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## **Latin America Occupational Therapy: reflections on professional education and social issues**

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**Introduction:** Latin America, characterized by economic inequalities and social vulnerabilities, becomes intervention place of the professionals involved with the social reality and the effectiveness of social policies, as the occupational therapist. We discuss the insufficiency of the individual and biomedical approach and the necessity of a social and collective perspective in the region. This kind of reflection is observed in the new guidelines of education of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT).

**Objective:** To investigate the professional education in occupational therapy in Latin American countries and verify if that address social issues.

**Method:** A mapping was carried out on the 114 websites of the undergraduate courses. Questionnaires were applied with 40 coordinators. And 23 distance interviews with professors responsible for disciplines that discussed subjects related to social issues in universities in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela were performed. Results: It was observed that there are reflections on the social issues in the professional education, however they are still scarce and not very representative among the other areas, especially those of biomedical nature. There has been a movement based on theoretical and practical reflections criticizing the use of individualistic approaches in face of the local social needs.

**Conclusion:** It is considered necessary to develop theoretical and methodological frameworks specific in occupational therapy in Latin American countries to address the social question. We hope this study stimulate to reduce borders among the Latin countries and new researches regarding occupational therapy and social issue.