



REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING PSYCHOLOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN BRAZIL¹

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Abstract

Psychological science, recognized as an independent field, has evolved significantly since the 19th century, consolidating through departments and laboratories within universities. In Brazil, practical psychology began to establish itself in the 1940s and was officially recognized in 1962. The National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) for undergraduate Psychology programs have been evolving since 2001, culminating in new regulations in 2023, which increasingly demand more qualified educators in the field. This article discusses teacher training in Psychology within Higher Education in Brazil, addressing changes in the DCNs, the growing demand for Psychology courses, as reflected in statistical analyses by MEC/INEP and CFP, as well as the impact of these changes on the training of Psychology educators. Continuous training for Psychology professors in Higher Education is highlighted as essential to ensure quality education and meet labor market demands. The methodology is characterized as an exploratory bibliographic study aimed at the theoretical and critical analysis of scientific publications on teacher training in Psychology within Higher Education. The objective is to understand the current scenario of psychologists working as professors in Higher Education courses and to reflect on how teacher training in Psychology can contribute to the professional development of these educators in their teaching practice.

Keywords: National Curriculum Guidelines; Higher Education; Continuing Education; Teacher Training; Psychology.

How to cite

SANTOS, Ezevaldo Aquino; MAZZAFERA, Bernadete Lema; SANTOS, Cassio. Reflections on teaching Psychology in Higher Education in Brazil. *Educação em Análise*, Londrina, v. 10, p. 1-20, 2025. DOI: 10.5433/1984-7939.2025.v10.53231.



¹ Translation performed with the assistance of AI-GEMINI

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REFLEXÕES ACERCA DA DOCÊNCIA EM PSICOLOGIA NO ENSINO SUPERIOR NO BRASIL

Resumo: A ciência psicológica, reconhecida como um campo independente, evoluiu significativamente desde o século XIX, consolidando-se através de departamentos e laboratórios nas universidades. No Brasil, a Psicologia prática começou a se firmar na década de 1940 e foi oficializada em 1962. As Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais (DCN) para a graduação em Psicologia têm evoluído desde 2001, culminando em novas regulamentações em 2023 que exigem cada vez mais, demandas por professores da área. Este artigo tece reflexões sobre a docência em Psicologia no Ensino Superior no Brasil, abordando as mudanças nas DCNs, a crescente demanda por cursos de Psicologia, presentes nas análises estatísticas do Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais do Ministério da Educação (INEP/ MEC) e do Conselho Federal de Psicologia (CFP), bem como, o impacto dessas mudanças na formação de professores psicólogos. A formação continuada dos professores psicólogos no Ensino Superior é destacada como essencial para garantir uma educação de qualidade e atender às exigências do mercado de trabalho. A metodologia caracteriza-se como um estudo bibliográfico de caráter exploratório, direcionado à análise teórica e crítica de produções científicas publicadas sobre a formação docente em Psicologia no Ensino Superior. O objetivo é compreender o cenário atual dos psicólogos que atuam como professores nos cursos do ensino superior, e refletir como a formação de professores de Psicologia no Ensino Superior pode ser uma fonte de contribuição para o desenvolvimento destes profissionais no exercício da docência.

Palavras-chave: National Curriculum Guidelines; Higher Education; Continuing Education; Teacher Training; Psychology.

REFLEXIONES SOBRE LA DOCENCIA EN PSICOLOGÍA EN LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN BRASIL

Resumen: La ciencia psicológica, reconocida como un campo independiente, ha evolucionado significativamente desde el siglo XIX, consolidándose a través de departamentos y laboratorios en las universidades. En Brasil, la Psicología práctica comenzó a consolidarse en la década de 1940 y fue oficializada en 1962. Las Directrices Curriculares Nacionales (DCN) para la carrera de Psicología han venido evolucionando desde 2001, culminando en nuevas regulaciones en 2023 que exigen, cada vez más, una mayor demanda de docentes en el área. Este artículo presenta reflexiones sobre la docencia en Psicología en la Educación Superior en Brasil, abordando los cambios en las DCN, la creciente demanda por carreras de Psicología según los análisis estadísticos del Instituto Nacional de Estudios e Investigaciones Educativas del Ministerio de Educación (INEP/MEC) y del Consejo Federal de Psicología (CFP), así como el impacto de dichos cambios en la formación de los docentes psicólogos. Se destaca la formación continua de los docentes psicólogos en la Educación Superior como un elemento esencial para garantizar una educación de calidad y atender a las exigencias del mercado laboral. La metodología se caracteriza como un estudio bibliográfico de carácter exploratorio, orientado al análisis teórico y crítico de producciones científicas publicadas sobre la formación docente en Psicología en el ámbito de la Educación Superior. El objetivo es comprender el escenario actual de los psicólogos que actúan como docentes en las carreras de nivel superior y reflexionar sobre cómo la formación de estos docentes puede contribuir al desarrollo profesional en el ejercicio de la docencia.

