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ORIGINAL

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE OF WORKERS IN SPANISH FITNESS CLUBS

PERFIL PROFESIONAL DE LOS TRABAJADORES DE LOS CENTROS DE FITNESS EN ESPAÑA

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RESUMEN

El objetivo del presente estudio fue el de profundizar en el conocimiento de las características sociodemográficas de los profesionales del sector del fitness en España en función del puesto principal desempeñado dentro de la organización. La muestra estuvo formada por 1.662 profesionales (edad media=32,14; DT=6,80; 50,7 % hombres; 49,3 % mujeres). Para la recogida de datos se utilizó un cuestionario diseñado *ad hoc*. Los resultados mostraron que el género, la edad, y el nivel de formación, resultaban diferentes en función del puesto ocupado. Como conclusión principal, se puede afirmar que los profesionales del sector del fitness español, presentaban una dilatada experiencia en la profesión y un nivel de formación adecuado a las necesidades de sus respectivos puestos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Gestión Deportiva, Profesionales, Fitness, Formación, Cualificación, Experiencia Profesional.

ABSTRACT

The goal of the present study was to delve into the knowledge of the socio demographic features of professionals in the Spanish fitness sector according to the main position performed within the organization. The sample included 1,662 professionals (average age=32.14; SD=6.80; 50.7 % males; 49.3 % females). To collect data an *ad hoc*-designed questionnaire was used. Results showed that gender, age and level of training turned out to be different depending on the position held. It may be concluded, for starters, that professionals in the Spanish fitness sector have ample experience in their profession and a training level adequate to the needs of their respective positions.

KEYWORDS: Sports Management, Professionals, Fitness, Training, Qualifications, Professional Experience.

1. INTRODUCTION

The demand for products related to physical activity and health has grown exponentially in our country in the last years (Calabuig, Quintanilla & Mundina, 2008; Martínez et al., 2009). Likewise, recent studies on the sporting habits of the Spanish population confirm that there has been a 20% increase in the people who take part in physical-sporting activities from 1980 to 2010 (García & Llopis, 2011). This has provoked a diversification in the sector, generating several employments in this sector, especially at the end of the 90's (CSD, 2000).

The sector related to fitness, specifically, has become an established market with constantly-growing numbers. Presently, the amount of users of fitness clubs in Spain according to the International Health & Racquet Sports Association (2011) is 7.98 million, ranking the Spanish fitness market at the second worldwide place behind the USA, and at the head of the European ranking for this indicator, over Germany (7.90 million) and the United Kingdom (7.40 million).

This high amount of fitness clubs users is also reflected, as was to be expected, in the amount of professionals who offer their services in these clubs, as shown in studies undertaken in the last years on the labour market in physical activity and sport (Centro de Estudios Económicos Tomillo [CEET], 2006; Instituto Nacional de las Cualificaciones-Consejo Superior de Deportes [INCUAL-CSD], 2008; Telecyl Estudios, 2006).

This growth in the number of professionals has taken place in the absence of an adequate legislation to regulate it (García, Lago & Fernández, 2011). For that reason, and in response to the demand of different collectives, several drafts for the Law on the organization of the professional practice of physical activity and sport have been produced (Campos, 2008). This aspect has already been dealt with in the regional sphere of Catalonia, the first Spanish region to regulate the practice of this profession (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2008).

That regulation, at a state level, would be aimed at ensuring a physical activity and sport service that is safe and of first quality, as one of the added values of any service with these characteristics is, undoubtedly, to count with qualified professionals with an adequate training for the different tasks performed in the organizations (Boned, Rodríguez and López de Viñaspre, 2004; Campos, González, Pablos and Jimenez-Beatty, 2008; Campos, Martínez, Mestre and Pablos, 2007; Gambau, 2011).

Traditionally, the fitness sector has given more importance to infrastructures, equipment or decoration than to the human touch. This tendency, however, has changed in the last few years, as a result of a market that keeps getting more competitive and clients that keep getting more demanding, making human resources an item of ever greater importance to distinguish one club from the rest (Gambau, 2011). According to IHRSA (2011), human resources in fitness

clubs are key to retain clients. For that reason it is essential to encourage the attendance of clients, to try to reduce the psychological barriers faced by new users, to involve all the staff in customer care and to try to avoid an excessive staff rotation. In this regard, Lloyd (2007) proposes that client satisfaction, and therefore their retention, increases when the level of training and specialization in the position held by the organization's staff is higher. In their search for this specialization in positions, López de Viñaspre et al. (2003) propose 5 positions in the fitness sector: guided activities teacher, room teacher, personal trainer, technical director/coordinator and managing director.

