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## Clinical Nutrition in Our Hand: Examining Clinical Dietitians' Perception, Motives of Use and Engagement with Nutrition Apps

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Nutrition mobile applications (apps) are becoming increasingly popular for a wide range of users. Their accessibility and availability every time and anywhere has turned them into a source of information with a potentially relevant role in nutritional choices and decisions. Despite a growing number of studies on attitudes, perceptions and behaviors related to nutrition apps, the literature is still scarce and provides an atomist and fragmented view on these subjects. In addition, most studies focus on the characteristics of nutrition apps and their effectiveness among adolescents and adults, either that present pathologies that require nutritional care or that simply for weight maintenance and management but the dietitian's perspective remains under researched.

In this exploratory study, in-depth semi-structured interviews with dietitian's were employed to understand their motives for using nutrition apps, their level of engagement and perception on this specific type of apps, as well as apps role on the dietitian-patient exchange processes. After interviews were transcript, a successive and recursive process of data categorization was employed, attending to the identified units of analysis, in order to aggregate and appropriately express the emerging themes of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

The results suggest that there are a number of reasons for the use of nutrition apps by these professionals, mainly related to utilitarian motives. Their need for actualization and interest in technology also appear to have a motivational role. Their level of engagement varies attending to their evaluation of each app adequacy, range of functionalities and its ability for providing solutions for solving their daily clinical problems or questions. This research also identified different roles of the nutrition apps on the dietitian-patient exchange processes. The implications of these results are discussed in the context of the clinical practice.

### Biography:

Sandra Miranda completed her PhD in Social Communication, Master degree in Human Resource Management and Bachelor degree in Sociology. She is an Associate Dean and Lecturer in School of Communication and Media Studies (Lisbon) Portugal. Her Research Fields are Organizational Behavior and Consumer Behavior.