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**CONTRIBUTIONS PERCEIVED BY STUDENTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM  
STAGE IN THE CONSTITUTION OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY****CONTRIBUIÇÕES PERCEBIDAS PELOS ESTUDANTES SOBRE O ESTÁGIO  
CURRICULAR NA CONSTITUIÇÃO DA IDENTIDADE PROFISSIONAL**

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**RESUMO**

O objetivo desse estudo foi analisar a contribuição percebida pelos estudantes acerca do estágio curricular na constituição da identidade profissional a partir de dimensões da representações profissionais. A amostra foi composta por 140 estudantes do último ano de Educação Física bacharelado de três instituições de ensino superior de Maringá (Paraná). Para a coleta de dados utilizou-se um questionário sociodemográfico e o questionário “Escala de avaliação da constituição da identidade profissional do bacharel em educação física” (EAACP). Para comparação dos âmbitos da representação profissional em relação a instituição de ensino superior utilizou-se o teste de Kruskal-Wallis e de Friedman com post hoc de comparação múltipla de Dunn. Já a avaliação da diferença dos âmbitos da representação profissional em relação as variáveis sociodemográficas adotou o teste “U” de Mann-Whitney. Os resultados evidenciaram que na visão dos estudantes o estágio curricular contribui para a compreensão de aspectos relacionados ao exercício profissional em seus saberes e possibilidades de intervenção, mas carece de um trato pedagógico que fomente a autonomia profissional. Conclui-se que as ações de socialização proporcionadas pelo estágio curricular, juntamente com o tempo de dedicação e experiências prévias contribuem para a constituição da identidade profissional.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação Física. Bacharelado. Identidade Profissional. Representação Profissional.

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was analyze the contribution perceived by the students about the curricular stage in the constitution of the professional identity from the dimensions of the professional representations. The sample was composed of 140 students of the last year of Physical Education baccalaureate of three institutions of superior education of Maringá-PR.. For the data collection, a sociodemographic questionnaire was used and the questionnaire " Assessment scale of the constitution of the professional identity of the bachelor in physical education" (EAACP). The Kruskal-Wallis test and Friedman's test with Dunn's multiple comparison post hoc were used to compare the areas of professional representation in relation to the higher education institution. The Mann-Whitney "U" test was used to evaluate the difference in the scope of professional representation in relation to sociodemographic variables. The results showed that in the view of the students the curricular internship contributes to the understanding of aspects related to the professional exercise in their knowledge and possibilities of intervention, but lacks pedagogical treatment that fosters professional autonomy. It is concluded that the actions of socialization provided by the curricular internship, together with the time of dedication and previous experiences contribute to the constitution of the professional identity.

**Keywords:** Physical Education. Bachelor's Degree. Professional Identity . Professional Representation.

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**Introduction**

Studies have increasingly investigated the constitution of Professional Identity (PI) in the course of Curricular Internship (CI) in undergraduate courses of Physical Education, according to the highlights of systematic reviews<sup>1,2</sup>. However, only a few studies address the constitution of PI for graduate programs in Physical Education<sup>2-4</sup>, which is the focus of this study, thus characterizing a new theme in this particular area of study.

PI can be defined as a category of belonging that encompasses behavior, attitude, and opinions and involves continuity and discontinuity resulting from the interaction between inherited identity and relational identity, reflecting biographic, social, organizational, and educational contexts<sup>5</sup>. Considering these aspects, Higher Education Institutions (HEI) perform a fundamental role in the constitution of PI by helping students to visualize themselves in the future of the profession and identify interactions and demands established in the practical routine through the guidelines introduced in the Course Pedagogical Project, curricular organization, content of curricular components, teaching staff, and both professional and personal socializations supported along the training process<sup>6</sup>.

In general, these directions are guided by the dimensions of professional representations: functional representation – matters of professional activity performance, related knowledge and possibilities of intervention, and professional profile; contextual – performance spaces, limits of profession, statutes, independence, directions/monitoring of CI in the HEI, and bureaucracy – contracts, frequency sheets, among others, and identity – knowledge generated from training processes and prior experiences, qualities, as well as professional and personal motivations required to exercise the profession<sup>7</sup>.