Palabras clave: Directrices Curriculares Nacionales; Educación Superior; Formación Continua; Formación docente; Psicología.

Introduction

Independent psychological science, as we know it today, was established in the second half of the 19th century and underwent a long development throughout the 20th century. Psychology as a science became one of the recognized branches of scientific knowledge, as psychology departments and laboratories took their rightful place in university science in many countries, beginning with the first Experimental Psychology laboratory created by Wilhelm Wundt in Leipzig, Germany, in 1879 (Araujo, 2009).

Practical psychology, as a field of professional practice in Brazil, began to materialize in the 1940s and was officially enacted in 1962 through Law No. 4.119.

According to Santos (2022), CNE/CES Opinion No. 1.314, of November 7, 2001, on the DCNs for the Undergraduate Course in Psychology, which was approved, proposes a structured education that aims to curb the trivialization, superficiality, and anti-scientificism previously associated with psychological processes in important public spaces, with repercussions in the academic community.

According to Rudá, Coutinho, and Almeida-Filho,

From this Resolution, Psychology courses ceased to follow the CM reference and began to follow the DCNs. At this moment, a new normative reference for undergraduate Psychology in the country was inaugurated, which was more flexible and permeable to the demands of society and the constantly changing world of work. [...] With the 2004 DCNs, several changes were instituted. The DCNs ended the 42 years of CM in Psychology. (Ruda; Coutinho; Almeida-Filho, 2015, p.75-76).

Over the next ten years of activity with the 2001 DCN, the CFP and other associations of psychologists, which presented opinions, culminated in a new DCN.

On May 15, 2011, the National Curricular Guidelines for undergraduate courses in Psychology were established by MEC/CNE/CES Resolution No. 5, which sets standards for the complementary pedagogical project for the training of Psychology teachers, replicates the bachelor's degree guidelines present in CNE/CES Opinion No. 072/2004, and adds the guidelines for Psychology licentiates. This process includes bachelor psychologists, the so-called psychologist training, and, on the other hand, licensed psychologists, that is, Psychology teachers for secondary education. (Santos, 2022, p. 46).

Resolution No. 569, of December 8, 2017, presented to the Plenary of the National Health Council (CNS) in its article 2, approves Technical Opinion No. 300/2017, which

includes Psychology among the health undergraduate courses and presents guiding elements for the development of curricula and didactic-pedagogical activities with direct impacts on internship practices, necessary for the profile of graduates of all listed courses (CNE, 2017).

In 2023, the CNE, in view of the changes resulting from the country's educational, economic, political, and social scenario, published CNE/CES Resolution No. 1, of October 11, 2023, which updates and institutes the DCNs for undergraduate courses in Psychology. Among some of the changes is that courses must be under the coordination of Psychology professionals, and the internships necessary for student training must be supervised by psychologists who are part of the faculty of the Higher Education Institution (HEI).

These changes in the DCNs generate reflections on the 2022 Higher Education Census conducted by the Ministry of Education (MEC), which reveals Psychology courses in the sixth position among the most sought-after in Brazil. According to the aforementioned survey and data extracted from e-mec, in the first half of 2024, the undergraduate Psychology program accumulated more than 275,000 enrollments offered in more than 1,200 active HEIs present in the national territory, both public and private.

This high demand for the undergraduate program in Psychology intensified after the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2021, which had the highest peak of infections in the country, resulting in an exponential increase in searches related to psychological phenomena (thoughts, emotions, feelings, attitudes, and behaviors) and other issues in the psychopathological sphere (mood disorders, among others).

The great demand for undergraduate courses in Psychology sparked the debate about the offering of this education. In July 2022, the MEC officially authorized the opening of the first undergraduate Psychology program in the distance learning (EAD) modality in Brazil, in July 2022, at a University Center, which offered 2,000 annual places, to start in the second semester of 2022. The authorization was published in the *Diário Oficial da União* (DOU) on July 14, however, the next day, July 15, 2022, a Saturday, the MEC backed down on its decision and suspended the authorization, arguing "material error," driven by pressure from the state and federal Psychology councils. The MEC then published a normative act to annul the decision via the Secretariat of Regulation and Supervision of Higher Education (Seres). Thus, the offer of distance learning Psychology courses in Brazil remains prohibited.

