

## PROFESSIONAL PROFILE OF EGRESSES FROM THE PHYSIOTHERAPY COURSE OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN THE STATE OF PARÁ

### *PERFIL PROFISSIONAL DE EGRESSOS DO CURSO DE FISIOTERAPIA DE UMA INSTITUIÇÃO DE ENSINO DO ESTADO DO PARÁ*

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#### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** recognizing the professional profile of graduates from an educational institution in the State of Pará. **Methods:** the survey was conducted in November/December 2019 through the questionnaire made available for virtual filling in the Google Forms, which was composed of open and closed questions, such as gender, year of completion of the course, occupation area in physiotherapy, level of job satisfaction, among others. **Results:** graduates entered the market quickly, 75% entered the activity in less than one year, 45% of those surveyed in addition to exercising physiotherapy continue to be trained in training and undergraduate courses, it was identified that the majority (25%) of the graduates works in the area of Physiotherapy in Traumatology-Orthopedics and professional satisfaction was registered in 64% of the answers. **Conclusion:** physiotherapy graduates of the institution studied have acquired sufficient skills to excel in the job market, as well as perceiving continuing education as a necessity to remain in the professional activity, and despite reports that the profession can still be valued more by the category, by the society and in the financial return, satisfaction with the profession fosters new paths for physiotherapy.

**Keywords:** professional profile; physiotherapy; job market.

#### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** conhecer o perfil profissional dos egressos de uma instituição de ensino do Estado do Pará. **Métodos:** a pesquisa foi realizada nos meses de novembro/dezembro de 2019 através do questionário disponibilizado para preenchimento virtual na ferramenta *Google Forms*, que era composto por perguntas abertas e fechadas, tais como gênero, ano de conclusão do curso, área de ocupação na fisioterapia, nível de satisfação profissional, entre outras. **Resultados:** os egressos se inseriram no mercado rapidamente, 75% adentraram na atividade em menos de um ano; 45% dos pesquisados, além de exercer a fisioterapia, continuam se capacitando em cursos de formação e pós-graduação; foi identificado que a maioria (25%) dos egressos atua na área da Fisioterapia em Traumatismo-Ortopedia e registrou-se satisfação profissional em 64% das respostas. **Conclusões:** os egressos de fisioterapia da instituição estudada, adquiriram competências suficientes para se destacar no mercado de trabalho, bem como percebem a educação continuada como uma necessidade para permanência na atividade profissional e, apesar dos relatos de que a profissão ainda pode ser mais valorizada pela categoria, pela sociedade e no retorno financeiro, a satisfação com a profissão fomenta novos caminhos para a fisioterapia.

**Palavras-chave:** perfil profissional; fisioterapia; mercado de trabalho.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The history of physiotherapy is recent and defined as a young area in the context of health<sup>1</sup>. The profession completed 50 years of existence on October 13, 2019 and has undoubtedly been evolving upwards through category struggles and with changes in academic education.

The National Curriculum Guidelines (NCGs), for the Graduation in Physiotherapy, provide for competencies and skills for the generalist, humanist, critical and reflective professional profile<sup>2</sup>; however, the educational process in Brazil emphasizes

traditional teaching models, where the student is considered passive in the process, while the teacher has a greater source of knowledge. But currently, the literature and the labor market point to the need for changes in this paradigm, through an innovative educational method, with the student's protagonism<sup>3</sup>.

Only from this transition, the future professional will effectively develop the personal and professional skills to insert and remain in the labor market. Since the competencies transform teaching, deeply, because the teaching-learning process based on competencies values the student's protagonism and provides significant learning, equipping the student to act with

autonomy in the face of the different realities of the professional market<sup>4,5</sup>.

Although the perception of graduates, given the teaching-learning process, is a mandatory factor in the institutional evaluation process, little information is found in the literature, and monitoring the results of this innovative educational process can support the readjustments of the curriculum because of the new social realities and different demands of the regional and national professional market<sup>6</sup>.

The North region has the lowest number of physiotherapists in the country, especially in states such as Pará, Acre, Roraima, Amazonas and Amapá<sup>7</sup>, so it is inferable that the regional market is favorable and that the competencies linked to the profile of the graduate become.

In view of the above, we sought to identify the professional profile of graduates of the physiotherapy course of an educational institution in the State of Pará, which will allow contributing to the continuous updating of undergraduate curricula in physiotherapy in front of the new premises of the professional market.

## METHODS

The study is of the descriptive observational type, of transversal character, of the quanti-qualitative type. The choice of participants occurred for convenience, from the database available in the course coordination, of graduates, between the years 2009. The research followed three steps: the first corresponded to the survey and cataloging of the contacts available in the coordination database, but many contacts were not updated and/or available, 190 contacts of graduates were cataloged.

The second phase occurred through the researcher's invitation to the graduates, to participate in the research, via messaging application. Along with the message, the access link to the survey questionnaire was sent, the period established for completion covered the months of November and December 2019.