In this context, CI emerges as a central element in the (re)constitution of PI for requiring knowledge and behavior that are appreciated in the scope of professional performance, thus supporting a dynamic process of reinterpretation of professional values and experiences, which should not be reduced to the transmission, assimilation, or social reproduction<sup>1,8,9</sup>. It is known that the results from practical experiences, mediated or not by early training, influence decisions about career and professional representation, both self-projected and projected on others, for the individual undergoing a training process<sup>10</sup>. CI contributes to PI by relating theory and practice during early training awakening critical sense regarding the development of actions and leading to a research attitude and capacity to reflect about the experience<sup>11</sup>, benefiting the process of constitution of positive emotions, resilience and management from the understanding of the professional context and active participation in the practical community, in addition to bringing students closer the professional reality in a practical sense<sup>12</sup>.

Considering these aspects, the objective of this study was to analyze the contribution perceived by the students regarding the Curricular Internship in the constitution of Professional Identity from the dimensions of professional representations.

## Methods

### *Type of Study and Sample*

This is a transversal, descriptive-exploratory study based on an inferential, quantitative approach. The sample involved 140 trainee students (EE) from the last year of graduate courses in Physical Education of three higher education institutions in Maringá-PR-Brazil, referred as HEI 1 (public institution) (n=30), HEI 2 (n=60), and HEI 3 (n=50) (private institutions), selected for offering on-site courses.

We highlight that all the TS at the last year of course were invited to participate in the study upon meeting the following three criteria: a) on-site attendance on the date previously scheduled by the course coordinator for the questionnaire application; b) acceptance of participation in the study by signing the Informed Consent Form (TCLE), and c) correct fulfilling of the all items in the instrument.

### *Procedures*

For data collection, we used the “Scale of evaluation of PI constitution for the graduate in Physical Education”, elaborated and validated by Anversa et al.<sup>4</sup> The goal of the instrument is to analyze the contribution perceived by the TS regarding the CI in the constitution of PI based on the dimensions of professional representation<sup>6,7</sup>. The instrument is composed of 17 multiple choice questions on a five-point Likert scale (1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree) distributed over the three dimensions of professional representation. The average of the answers is obtained by adding the score of the answers divided by the number of questions in the category. We emphasize that the study was approved by the Ethic Committee of Research (CEP) under number 1,246,824.

### *Statistical analysis*

Initially, we verified data normality through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the inferential analysis of the variables. As the data did not present normal distribution, we implemented nonparametric statistics, with median (Md) and interquartile range (Q1; Q3) applied for the characterization of the measures of central tendency and dispersion.

To establish a comparison of HEI and scopes of professional representation, we applied Kruskal-Wallis and Friedman test with post hoc Dunn’s test for multiple comparisons. To assess the difference of the scopes of professional representation, we adopted the Mann-Whitney U test for the following variables: sex; experience with work fields in Physical Education prior to college; execution of paid internship; remunerated position unrelated to the area of Physical Education or participation in congresses in the area. The significance level considered in all analyses was 95% ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

## **Results**

Aiming at understanding the contribution perceived by the TS regarding the CI in the constitution of PI from the dimensions of professional representation and existing relations, Table 1 presents the characterization of the social-demographic and academic data of the participants in the study.

**Table 1.** Characterization of the trainees participating in the survey regarding the social-demographic and academic aspects

