

### **Influencing factors on Occupational Therapy graduating' decision of working area**

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**Introduction:** This study identified factors that influenced the area of specialty choice among Occupational Therapy undergraduate students from the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) and from the Faculdade de Ciências Médicas de Minas Gerais (FCMMG).

**Objectives:** to identify and to characterize the relevance of these factors as contributors to the choice of professional specialty area of interest and to compare factors that are specific to this choice among the undergraduate students from both Occupational Therapy courses in the city of Belo Horizonte/MG, of distinct nature (public and private).

**Methods:** a questionnaire was administered to all students graduating in the second semester of 2001, first and second semesters of 2002 from UFMG, and to the graduating classes of 2001 and 2002 from FCMMG.

**Results/discussion:** data were analyzed with quantitative procedures. The results revealed grouping of factors with distinct relevance, according to the following contents: passion, calling, curricular and extra-curricular practical experience, faculty education background and professor/student relationship, strength of professional identity in the area, course structure and curriculum organization and marketing perspective.

**Conclusion:** the results from this study may contribute to the understanding of both courses regarding the influences that they have on the graduating students and consequently, help create strategies to their problem solving process.