On December 13, 2023, the CFP issued a note regarding the MEC's position through MEC Ordinance No. 2.041/2023, published on November 29, 2023, which temporarily

suspended, for a period of 90 days, the authorization processes for several courses in the Health area in the EAD modality, including the undergraduate Psychology program.

The Ministry of Education (MEC), in the context of regulatory review of Distance Education in Brazil, suspended the creation of new undergraduate courses in this modality through Ordinance No. 528, of June 6, 2024. This suspension was in effect until the publication of Decree No. 12.456, of May 19, 2025, which instituted a new legal framework for the offering of higher education courses, regulating the on-site, blended, and distance formats. The Decree established that courses in Law, Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, and Psychology must be offered exclusively in the on-site format. It is important to highlight that, with the exception of the Medicine course—which must be 100% on-site—the other on-site courses may have up to 30% of the workload offered remotely, provided that the National Curricular Guidelines are respected.

As one of the main innovations, the decree formally recognizes the blended format, which now has different minimum percentages of on-site and synchronous mediated activities according to the area of knowledge. MEC Ordinance No. 378/2025, which details this application, defined that, for courses in the areas of Health and Well-being (except Medicine, Nursing, and Psychology), such as Biomedicine, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Physical Therapy, the blended format requires at least 40% of on-site activities and 20% of on-site or synchronous mediated activities. This regulatory differentiation generated debates among professional entities and councils, which began to question the permission to offer blended formats in certain health professions, while it was forbidden for others—such as Medicine, Nursing, and Psychology, whose offering must be exclusively on-site.

The basis for the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP) and other representative entities of the profession was to argue that the offering of the course in the EAD modality was not foreseen in the DCNs established in 2023, and they mobilized an action plan that considers an on-site presence as an indispensable condition for quality education.

Due to the increase in courses in the country, the need for faculty for the area is growing. However, not all Psychology teachers are specifically trained for the exercise as professors in Higher Education, although many have a background in the area. And, although a large part of the faculty has some type of postgraduate degree, the qualification and pedagogical training still need to be improved, and academic training and teaching capacity are not guaranteed for all psychologist professors in Higher Education (Noronha, 2003).

According to Bioto, Barbosa, and Domingues (2021), teacher training is a continuous and comprehensive process that aims to prepare educators to exercise their profession effectively and reflectively. It involves both initial training, carried out in licentiate and pedagogy courses, and continuing education, which occurs throughout the teacher's career. According to the authors, teacher training covers theoretical, practical, and ethical aspects, aiming to develop the pedagogical, didactic, emotional, and social skills necessary to work in the educational context, which may also include reflections on professional identity, the relationship with students, classroom management, teaching evaluation, and the integration of new technologies into the educational process.

Continuing education is important for Psychology teachers, as it ensures that they are up-to-date and committed to the advances in the field, promoting quality education, and can meet the demands of the Curricular Guidelines, improve teaching practice, provide more consistent classes, and up-to-date training for undergraduates (Noronha, 2003).

In view of these aspects that impact the training of the future psychologist, this article aims to reflect on the teaching of Psychology in Higher Education in Brazil, addressing the changes in the DCNs, the growing demand for Psychology courses, present in the statistical analyses of MEC/INEP and CFP, as well as the impact of these changes on the training of psychologist teachers.

Method

The present research is characterized as a bibliographic study of an exploratory nature, aimed at the theoretical and critical analysis of published scientific productions on teacher training in Psychology in Higher Education. According to Gil (2002), "bibliographic research is the survey or review of published works on the theory that will guide the scientific work" (p. 44), with the objective of gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing existing contributions. Boccato (2006) complements this by stating that bibliographic research seeks to solve a problem or validate a hypothesis through the analysis of published theoretical references, providing a critical and integrated view of the various scientific contributions on the topic (p. 266).

The study is based on the identification, selection, and systematic analysis of primary and secondary sources, including scientific articles, books, theses, and dissertations. Data collection followed criteria of relevance, timeliness (publications preferably from the last 10 years), and thematic pertinence, in order to ensure the representativeness and theoretical depth

necessary to support this work. The databases used included Scielo, PePSIC, BVSPsi, CAPES/Periódicos, and Google Scholar, ensuring the breadth and quality of the sources.