	HEI 1		HEI 2		HEI 3		TOTAL	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	14	46.7	43	71.7	24	48.0	81	57.9
Female	16	53.3	17	28.3	26	52.0	59	42.1
<b>Age group</b>								
Up to 21 years	12	40.0	12	20.0	8	16.0	32	22.9
22 years or older	18	60.0	48	80.0	42	84.0	108	77.1
<b>Experience with the area prior to the early training</b>								
Yes	18	60.0	38	63.3	32	64.0	88	62.9
No	12	40.0	22	36.7	18	36.0	52	37.1
<b>Fields of the experiences of the trainees prior to the early training</b>								
Former Athlete	6	20.0	14	23.3	8	16.0	28	20.0
Sport initiation	7	23.3	9	15.0	9	18.0	25	17.9
Fitness center practitioner	15	50.0	18	30.0	15	30.0	48	34.3
Others	1	3.3	1	1.7	2	4.0	4	2.9
<b>Paid internship in the area</b>								
Yes	22	73.3	39	65.0	40	80.0	101	72.1
No	8	26.7	21	35.0	10	20.0	39	27.9
<b>Duration of the paid internship in the area</b>								
Up to two years	12	40.0	17	28.3	23	46.0	52	37.1
Over two years	10	33.3	22	36.7	17	34.0	49	35.0
Not applicable	8	26.7	21	35.0	10	20.0	39	27.9
<b>Area of the paid internship</b>								
Collective Sports	4	13.3	11	18.3	12	24.0	27	19.3
Individual Sports	7	23.3	7	11.7	7	14.0	21	15.0
Health Center Activities	16	53.3	25	41.7	31	62.0	72	51.4
Leisure, Recreation, and Activities involving Contact with Nature	5	16.7	14	23.3	4	8.0	23	16.4
Special Populations	6	20.0	7	11.7	4	8.0	17	12.1
Social Projects	1	3.3	7	11.7	4	8.0	12	8.6
<b>Participation of the trainees in extracurricular activities</b>								
Research Projects	2	6.7	2	3.3	0	0.0	4	2.9
Scientific Congresses	30	100	50	83.3	50	100	130	92.9
Refresh Courses outside the University	30	100	60	100	50	100	140	100
Extension Project	22	73.3	39	65.0	42	84.0	103	73.6
Organization of sport and recreational events	6	20.0	10	16.7	5	26.0	21	15.0
Others	9	30.0	16	26.7	13	26.0	38	27.1

**Source:** The authors

Data demonstrated that most of the sample is constituted of male students (57.9%), at the age of 22 years or more (77.1%). Both the private HEIs had high indices of students over 22 years of age.

Regarding the experience in the graduate area in Physical Education prior to the early training, 62.9% of the TS demonstrated having considered the training professional field before starting a formal training mainly influenced by their experience in motor activities at fitness centers (34.3%) and in the scope of high-performance sports as athletes (20%).

By seeking to understand the experience consolidated during the early training process of the TS, we highlight that 72.1% of the participants were engaged in the execution of paid internship alongside the undergraduate course, especially in the area of fitness center activities (51.4%). We also found that 22.9% of the sample reported to perform some remunerated function outside the educational area, which can be associated with family's financial needs, seek of personal independence, among other factors not identified in this study.

Regarding the participation of TS in extracurricular activities, 100% evidenced interest

and participation in extracurricular update courses, that is, in addition to the training courses provided by the IES, while 92.9% did not participate in scientific congresses and 73.6% sought training experiences by participating in extension projects. However, the sample emphasizes a worrying statistic regarding the scope of research since only 2.9% of the participants engaged in research projects.

Regarding the general analysis of the results and considering the dimension of professional representation of the TS, we found a significant difference ( $p < 0.01$ ) among the dimensions of constitution of professional representation, in which the functional dimension (4.34) presented higher score comparing with the contextual (4.18) and identity (4.17) ones. Data emphasize that the understanding of the reference to performance and professional profile (functional dimension) is higher among the TS of the analyzed sample.

A comparison of the constitution of PI and HEI revealed a significant difference ( $p < 0.01$ ) in the dimension "Identity". In this analysis, HEI 1 presented a lower index compared with the remaining HEI. In contrast, the "Functional" ( $p < 0.01$ ) and Contextual ( $p < 0.01$ ) and Overall Assessment ( $p < 0.01$ ) scopes showed significant difference, with HEI 3 presenting higher value than HEIs 1 and 2 (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Comparison of the Professional Identity considering the dimensions of the professional representation

Dimensions of professional representation	Higher Education Institutions			p*
	HEI 1 Md (Q1 – Q3)	HEI 2 Md (Q1 – Q3)	HEI 3 Md (Q1 – Q3)	
<b>Functional</b>	4.25 (3.96 – 4.50)a	4.33 (4.00 – 4.67)a	4.67 (4.29 – 5.00)b	<b>&lt;0.01</b>
<b>Contextual</b>	4.09 (3.46 – 4.54)a	4.09 (3.67 – 4.33)a	4.67 (4.17 – 4.83)b	<b>&lt;0.01</b>
<b>Identity</b>	3.92 (3.54 – 4.17)a	4.23 (3.92 – 4.52)b	4.38 (4.06 – 4.62)b	<b>&lt;0.01</b>
<b>Overall As.</b>	4.15 (3.78 – 4.36)a	4.18 (3.93 – 4.50)a	4.49 (4.23 – 4.79)b	<b>&lt;0.01</b>

Note: Probability estimated through the Kruskal-Wallis test.

