Development and Malnutrition

Source: National Council of Technological and Scientific Development Table of Fields of Knowledge Accessed on March 3, 2012. Available on <http://www.cnpq.br/areas/tabconhecimento/index.htm>

Such field and area classification guide the actions related to the financing and distribution structure of resources (grants for research and scholarships, placements for students and teachers in higher education and in research institutions, for instance) in virtually all institutions operating in the training of professionals and researchers. Which is the case of CNPq, CAPES, FINEP, FAPs, and of universities, to name those that make part of the routine of any researcher, teacher, or student in Brazil.

It is important to register here the great difference between this field and area classification and that which describes the cores of knowledge, and which has served as basis for the construction of tables 2 and 3. By unfolding, we may present the criticism to this classification in “fields of knowledge”, since it does not maintain correspondence with the inner constitution of the field of Food and Nutrition.

The implications of this gap between the empirical and the institutionalized codes are evident and problematic: if the funding requests forwarded to agencies that support research must follow the current classification, how should one know which core of knowledge matches each application for funding, considering the obvious lag between what appears in the Table of Fields of Knowledge and what is described in the lines of research of graduate programs or articles published in our journal?

It is at least possible to consider that the chances that an application for aid or scholarship will be successful are reduced for those who fall into cores of knowledge that are not included on the Table of Fields of Knowledge. After all, how should one forward proposals for peer review? How to build proportionality in the distribution of resources considering that such diversity is still so little known? How to proportionally and properly distribute the scientific capital in dispute, if there is no representation of each of the cores of knowledge?

We believe there is an urgent need to acknowledge that the rules of this dispute are outdated and that the current dynamics of the field include new agents into action, who require new institutional orders. The field of Food and Nutrition need changes to be managed by the agencies, and one of these changes concerns the update of the Table of Fields of Knowledge.

And this is how *DEMETRA* contributes to this matter.

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