This excerpt is part of the doctoral thesis entitled "Proposal for teaching curricular components of Psychological Assessment developed by Psychology professors in collaborative training," with a focus on the chapter that discusses the training of Psychology teachers in Higher Education. By conducting a critical analysis of the National Curricular Guidelines (DCN) as well as statistical studies from sources such as MEC, INEP, and CFP, the research seeks to understand the impact of recent educational transformations on teacher training, reflecting on its relevance for continuous professional development in the academic context.

Bibliographic research is not limited to a passive review of literature but adopts a critical-reflective stance, allowing for the identification of gaps and opportunities for the improvement of teaching practice in Psychology, capable of contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the area.

Results and Discussion

The field of Psychology education has undergone significant transformations in the last five years, driven by both technological advances and changes in educational contexts. As Psychology grows in popularity, especially after the COVID-19 outbreak between 2020 and 2021, the demand for Psychology teachers has also increased.

National research reveals promising scenarios for the entry of new psychologists into the job market, while also prompting reflections on who trains these undergraduate students and what constitutes this academic training. Psychologist professors in higher education teach in undergraduate and graduate courses, in addition to professional practice.

In Brazil, the Psychology program is among the 10 largest undergraduate courses in terms of enrollments, new students, and graduates in the period from 2012 to 2022 (INEP, 2023). Table 1 presents this distribution.

Over the years, the Psychology course has maintained a relatively stable position among the most popular courses (Table 1). In 2012, there were 162,280 enrollments, corresponding to 2.3% of the total enrollments in the country, placing it in eighth position. The number of new students in that same year was 60,639, representing 2.2% of the total, positioning the course in ninth place. The number of graduates was 22,109, with 2.1% of the total, also in ninth position.

From 2013 onwards, there was a continuous increase in the number of enrollments, new students, and graduates. In 2013, the number of enrollments rose to 179,892, raising the course's position to seventh place. The number of new students and graduates also increased to 66,811 and 20,005, respectively, although the course's position varied between eighth and tenth places for new students and graduates.

Table 1 - Ranking among the top 10 undergraduate courses in terms of number of enrollments, new students, and graduates (Cine Brasil classification) – Brazil – 2012-2022

Year	Enrollment				Posição	New students			Posição	Graduates			Position
	Course / Cine Brasil	Number	%	% Accumulate d		Number	%	% Accumulate d		Number	%	% Accumulate d	
2012	Psychology	162.28	2, 0	2,3	8	60.639	2, 2	2,2	9	22.109	2, 1	2,1	-
2013	Psychology	179.89	2, 2	4,8	7	66.811	2, 4	4,6	8	20.005	2, 0	4,1	10
2014	Psychology	207.07	2, 0	7,4	7	80.715	2, 6	7,2	8	20.663	2, 0	6,1	9
2015	Psychology	223.49	2, 0	10,2	7	74.650	2, 6	9,8	8	s/d		6,1	s/d
2016	Psychology	235.59	2, 4	13,1	7	76.283	2, 6	12,3	9	26.344	2, 3	8,4	9
2017	Psychology	249.95	3, 6	16,1	7	83.256	2, 6	14,9	9	30.187	2, 5	10,9	9
2018	Psychology	260.72	3, 5	19,3	7	89.037	2, 8	17,7	9	35.102	2, 9	13,8	8
2019	Psychology	270.23	3, 9	22,4	7	99.097	2, 7	20,4	9	37.584	3, 0	16,8	8
2020	Psychology	275.77	3, 1	25,6	6	106.00	2, 8	23,2	9	34.136	2, 7	19,5	8
2021	Psychology	289.87	3, 9	33,1	6	99.868	2, 1	33,4	9	37.349	2, 9	45,6	8
2022	Psychology	314.54	3, 3	34,2	6	123.66	2, 8	42,4	9	39.033	3, 0	37,2	6
MEDIA		242.67			7	87.276			9	30.251			8