Source: The authors

By comparing the scopes of professional representation of PI in terms of experience of the TS prior to early training (Table 3), significant differences were found only in HEI 2. The students who reported previous experience presented higher values in the contextual ( $p = 0.01$ ) and Overall Assessment ( $p = 0.02$ ) dimensions.

**Table 3.** Comparison of the Professional Identity regarding the experience prior to the early training of the students

Prior Experience	Higher Education Institution					
	HEI 1 Md (Q1 – Q3)	p*	HEI 2 Md (Q1 – Q3)	p*	HEI 3 Md (Q1 – Q3)	p*
<b>Functional</b>		0.52		0.10		0.38
Yes	4.25 (4.00-4.50)		4.50 (4.00-4.67)		4.34 (3.99-4.52)	
No	4.17 (3.71-4.33)		4.09 (3.79-4.54)		4.67 (4.17-4.83)	
<b>Contextual</b>		0.60		<b>0.01</b>		0.95
Yes	4.00 (3.67-4.42)		4.25 (4.00-4.50)		4.25 (4.00-4.50)	
No	4.17 (3.17-4.62)		3.83 (3.50-4.04)		4.59 (4.15-4.62)	
<b>Identity</b>		0.19		0.13		0.99
Yes	4.03 (3.73-4.23)		4.38 (3.98-4.54)		4.38 (3.98-4.54)	
No	3.74 (3.46-4.13)		4.08 (3.73-4.46)		4.42 (4.15-4.62)	
<b>Overall As.</b>		0.47		<b>0.02</b>		0.68
Yes	4.19 (3.81-4.42)		4.34 (3.98-4.54)		4.34 (3.98-4.52)	
No	4.04 (3.42-4.33)		3.98 (3.70-4.20)		4.49 (4.24-4.77)	

Note: Probability estimated through the U Mann-Whitney test

Source: The authors

By comparing PI regarding the execution of other remunerated positions (Table 4), we found a significant difference only in HEI 2 (Dimensions: Functional,  $p=0.04$ ; Contextual,  $p=0.01$ ), and Overall Assessment ( $p=0.02$ ). Evidence demonstrates that subjects executing some other remunerated function have lower identity indices compared with the TS who work exclusively in the area of Physical Education.

**Table 4.** Comparison of the Professional Identity regarding other paid activities of the students

Other paid activity	Higher Education Institutions					
	HEI 1 Md (Q1 – Q3)	p*	HEI 2 Md (Q1 – Q3)	p*	HEI 3 Md (Q1 – Q3)	p*
<b>Functional</b>		0.74		<b>0.04</b>		0.33
Yes	4.00 (3.67-4.50)		4.00 (3.50-4.50)		4.59 (4.38-4.67)	
No	4.33 (4.00-4.50)		4.50 (4.00-4.67)		4.67 (4.21-5.00)	
<b>Contextual</b>		0.87		<b>0.01</b>		0.49
Yes	4.00 (3.33-4.50)		3.67 (3.33-4.33)		4.42 (4.29-4.67)	
No	4.17 (3.50-4.67)		4.17 (3.92-4.50)		4.67 (4.17-4.83)	
<b>Identity</b>		0.60		0.12		0.72
Yes	3.92 (3.46-4.15)		4.00 (3.54-4.46)		4.35 (4.15-4.71)	
No	4.08 (3.54-4.23)		4.38 (4.00-4.54)		4.42 (4.02-4.62)	
<b>Overall As.</b>		0.53		<b>0.02</b>		0.67
Yes	3.93 (3.81-4.15)		3.94 (3.51-4.41)		4.42 (4.31-4.57)	
No	4.24 (3.74-4.36)		4.25 (4.00-4.52)		4.54 (4.22-4.79)	

Note: Probability estimated through the U Mann-Whitney test.

Source: the authors

Finally, a comparison of participation in congresses and the constitution of professional representation (Table 5) pointed out that those who participate in scientific congresses have higher PI in the contextual scope ( $p=0.03$ ).