The third and final phase consisted of collecting answers, it is worth clarifying that the first section of the form was the Free and Informed Consent Form (FICF), informing the graduate about the objectives, risks and benefits of the research. After voluntary consent, it was followed to the section of open and closed questions linked to the profile of the graduate, these items were based on the institutional project of monitoring the graduates of the researched institution and on the NCGs.

The instrument was answered through the Google Forms tool, had questions about the

participant's gender, year of completion of the course, state of residence and how long he entered the job market.

Specific questions of professional performance: current occupation, whether it is in the completed course or another follow-up - in case the current occupation is in physiotherapy - the researched should indicate in which area of specialty is working (cardiorespiratory, osteopathy, dermato-functional, etc.); type of work developed, with possibilities of "formal" response in the private or public sector, "informal" or "I am not working"; the level of professional satisfaction - with possibilities of response on a linear scale from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. The open questions, discursive, were "what difficulties are perceived for insertion and permanence in the labor market" and "what is your suggestion of approaching the training institution with the graduates". At the end of the third phase, only 60 responses were received.

The database is made available, in spreadsheets, by the Google Forms platform itself, with these records it was possible to build tables and graphs, as well as descriptive statistical analysis by calculating means, standard deviation, and percentages through Microsoft Excel 2016.

## RESULTS

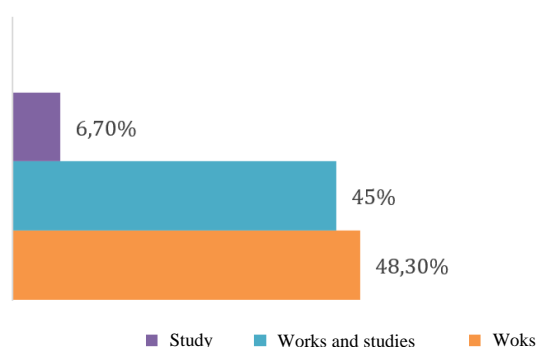
One-hundred ninety graduates were invited, this study is based on a sample of 60 valid responses from graduates of the Physiotherapy course.

The research population was represented by 73.3% female and 26.7% male participants, the surveyed were formed between 2010 and June 2019, most participants (21.67%) completed the course in 2018.

Most graduates still live in the municipality of Belem, only 11.7% of those surveyed are in other states due to employment, in states such as Paraná, Curitiba, Ceará and João Pessoa.

The study showed that 93.3% of the surveyed are inserted in the labor market in physiotherapy, and 6.7% are not working on the complete course but would like to be in the training course market.

The characterization of the participants, regarding the current occupation, professional performance, and professional qualification, points out that a considerable proportion of graduates (n=27 / 45%) professional qualification with work, as shown in Graph 1.



**Graph 1.** Characterization of professional occupation and/or qualification developed.

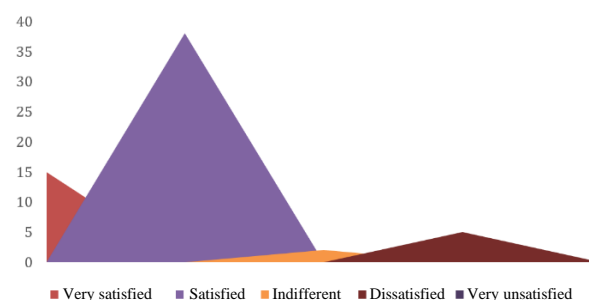
The information about the time of insertion in the labor market, the area of activity of physiotherapy and the function/position are described in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Variables on insertion in the labor market.

	N	%
Time for insertion in the labor market		
Did not enter the labor market	3	5,0
Less than 1 year	45	75,0
From 1 to 3 years	12	20,0
Area of action in Physiotherapy		
No area of Physiotherapy	3	5,0
Traumatology, orthopedics, and rheumatology	15	25,0
Pediatrics	3	5,0
Neurology	5	8,33
Gerontology	1	1,67
Cardiorespiratory	11	18,33
Worker's Health	1	1,67
Dermatofunctional	6	10,0
Urogynecology	1	1,67
Acupuncture	4	6,66
Other areas of Physiotherapy	10	16,67
Function/Position		
Physiotherapist in the public sector	14	23,33
Physiotherapist in the private sector	28	46,67
Self-employed	15	25,0
Unemployed	3	5,0

Graph 2 represents the levels of satisfaction with the professional activity of the graduates. We investigated the difficulties faced for insertion in the labor market, as well as barriers to staying in the professional market; the answers were grouped into categories, according to graph 3.

When analyzing the answers to the question about perceived difficulties, it is necessary to transcribe one of the answers of the graduates (\*E) that demonstrates a broader perception about the professional insertion in the labor market.