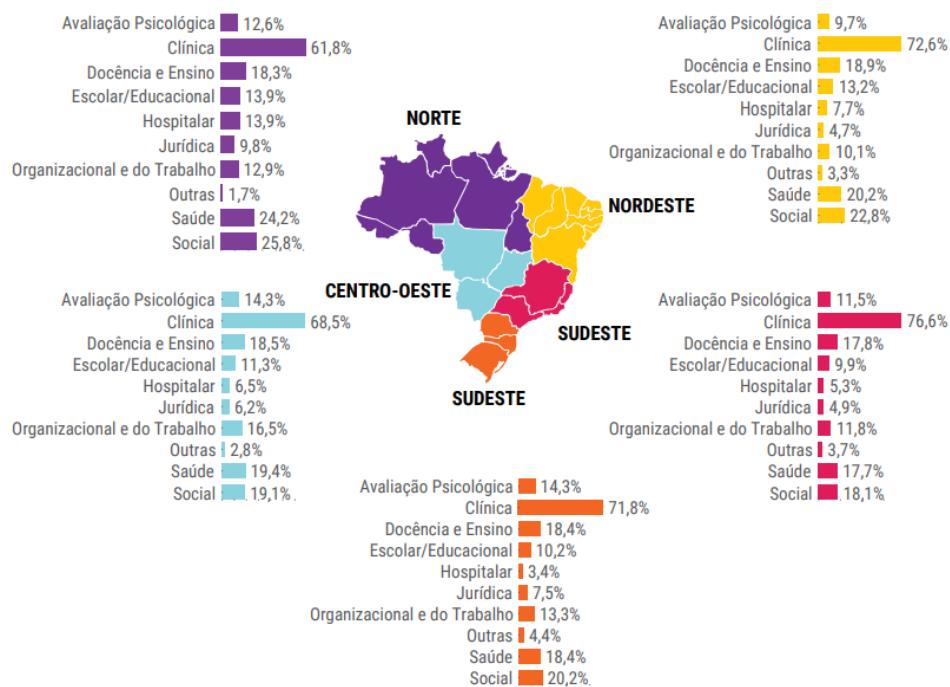
Source: Mec/Inep (2023).

In 2014, the Psychology course continued to grow, with 207,070 enrollments, representing 2.6% of the total and maintaining its seventh position. The number of new students reached 80,715, and graduates were 20,663, with the course remaining in eighth and ninth positions, respectively. This steady growth continued until 2022, when the number of enrollments reached 314,543, with a 3.3% share of the total, raising the course to sixth place among the most popular in the country. The number of new students also increased to 123,668, but the course remained in ninth position in this regard. In terms of graduates, the number rose to 39,033, with a 3.0% share, placing the course in sixth position.

The Psychology course maintained a prominent position on average, with an average of 242,676 enrollments over the years, which is equivalent to approximately 7% of the total

enrollments in undergraduate courses in the country. The average number of new students was 87,276, keeping the course in ninth position, while the average number of graduates was 30,251, corresponding to the eighth position. The 2022 CensoPsi conducted by the Federal Council of Psychology, on the profile of the Brazilian psychologist, reveals the areas of insertion of the psychologist after graduation in the country.

Figure 1 - Areas of activity by region of the country



Source: Federal Council of Psychology (p. 20, 2022).

Figure 1 shows that there are no profound changes; in other words, the distribution profile of psychologists' areas of practice as Psychology teachers does not seem to be affected by the social and economic differences of the different regions of Brazil. The rate is 18.3% in the North Region, 17.8% in the Southeast Region, 18.9% in the Northeast, 18.5% in the Central-West Region, and 18.4% in the South Region.

The census on the profile of the Brazilian psychologist conducted by the CFP (2023) reveals the most frequent specialties/areas of practice that graduates enter, and it is worth noting that among these are many teachers who teach in HEIs from the north to the south of the country.

For almost all subjects that are part of the undergraduate Psychology program, the professional must have at least a specialization in the related area, in addition to their

Psychology degree, when entering as a professor in Higher Education. In many cases, years of experience in specific areas of the profession are important in training students due to their experiential nature.

Figure 2 - Areas of psychology



Source: Federal Council of Psychology (p. 17, 2022).

The profile of Psychology teachers is complex, involving not only the ability to transmit theoretical knowledge and specificities present in the areas of practice (Figure 2) but also the development of skills and competencies that promote adaptation to new teaching methods, such as blended learning with resources from digital information and communication technologies (DICT). The teacher training of psychologists in Higher Education constitutes an essential element for the development of competencies of undergraduate students in psychological science for professional practice.

Martins (2012) argues that "the reasons that guide entry into education have less to do with identification with 'education' and more with objective issues related to employment in the higher education job market." The author emphasized the meaning and implications that are

created in how something is done. The term "becoming a teacher" can be associated with traditional pedagogical tendencies that see teaching as the transfer of knowledge.

Martins (2012) states that engagement in education is not motivated by identification with the activity, but by the need to enter the job market, which directly affects the personality of the Psychology teacher in terms of belonging to the profession. According to the author, this may explain why many teachers continue to identify as psychologists and practice teaching as a secondary activity complementary to their profession.