**Table 5.** Comparison of Professional Identity in terms of the students' participation in scientific congresses

Professional Identity	Participation in Congresses		p
	Yes Md (Q1 – Q3)	No Md (Q1 – Q3)	
<b>Functional</b>	4.50 (4.00 – 4.67)	4.09 (3.92 – 4.54)	0.14
<b>Contextual</b>	4.33 (3.96 – 4.67)	3.75 (3.50 – 4.08)	<b>0.03</b>
<b>Identity</b>	4.19 (3.92 – 4.54)	4.04 (3.38 – 4.42)	0.18
<b>Overall As.</b>	4.29 (3.95 – 4.58)	4.02 (3.61 – 4.31)	0.06

Note: Probability estimated through the U Mann-Whitney test

Source: The authors

## Discussion

The social-demographic data presented demonstrate that the students of private HEI are older than those of public HEI, which indicates a possible existence of demands that enlarge the interval between primary education and the entry into higher education. One example is the need of an early entry into the market and lack of adaptation to the school model or difficulty of access and permanence. In addition, the prevalence of older students in private institutions may reflect incentive laws regarding the entry into higher education implemented over the past few years, which enhanced the participation of individuals belonging to an age group above the usual expectation for higher education, with a more expressive percentage at private institutions<sup>13,14</sup>.

This indication can affect the constitution of PI since the transition between the exit from the school system and the entry into the market is an important factor to constitute the

independence aspect and PI. This is because influences from the scopes of family, individual-society relations and previous professional experiences have great impact on the constitution of Professional Identity and establishment of relations between informal and formal knowledge<sup>5,15</sup>.

The data on the sex aspect corroborate those described in the synthesis report of the INEP<sup>16</sup>, which concluded through an analysis at a national level that the students of the Physical Education (bachelor's degree) area were predominantly (57.6%) male.

We highlight that the experiences prior to early training represent a proactive socialization that will reflect on the constitution of PI by demonstrating how the future professional conceives their work field and expectations on professional actions, maximizing body practices before the professional choice<sup>17</sup>. In the case of former athletes or practitioners of bodybuilding/gymnastics, the potential success of their body practices is a major factor to choose the profession for revealing a feeling of belonging that incorporates as an impression, shaping knowledge and approaching the Physical Education content<sup>5</sup>.

The participation of TS in paid internship in the area represents a learning process of personal training strategy considering their individual interest, through which students participate in the performance and application of practices in the professional environment seeking to develop and improve specific skills<sup>18</sup>. The search of optional internship by students is rather significant, either in private and public HEIs, thus indicating a possibility of remuneration during the undergraduate course and financial resource to support personal and academic expenses<sup>19</sup>.

Regarding the employment bond outside the Physical Education area, we notice that the insertion of students in the work context, even when representing a source of remuneration, can influence the professional training considering two categories of students: student-worker, whose studies represent the main occupation, and work is a secondary activity, and worker-student, whose work demands more daily dedication, leaving the studies to a secondary activity<sup>20</sup>. The latter represents the TS who perform some remunerated function outside the training area. Educational training combined with work situations leads to changes in the interaction between individual and environment, thus demanding larger psychological mechanisms to cope with the field dynamics of practices, situations of socialization, and didactic contexts of training<sup>7</sup>.

The data in this study show that the TS who did not participate in any remunerated positions outside the area had better indices in the scopes of professional representation, indicating that a diversity of intervention fields and related demands refer to the vulnerability of identity affirmation and social recognition. Therefore, working in a formal/official contextual of intervention (paid internship or remunerated position in another area) establishes a relationship of mutual influence between the cognitive process of the individual and social contexts. Such interactive process triggers a social-cognitive process that reflects the configuration of PI through attitudes, information, and field of representations<sup>7,21</sup>.

The low index found for the participation in research projects reveals the lack of incentive to such practice in private HEI because of the absence of public financing mechanisms<sup>22</sup>. In contrast, extension projects represent a possibility of inserting trainee students in the interventive context by conducting activities integrated to educational proposals that, when engaged in proposals of the course, enable the student to prepare to the professional field by creating new interventive alternatives and exchange of experiences<sup>23</sup>.

The interest in seeking extension activities follows the advance of the course and emerges from the need to develop experience for professional intervention. Along with Curricular Internship and practices such as curricular components, this practice may interfere positively on the perception of professional competence by providing an opportunity of

application in the actual social scenario, thus contributing to the development of knowledge, skill, and attitudes, as well as a feedback regarding the content of disciplines<sup>24,25</sup>.

The factor of search of update courses demonstrates that students wish to find mini courses, workshops, clinics, seminars, conferences, and orientation programs (coaching)<sup>26</sup> in different HEIs based on their personal and professional interests derived from the need of immediate intervention and multiple acting possibilities that the market requires.

