

# INFLUENCE OF THE PRESENCE OF PROFESSIONALS WHO HOLD A BACHELORS DEGREE IN THE SCIENCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT ON THE SUPPLY OF SERVICES AVAILABLE AT FITNESS CENTERS IN MADRID

Author:  
Carlos Boned

email:  
cj.boned@gmail.com

Co-authors:  
[García-Merino], [Sonia];  
[Felipe], [José Luis];  
[Moral], [Susana];  
[Martín], [María];

University:  
Universidad Europea de Madrid

Faculty:  
Theory, Recreation and Organization of Sport

## Abstract

### Aim of paper

To analyze whether the presence of professionals with bachelor degrees in the Science of Physical Activity and Sport at the fitness centers in Madrid have any relationship with health-oriented services available, particularly services to special populations, personal training, conducting functional assessments, and the administration of pre-exercise questionnaires in the fitness centers. Therefore the main aim was: Effects of professionals holding a BA degree on Madrid fitness centers' activities.

### Theoretical background

Fitness activities have become one of the alternatives to physical activity for much of the population, evolving in parallel with the developed societies (Boned, 2010; García 2011). Thus, people who practice this type of exercise, seek to enjoy a complete set of services where there is a balance between intellectual components, and social and physical development beyond the physical fitness components in isolation (Corrales, 2010). In this new field, the professionals who design, implement, monitor and evaluate exercise programs in fitness centers are becoming vital for their success (Viallon, Camy & Collins, 2003), and their professional qualifications are one of the variables that have been identified as key to their professional success (Gavin, 2007; Jiménez, 2005). However, there is a deficiency in the Spanish environment of rigorous studies that address this issue. A study carried out in 2003 on a sample of 145 professionals in the fitness

sectors of Madrid and Barcelona, it was discovered that 22.2% of them held a bachelor degree in the Science Physical Activity and Sport (Boned, Rodríguez & López, 2003). On the other hand, Eroski (2006) discovered that one of each seven Spanish Fitness Centers developed a pre-exercise test with their clients and only the 18% had a medical service. In relation to the presence of the personal training, Boned, García & Martín (2009) detected that one of each two fitness centers in the Madrid area, had that service.

### Methodology, research design and data analysis

The sample unit was a private fitness center located in the community of Madrid. To determine the sample size, a census was performed on this type of facility, since there was not to date any reference that would provide this information (N=409). The sample was selected and stratified geographically through a random selection of that census calling by phone to set the interviews. The result was 49.3% (n = 202) of the sampling, allowing extract results extrapolated to the entire population with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of sampling error of  $\pm 5$ .

For the data collection, an Ad Hoc questionnaire was developed and administered through a personal interview with the manager of each of the centers with an average interview duration of 40 minutes.

The variables used for statistical analysis were: 1. Presence of a bachelors degree in Physical Activity and Sport in the fitness center, 2. Presence of exercise programs designed exclusively for people with special needs, 3. Presence of personal training services in the fitness center 4. Application of functional assessments in the fitness center 5. The use of pre-exercise physical fitness questionnaires in the centers.

To test the possible relationships between variables, Chi-square tests were performed to determine the exact calculation of probability. The cutoff points were the Z values for significance levels 0.05 ( $\pm 1.96$ ) and 0.01 ( $\pm 2.57$ ). For all of these tests, significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

### Results, discussion and implications/conclusions

Of the 202 fitness centers analyzed, 63.9% had professionals with a bachelor degree in Science of Physical Activity, 34.6% included exercise programs targeted for populations with special needs, 45.5% offered personal training, 50.0% possessed the ability to perform functional assessments for their clients and only 37.6% administered pre-exercise physical fitness questionnaires to new customers.

The statistical analysis revealed a positive relationship between the presence of bachelor degree program graduates in Science of Physical Activity and Sport and all the variables studied: offering exercise programs aimed at special populations ( $X^2 = 18.040$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ), personal training service ( $X^2 = 22.832$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ), functional assessments ( $X^2 = 14.324$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ) and fitness questionnaires ( $X^2 = 10.011$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

Therefore, we could conclude that in the centers surveyed, the presence of bachelor degree holding professionals seems to have a positive impact on the services available, identifying bachelor degree recruitment as an added value

for these types of organizations.

References:

- Boned, C.J. (2010). Actitudes y comportamientos relacionados con la actividad física de los habitantes del área metropolitana de Madrid. PhD Dissertation. Madrid: Universidad Europea de Madrid.
- Boned, C.J., García, S. & Martín, M. (2009). Situación actual de los servicios de entrenamiento personal en los centros de fitness. In G. Hernando (Coord.). Nuevas tendencias del entrenamiento personal, pp. 49-57. Barcelona: Paidotribo.
- Boned, C.J., Rodríguez, G. & López, P. (2003). Aproximación a la situación de los profesionales en el sector del fitness. In Actas de I Congreso Internacional de Gestión deportiva de Canarias (pp.239-240). Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: ACAGEDE.
- Eroski (2006). La atención y el asesoramiento al cliente de los gimnasios siguen en baja forma. Consumer Eroski, 117, 35-41.
- Corrales, A.R. (2010). El fitness entendido como ocio actual saludable. Revista de Transmisión del Conocimiento Educativo y de la Salud. 2(1), 14-29.
- García, S. (2011). Características de los centros de fitness de titularidad privada de la Comunidad de Madrid. PhD Dissertation. Madrid: Universidad Europea de Madrid.
- Gavin, J. (2007). IDEA Fitness Industry Compensation Survey 2006. IDEA Fitness Journal. Recovered of: [www.idealife.com](http://www.idealife.com), April 27th 2010.
- Jiménez, A. (2005). El entrenamiento personal hoy en día. In A. Jiménez (Ed.), Entrenamiento Personal. Bases Fundamentales y Aplicación, (pp. 1-12). Barcelona: INDE.
- Viallon, R., Camy, J. & Collins, M.F. (2003). The European integration of a new occupation, the training and education strategies of national professional organizations: the case of the fitness sector in France and the United Kingdom. Managing Leisure, 8, 85-96.