The process of teaching Psychology is present in the DCNs for the undergraduate Psychology course of 2023, which in article 24, mentions that the training of Psychology teachers must articulate competencies, among them, the one stated in item V: "Pedagogical practices that prepare the student to act in the face of different processes and in diverse educational contexts, with different pedagogical resources, making good use of information and communication technologies," and consider article 25, item XI: "Adopt an investigative posture in the face of issues and problems that affect education." (MEC, 2023, p. 56, 57).

From the 2000s onwards, there was a growing increase in Psychology courses in Brazil, which absorbed and inserted many psychologist teachers into classrooms (CFP, 2022). However, with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2021, and consequently the access to digital resources (synchronous classes), the virtual character with Emergency Remote Teaching (ERE) served as an opportunity for many people to enter this undergraduate course, given that there is no offer of the course in the distance learning modality, and also the dismissal of numerous teachers from private HEIs, causing those who remained in these institutions to have to take on diverse subjects without having adherence or even teach synchronous classes for a large volume of students from all over the country (Souza et al., 2023; CFP, 2022; Peixoto; Ferreira, 2021).

Figueira (2012), when investigating the instability of undergraduate Psychology teaching, used the term "empty theoretical content." In her research, she considered the need for conceptual proficiency on the part of senior teachers to offer quality education and mastery of the content to be taught to students. She also pointed out a weakness in this study, by highlighting that in private universities, teachers are generally hired to teach one subject and then asked to teach other subjects with which they are not familiar, which leads to superficial learning based on third-party texts, without promoting a deep understanding of the content.

Psychology, as a science, offers teachers valuable tools to promote assessment methods that stimulate reflection, understanding, and the application of knowledge, instead of simply

memorizing information. This approach is essential for the development of teaching practices that effectively meet the learning needs of students and future psychologists during higher education.

The INEP (2022) census reveals that in the national scenario there are opportunities for Psychology teachers to contribute to the development of good professional practices of students and future psychologists, teaching them how to actively incorporate the professional profile into their practice, due to the large contingent of those who start and finish the undergraduate course.

If, on one hand, we have the growing increase in the ranks of new students in the Psychology course, the demand for psychologist teachers with academic training and training for teaching in this contemporary world, on the other hand, we have the results of the formative quality of students within the undergraduate programs (Table 2).

The analysis indicates a significant diversity in terms of administrative categories, academic degrees, teaching modalities, and performance in educational quality indicators for the Psychology course, according to the MEC (2024). Table 2 highlights data such as the Preliminary Course Concept (CPC)⁵, Course Concept (CC)⁶, National Student Performance Exam (ENADE), Indicator of Difference between Observed and Expected Performance (IDD)⁷ and the average number of authorized places for the courses.

As can be seen, Psychology courses offered by state, federal, and municipal public institutions, as well as by private institutions, vary in terms of bachelor's and licentiate degrees, being offered in the on-site modality. State and federal public institutions, both in the bachelor's and licentiate degrees, present quality indicators, such as CPC, CC, ENADE, and IDD,

⁵ **Preliminary Course Concept (CPC):** an Inep/MEC indicator that annually evaluates the quality of undergraduate courses, combining student performance in the Enade, the qualification of the teaching staff, the infrastructure and didactic-pedagogical resources, in addition to student perception. It is expressed on a scale from 1 to 5 and serves as a basis for the supervision and regulation of courses.

⁶ **Course Concept (CC):** an Inep/MEC indicator assigned after an on-site evaluation of an undergraduate course, considering criteria such as didactic-pedagogical organization, teaching staff, and infrastructure. It is expressed on a scale from 1 to 5 and is used in the processes of authorization, recognition, and renewal of recognition of the course in the federal education system.

⁷ **Indicator of Difference between Observed and Expected Performance (IDD):** an Inep/MEC indicator that measures the value added by the course to the students' training, comparing their performance in the Enade with the knowledge they already had when they entered the undergraduate program. It expresses how much the course contributed to the development of the students, isolating the effect of academic training. It is used in the composition of the CPC and the IGC, with a scale from 1 to 5.

generally above average, standing out with concepts 3 and 4. This analysis shows that there is consistency in the quality of teaching and solid academic training in these courses.

It is observed that Psychology courses offered by private for-profit institutions also show good quality indicators, with CPC and ENADE frequently reaching concept 3. Private non-profit institutions present similar performance, with scores generally at concept 3, standing out in some areas with concepts 4, especially in the Psychology licentiate degree. Although the demand for Psychology licentiate courses is less numerous compared to bachelor's degrees, they are relevant in the context of teacher training in the area of Psychology. However, the data indicate a greater variation in quality indicators among the licentiate courses, with some institutions obtaining lower scores in ENADE and IDD, and indicates specific challenges faced by these formative courses.