Participation in scientific congresses also follows the same direction for combining professionals, experts, and students interested in sharing knowledge regarding their educational field. The contribution of these educational practices can occur in situations of formal learning considering the institutional environment and chronological organization focused on a reflection on the state-of-the-art and improvement of research in the area. Additionally, informal learning situations are also possible, derived from interactions, conversations, and exchanges between researchers. However, despite the strong indication of participation in scientific congresses by the TS, engaging in programs of undergraduate research represents an alert factor since the participation in research projects can influence the self-perception of indicators of professional competence<sup>24</sup>.

The data from a comparison of Professional Identity considering all dimensions of professional representation demonstrated that the functional dimension seems to affect the most the constitution of PI for TS showing the highest score of the three institutions analyzed, which refers to the clarity and concern of the HEI to present objectively the fields of intervention and particular skills expected for the graduate in Physical Education. Such indications favor the constitution of PI considering that when trainee students understand their professional performance, knowledge, functions, and possibilities of intervention, it is possible for them to recognize and identify the needs, possibilities and desires of people regarding the human movement<sup>27</sup>. By mobilizing knowledge in favor of specific situations of profession, the early training process directly benefits the students' understanding on the required skills and attitude, in addition to favoring appreciation and professional recognition<sup>28</sup>.

The Brazilian university environment guarantees a solid base of knowledge on the human movement and its possibilities of intervention, reinforcing evidence on the professional representation in the functional scope. However, we understand that courses need to employ different educational strategies to support the capacity of discussion, reflection, criticism, and evaluation of programs developed for students to build their knowledge base and continue to improve along their professional trajectory with independence regarding their professional actions and both personal and professional motivations before the obstacles of the practical routine<sup>29</sup>. The results found indicate the need of educational actions focused on the limits of profession and professional independence since two of the three HEI investigated presented lower indices in the contextual dimension of PI.

These data highlight the importance of implementing actions focused on reflecting about the practices in their spaces and limitations to favor the solution of problematic situations aiming at encouraging proactivity and motivation, which can reflect on the higher contextual and identity indices, especially in CI actions.

The indications demonstrated in our results reveal that it is possible that prior experiences, actions, attitudes, motivations, projects and professional skills of TS of HEI 1 are poorly explored or supported along the course, either by trainee students and professors. Such barrier between the content of educational actions and the respect of interests and personal experiences of the TS may result in a historical process of consolidation through which a distinct educational level (graduation and bachelor's degree) still undergo, in addition to the lack of relation between the learned content (technical and methodological aspects of profession) and the demands of practice<sup>26,30</sup>.

Regarding the autonomous and central participation of TS in discussions and actions in the scope of early training, we highlight that the first indications of identity development result from a reflection on past experiences and future possibilities<sup>31</sup>. These reflections are enriched in scenarios of conflict and discomfort and pervaded in a discursive manner regarding the actual practice and not the theory involved.

It is worth considering how the actions of independence of students are established when facing the educational proposals. To provide independence is to consider their academic knowledge and previous educational background derived from experiences prior to the training process and actions of the CI. Such actions constitute a stage of PI constitution and can influence the field of professional training since this knowledge may benefit professional attitudes and responses regarding problematic situations<sup>9</sup>.

Courses with curriculum oriented to normalize standards and answers can impair the student's capacity of action and the perception of articulation between interventive process and disciplinary knowledge, relations that guide both social and professional representations, and consequently identity constitution<sup>9</sup>. In this context, we emphasize that in order to contribute to the identity constitution of the students, teachers need to assume their professional role in their practice area, thus benefiting the constitution of representations of ideas on the profession and field of intervention<sup>32</sup>.

The fact that the students of HEI 3 have higher scores in relation to the functional and contextual scopes (organizational and institutional directions) can be associated with the unique offer of the graduate course in Physical Education by the institution analyzed. We also highlight that all professors graduated in Physical Education found themselves directly engaged in actions of CI, acting as supervisor professors. Such aspects can enhance the level of involvement of the professors with the institution and their students, emphasizing actions directed to the functional and contextual scopes by engaging in educational projects and actions to improve the institution and training processes, and consequently social, cultural and training policies, either by professors and students<sup>7,32</sup>.