**Graph 2.** Level of satisfaction with professional performance.



**Graph 3.** Difficulties faced for insertion and permanence in the labor market.

"For me none. In general perception the lack of entrepreneurship and knowledge in management. What makes the physiotherapist think that just being employed or having to take millions of courses to be able to earn some money" (\*E.42)

The majority of those surveyed report that they would be satisfied with the institution of training with its graduates, based on invitations to contribute to scientific events of the course, possibility of teaching workshops, courses and lectures, as well as would like to have the opportunity to qualify in courses and improvements offered by the institution.

## DISCUSSION

The present study inferred that the graduates developed the skills and skills vital for insertion in the labor market, as they did not present difficulties of entering the branch of the profession, continue to qualify and demonstrate satisfaction with the physiotherapeutic activity.

Information compatible with the "Graduate Profile", provided for in the National Curriculum Guidelines<sup>2</sup>, is defined as the set of characteristics and resources developed through the competencies

acquired in the undergraduate course, allowing the social recognition of this professional<sup>6</sup>.

It is noteworthy, however, that the difficulty pointed out by the graduates, to enter the market, was the requirement of professional experience, because companies do not always consider the activities performed during graduation, such as compulsory and non-compulsory curricular internships.

And the article by Silva et al<sup>8</sup> states that the professional experience is started in the undergraduate course, but will be improved through his practice with patients, in a work environment, to improve reasoning and techniques.

This experience lived in undergraduate should be better valued, because it is through higher education institutions that the individual could develop cross-cutting and technical skills to practice the profession, highlighting skills such as orality, effective teamwork, creativity and innovation<sup>5</sup>.

The mastery of the aforementioned skills favors a differentiated curriculum, as well as the insertion of the graduate in the professional practice, as identified in this study in which 75% of the graduates were absorbed by the market in less than one year of training.

The work of Thomas *et al*<sup>9</sup> corroborates the present research, given that the graduates, researched by him, obtained the first employment relationship through curricular presentation (32.04%), followed by the indication of third parties (28.16%).

Thus, preparing and achieving the professional profile and regardless of the way we enter the market, our graduates will perceive the need for continuing education for the profession and the permanence in a professional occupation, as registered in 45% of graduates who continue to train themselves through training and postgraduate courses. As the results of Câmara and Santos<sup>10</sup> evidenced 46% of the graduates performing specializations, especially in the areas of orthopedics/sports and cardiorespiratory, highlighted as the areas of greatest demand and consolidation in the market.

In this context, it is known about the predominance of the female public in the health curious fact, in the physiotherapy course of the institution researched, is the increase in male participation, resulting from the interest in the areas of physiotherapy in traumatology and sports, also exposed as those with a higher frequency of professional performance of the investigated graduates.

Regarding the current occupation, the configuration of professional link was higher in the private sector (46.67%), as in the research by Santos *et*

*al*<sup>11</sup> that identified 35% of its graduates linked to private clinics, academies, and Pilates area.

Despite being practicing the profession, the graduates reveal difficulties faced such as professional and wage devaluation, ratified in the work of Câmara and Santos<sup>10</sup> that show the reality of bonding in more than one place, in an attempt to increase income. Particularly in the municipality of Belem, this devaluation is accentuated because there is no professional union, so physical therapists do not have a salary floor, and this economic reality is also described in other places of the country because it is not part of the daily life of most physiotherapists to perceive the relationship between the work situation and labor reforms<sup>12</sup>.

This restricted view that the worker profile is linked only to clinical practice, distancing knowledge from other factors that influence professional performance<sup>12</sup> have repercussions on physical therapists who undergo a workday greater than 40 hours per week, in an attempt to improve financial return<sup>11</sup>.

In this perspective, the use of a virtual questionnaire for the current research favored contact with the possible researchers, but a limitation of the study was the research time, due to having been applied in the final months of the year, the graduates had little availability of time to participate in the work, reflecting in membership of 31.57% of the invited graduates.

Such career difficulties are widely scored by graduates; however, they did not interfere in the levels of personal and professional satisfaction, since 63.4% of the surveyed are satisfied with the performance in physiotherapy and 25% very satisfied, that is, almost 90% of the graduates present important professional satisfaction.

Fortunately, the results of this study are in line with the work of Shiwa<sup>13</sup>, which signals professional satisfaction of physiotherapy graduates in the states of Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Santa Catarina. In this way, satisfaction will contribute to the growth and development of personal and professional, as well as collaboration for reformulations in physiotherapy courses in the country favoring the recognition of physiotherapy before society.

## CONCLUSION

Most of the graduates presented rapid insertion in the labor market, and that even in professional practice they continue to seek qualification through the undergraduate study. And it was found that regardless of the area of activity, the vast majority of graduates are satisfied with their performance in the

physiotherapy profession, but they highlight that the profession can still be more valued by the category itself, by society and in financial return. It is noteworthy that this research will contribute consubstantially to the reformulation and updating of the Pedagogical Projects of the Physiotherapy Course.

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