Table 2 - Administrative categories, academic degrees, teaching modalities, and performance in educational quality indicators

Course	Administrative Category	Grade	Modality	CC (Media)	CPC (Media)	ENADE (Media)	IDD (Media)	Authorized Vacancies (Media)
Psychology	Special	Bachelor's degree	In person	-	3	2	3	158
Psychology	State Public	Bachelor's degree	In person	4	3	3	3	154
Psychology	State Public	Master's degree	In person	0	6	5	2	179
Psychology	Federal Public	Bachelor's degree	In person	4	3	3	3	153
Psychology	Federal Public	Master's degree	In person	4	3	3	3	154
Psychology	Municipal Public	Bachelor's degree	In person	-	3	3	3	165
Psychology	For-profit private	Bachelor's degree	In person	4	3	3	3	155
Psychology	For-profit private	Master's degree	In person	-	3	3	4	170
Psychology	Non-profit private	Bachelor's degree	In person	4	3	3	3	155
Psychology	Non-profit private	Master's degree	In person	4	3	3	3	160

Source: EMEC/ MEC (2024)

According to the table, the average number of authorized places for Psychology courses also varies significantly. For-profit private HEIs tend to offer a greater number of places, including for licentiate degrees, which may indicate a strategy to expand access that can be relevant to higher education. In contrast, public and non-profit private institutions generally

offer a smaller number of places, with averages ranging from 153 to 165 for the bachelor's degree.

Considering this data, despite the growth in Psychology education, which generates a demand for qualified teachers to handle the volume of new students in this undergraduate program, the CensoPsi on the identity of the Brazilian psychologist conducted by the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP, 2022) reveals that,

the quality of undergraduate Psychology education has been fragile and unsatisfactory in the last four decades due to the indiscriminate proliferation of courses, the lack of qualified teachers for teaching Psychology subjects in the various sub-areas, the distance between teaching and research, the predominance of clinical Psychology content, and various failures in undergraduate curricula, which have led to gaps in general, emerging, and critical competencies for professional practice (CFP, 2022, p. 120).

In Brazil, the teaching of Psychology in higher education institutions (HEIs) is generally conducted by psychologist professors with *lato-sensu* specializations in approaches or areas of practice of psychological science, as well as by psychologist professors with *stricto-sensu* training, masters and doctors, both in the psychological field and in related areas of human and health sciences. These professional teachers are directly involved in the learning process of students who are in the process of academic training to become professional psychologists at the end of a five-year period (MEC, 2023).

The most relevant roles played by teachers in the undergraduate Psychology program consist of teaching psychological content in classrooms, supervising internships, research, and extension. The latter are not normally associated with the professional responsibilities of teachers in many of the HEIs, especially private ones, due to the fact that they work on an hourly basis, focused on teaching the subjects of the course, while in public HEIs, research and extension are part of the effective dynamic of the position of professors of the undergraduate Psychology program.

Teaching is directly related to responsibility, the ability to express oneself through mastery of the subject, clarity of concepts, maintaining student interest, showing enthusiasm for the subject, and encouraging students to use and reflect on the use of the resources made available for the teaching and learning process to occur (Gaeta; Masseto, 2019; Leite, 2023).

Psychology teachers in education transmit theoretical and practical knowledge in Psychology in the promotion of teaching, research, student guidance, and skill development. This professional experience requires extensive training, ranging from a bachelor's degree in

Psychology, *lato-sensu* specializations, master's and doctoral degrees, as well as practical, day-to-day experience as a professional working in psychological practice, and teaching practice (Oliveira, 2022).

Understanding and applying psychological theories is necessary among Psychology teachers in relation to the training of students in this undergraduate area. The teacher acts as a guide who helps students explore and understand the world of Psychology (Oliveira, 2022). The Higher Education Psychology professor needs to master the appropriate teaching strategies aimed at transmitting the necessary knowledge for the professional psychologist, as well as understand the learning styles capable of promoting the insertion of students into the diverse contexts of the profession's practices. Having practical experience in the area means that they must have the ability to research, observe, diagnose, prevent, and develop treatments for mental illnesses, lead and guide students in practical activities related to the subjects. They teach students to apply theoretical knowledge in real situations, broadening their understanding of the topics of the areas and psychological phenomena (Nagimzhanova, 2019; Oliveira, 2022).

