

# New study on the Brazilian physical therapy researcher

Estudo inédito sobre o pesquisador fisioterapeuta brasileiro

The Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy (BJPT) could not fail to highlight the new study on the profile of the Brazilian physical therapist, recently published in the BJPT (COURY, Helenice JCG and VILELLA, Iolanda. Profile of the Brazilian physical therapy researcher. *Rev. bras. fisioter.* [online]. ahead of print, pp. 0-0. Epub Aug 28, 2009). The study described the profile of the physical therapy researcher in terms of training, scientific production and funding by Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq). The authors analyzed the individual curricula vitae of 573 physical therapy researchers with a PhD, available in the Lattes Database of CNPq. The variables analyzed were the year of award of doctoral degree, the institution that awarded the undergraduate and doctoral degrees, the academic and practical specialty area, scientific production and training of new researchers. The chosen quality indicator was the publication of international articles (Institute for Scientific Information-ISI/Journal Citation Reports-JCR), which was analyzed on the basis of the field of practice and other work and lines of research as possible factors of influence.

In the last decade, there was an exponential increase in the number of PhD researchers with undergraduate training in physical therapy, which represented a leap from 57 researchers in 1998 to 573 in 2008. This result shows the massive effort on the part of the physical therapy community to achieve scientific qualification. Although the graduate programs in the field are relatively new, with the first master's degree program created in 1997, 20% of researchers (N=115) already have master's degree and/or PhD students who defended theses and dissertations. The average number of full articles published by physical therapy researchers per year (N=1.99) exceeds the same indicator for researchers in all fields (N= 1.44) in the Brazilian Research Group Directory of the 2002, 2004 and 2006 CNPq censuses.

The majority of PhD researchers completed their undergraduate training at universities from the country's Southeast Region: Universidade Federal de São Carlos - UFSCar (N=71), Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas - PUC-Campinas (N=46), Universidade Metodista de Piracicaba - Unimep (N=35) and Universidade Estadual Paulista - Unesp (N=31). The remaining institutions had values under 25. In the South Region, the main universities were Universidade Estadual de Londrina - UEL (N=41) and Universidade Federal de Santa Maria - UFSM (N=24), and in the Northeast, Universidade Federal da Paraíba - UFPB + Universidade Estadual da Paraíba - UEPB (N=25), Universidade Federal de Pernambuco - UFPE (N=15) and Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte - UFRN (N=9).

The area of musculoskeletal physical therapy had 190 researchers (33.2% of the total) and accumulated the largest number of published articles. The area of cardiopulmonary physical therapy, with 158 researchers (27.6% of the

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total), had the second largest number of published articles. The areas of adult and child neurology, with 107 researchers, published 18.7% of the total. The areas of gynecology and geriatric physical therapy, with 47 researchers, published 8.2%.

The data related to funding, however, showed that this great academic effort has not been accompanied by equal support from the funding agencies. When compared to the other allied health areas of CNPq, physical therapy was the area that received the least amount of support per researcher between 1998 and 2007.

The study also highlights the importance of the service rendered by journals such as the Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy in seeking indexing and disseminating quality research results, in print and electronic format, to extend the visibility of the scientific production across the country. As emphasized by the authors, the profile of the researchers described in the study may help the academic community to gain a perspective on their identity and to define future priorities for the furtherance of knowledge and professional practice.

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