Good functional and conceptual directions result in field information or representation image, that is, classroom content related to the practice field demands or experiences provided by the CI. Therefore, students become aware of the object represented and understand better the hierarchic organization of the elements composing both the social and professional representations by establishing a relation between theoretical and practical knowledge. When teachers do not limit themselves to concepts and theories, but demonstrate their respective applications in different practical situations, the learning process becomes inseparable from the social practice, and previous experiences and knowledge are related to problems and dilemmas in debate, thus contributing to a more critical and creative thinking regarding practical demands<sup>33</sup>.

A detailed analysis of the constitution of professional representation revealed that the execution of paid internship did not affect significantly the identity constitution of TS, which highlights an alert, since these experiences must represent a source of knowledge, new skills and learning for the future, resulting in instrumental, cognitive and affective learning that reflects the professional representation and consequently PI<sup>7,34</sup>. However, engaging in the practice is not enough to develop a learning process, it is essential to support reflections on the actions developed and situations created in the daily life<sup>35</sup>.

Regarding the results referring to the need of the HEIs to make use of students' prior experiences in their training actions, we emphasize that practical experiences can provide opportunities to develop professional skills<sup>7,29</sup>. Integrating experiential and formal knowledge benefits to acknowledge the profession statute and decentralize/share actions, resulting in a new degree of social belonging<sup>7</sup>.

The highest score (Md= 4.25) in the assessment of the contextual dimension by the TS

of HEI 2 can be related to the fact that, according to its regulation, the institution in question links part of the course load to the participation of TS in projects of extension, institutional actions whose objectives include involving both students and teachers in the constitution or reconstitution of knowledge by meeting social interests<sup>36</sup>. These projects can guarantee independence to the TS, who experiences the professional role in the daily practice by discussing actual situations with the teachers responsible for projects as well as the remaining participant students and creating meaning to their practical experiences, an important element to the learning process<sup>36</sup>.

The lowest indices in the Functional and Contextual scopes, and consequently in the Overall Assessment, can be associated with disadvantaged possibilities of engagement and dedication of the worker-student regarding the educational activities offered by the HEI, such as projects of research and extension, study groups, monitoring, among others. Work condition imposes a limit to the study shift of the student in the HEI, as well as their involvement in the academic environment. Lack of time generates a strict routine regarding mediating work and study, which, in the long run, may lead to disillusion and frustration that reflect the student's behavior possibly involving anxiety, stress, low performance, and often school evasion<sup>37</sup>.

The process of socialization generated from the participation in academic-scientific events (congresses scientific) helps the student to know different institutions, researchers, and teachers. By presenting works and/or follow works by other students and professionals, students of the area enlarge their degree of implication or social belonging.

Participation in scientific congresses and engaging in research projects sharpen scientific skills, the constant update and potential to face professional challenges<sup>37</sup>, thus encouraging students to fulfil their study goals, which can promote an improvement of the course and enlarge the scope of educational analysis and analysis. Furthermore, by presenting their works to colleagues and other professionals of the area, students find themselves acknowledged and appreciated by their professional group, which favors the constitution of social and professional identities. In general, we observe that the actions of the CI in the investigated HEI lack the development of knowledge applied to professional practice and oriented to independence, reflection, and solution of problematic situations to reinforce indications directed to professional representations in their contextual and identity scopes.

## Conclusions

Evidence found allowed to identify the contribution perceived by the trainee student on the Curricular Internship regarding the constitution of Professional Identity from professional representations. The Curricular Internship brought understanding on the aspects related to professional performance in the scope of their knowledge and possibilities of intervention. However, it lacks a novel pedagogical approach on the actions that support professional independence, their relations with the reality of the profession and the feeling of social belonging, bringing the content learned closer to the practical demand.

The results also legitimate that the constitution of Identity Professional can be related to prior experiences, whilst the trainee student dedicates to educational actions of courses and participation in congresses and other scientific events. However, it is noticeable that performing other remunerated positions without direct link to the early training can interfere in the functional and contextual scopes of professional representation by depriving the trainee student of carrying out extracurricular activities, as well as knowing different institutions, researchers and professors, which would enlarge the bonds of professional socialization.

Finally, we emphasize that this study considered a regional reality based on a similar market demand and perspective of students, which evokes the importance of further studies in different training contexts to verify possible similarities with other indications and reflections, thus benefiting the HEI when rethink the directions of the CI and the execution of the educational proposal.

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