The 2022 CensoPsi reveals the areas of insertion of the psychologist after graduation in the country. The study shows that there are no profound changes; in other words, the distribution profile of psychologists' areas of practice as Psychology teachers does not seem to be affected by the social and economic differences of the different regions of Brazil. The rate is 18.3% in the North Region, 17.8% in the Southeast Region, 18.9% in the Northeast, 18.5% in the Central-West Region, and 18.4% in the South Region.

It is essential that teachers of Psychology courses in HEIs can base the teaching of the profession on current mechanisms of a contemporary environment, in order to ensure that students have a solid knowledge base and understand the fundamental principles of Psychology and interact professionally with an increasingly connected world. These teachers need to be able to teach and apply psychological theories, have practical experience in the area, and establish a relationship of trust with students, effectively instrumentalizing them in the face of environmental changes. As a result of this vision, teachers can create favorable learning scenarios and help students develop the potential to work in the job market upon graduation.

Training Psychology teachers for Higher Education is part of a complementary and differentiated educational project. Higher Education Psychology teachers face a series of challenges, such as the need for continuous professional development, managing a workload, often alternating professional practices with teaching, promoting student engagement, diversity and inclusion, and issues related to technological integration with the classroom in this

formative context. These factors require teachers to adapt to new teaching methods and manage their socioemotional skills (Oliveira, 2023).

The census on the profile of the Brazilian psychologist conducted by the CFP (2023) reveals the most frequent specialties/areas of practice that graduates enter, and it is worth noting that among these are many teachers who teach in HEIs from the north to the south of the country.

The profile of Psychology teachers is complex, and involves not only the ability to transmit the theoretical knowledge and specificities present in these areas (Figure 2) but also the development of skills and competencies that promote adaptation to new forms of teaching, such as blended learning with resources from digital information and communication technologies (DICT). The Psychology teacher plays a fundamental role in this process, providing tools and strategies that help students in training to promote quality education that meets the needs of the training.

The contemporary Higher Education Psychology professor will need to demonstrate that they have experience in teaching and research, a willingness to teach, mediate team activities and interpersonal relationships, be a good communicator, have skills in DICT, manage time, have academic administration skills, and a commitment to their own continuous professional development, an important step in the role of the Higher Education psychologist teacher.

Final Considerations

This study addressed teacher training in Psychology in Higher Education in Brazil, highlighting the evolution of the National Curricular Guidelines (DCN), the growing increase in demand for this undergraduate course, and the impact of these changes on teaching practice and profile. The analysis revealed that the continuing education of Psychology teachers can ensure quality education, aiming to meet the growing demands of the job market.

The increasing demand for Psychology courses, driven by events during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights the need for teacher training that not only transmits theoretical knowledge but also prepares future psychologists to face practical and emerging challenges in society. The number of students studying Psychology in Brazil has increased over the last 10 years, as evidenced by research from MEC/Inep (2023) as well as CensoPsi (2022). This demand will certainly require a greater number of Higher Education teachers to meet the growing need for

psychologist trainers. Teachers will need to be increasingly qualified in various aspects beyond psychological practice.

Therefore, the development of the Higher Education psychologist-teacher is based on continuing education, aiming not only at the transmission of psychological knowledge but also at the construction of the identity of a competent professional, prepared to face the growing demands of a society in constant transformation.

This study described the current scenario of psychologists who work as teachers in higher education courses in the Brazilian context and reflected on how the training of Psychology teachers in Higher Education can be a source of contribution to the development of these professionals in the exercise of teaching. Consequently, it is not possible to extend the described constructions to the entire Psychology education system in the national scenario. New research is suggested that could both deepen the understanding of the analyzed phenomenon and seek practical validation for the results found.

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CRediT

Recognition:	Not applicable
Financing:	This work was supported by National Funds through FCT-Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P., under UIDF - Research and Development Unit in Education and Training, UIDB/04107/2020, https://doi.org/10.54499/UIDB/04107/2020 (Cassio Santos).
Conflict of interest:	The authors certify that they have no commercial or associative interests that represent a conflict of interest in relation to the manuscript.
Ethical approval:	Not applicable
Authors' contribution:	SANTOS, E, A; MAZZAFERA, B, L; SANTOS, C. declare that they participated in the writing of the article and affirm that they were responsible for Conceptualization, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, and Investigation. SANTOS, E, A; MAZZAFERA, B, L; SANTOS, C. declare that they participated in the Methodology, Writing – original draft; Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – revision and editing.

Submitted: June 10, 2024

Accepted: June 11, 2025

Published: August 12, 2025

Section editor: João Fernando de Araujo

*Production team member: Junior Peres de Araujo
Editorial assistant: Martinho Gilson Cardoso Chingulo*