As of today, there are no studies at a national level focused specifically on the socio demographic, training and experience profile of the fitness sector professionals. Thus, a reliable response could be given to the reality of each and all of the professional spheres of physical activity and sport.

2. OBJECTIVES

Bearing all this in mind, the main aim of this study was to delve into the description of the features of the Spanish fitness sector professionals in order to shed some more light on the state of the matter. Two research objectives were established for that end. Firstly, to define the socio demographic typologies and those related to the progress of the professional career of the Spanish fitness sector professionals, especially those related to their training level and their experience in the sector. Secondly, to explore the professional profiles of the staff holding different technical positions in fitness centres, searching for the features that characterize them.

3. EQUIPMENT AND METHOD

3.1 DESIGN AND SAMPLE

A transversal study was undertaken based on sample, using a self-administered questionnaire as data collection technique (both on paper and on-line versions).

The population subject to the study included all the professionals currently holding positions in the fitness sector who held any position within the technical staff of any organization of a private nature. For that end the following positions were considered: Fitness Room Specialists (FRS), Personal Trainers (PT), Specialists in Collective Classes (SCC) and Technical Directors/Coordinators (TD/C).

Since there is no database or census that would allow to know the scope of the population subject to the study, an expert in Business Management and Administration undertook an estimation of the scope of this universe taking as starting point the existing literature and using as sources the following entities and info sources: Federación Nacional de Empresarios de Instalaciones Deportivas (FNEID); the trade unions Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) and Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT); Sistema de Análisis de Balances Ibéricos

(SABI); and Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE), specifically la Encuesta de Población Activa (EPA) and el Directorio Central de Empresas (DIRCE).

The scope of the sample universe was finally estimated in 74,808 professionals. From that scope a sample of 1,662 participants was selected, which allowed obtaining representative data at a global level with a confidence interval of 99.7 % (3σ) and a sampling error margin of ±4% according to the calculation in order to determine sample sizes in finite populations provided by Sierra (2001).

The sample allocation was performed by the autonomous community of origin according to the estimations done on the population subject to the study. To that end, field work was intensified in those autonomous communities which presented a greater proportion of professionals in the activity sector in which those professionals are included according to the Encuesta de Población Activa (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2010), which turned out to be Madrid, Catalonia and Andalucía. Thus, the scope of each of the strata of the sample presented a proportional relation very close to the scope of the layers of the universe (see Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of the strata of the population subject to the study and of the sample by autonomous community of origin

Stratum by autonomous community	Serving staff	Percentage of the stratum in the universe (%)	Percentage of the stratum in the sample (%)
Andalucía	230,200	15.7	17.9
Aragón	36,100	2.5	3.4
Asturias	31,900	2.2	2.4
Baleares	45,300	3.1	2.0
Canarias	57,900	4.0	3.8
Cantabria	16,700	1.1	1.0
Castilla y León	57,100	3.9	7.0
Castilla-La Mancha	42,700	2.9	2.2
Catalonia	233,100	15.9	14.7
Ceuta	1,000	0.1	0.1
Comunidad Valenciana	175,000	12.0	8.1
Extremadura	20,700	1.4	0.7
Galicia	84,400	5.8	2.9
La Rioja	9,500	0.6	1.3
Madrid	279,100	19.1	24.8
Melilla	1,500	0.1	0.1
Murcia	46,100	3.2	1.9
Navarra	20,000	1.4	1.3
Basque Country	72,800	5.0	4.3
Total	1,461,000	100.0	100.0

Own elaboration based on the 2010 Encuesta de Población Activa of the professional activity branch: "Artistic, recreational and entertainment activities; households as domestic employers and as goods and services producers for self-use; activities in organizations and extraterritorial bodies; other services (INE, 2010)"

The selection of the sample, analysed through the traditional questionnaire, was done on several events, fairs and exhibitions focused on the fitness sector at national level which usually congregate a reasonable amount of professionals with the characteristics of the population subject to the study. The sample analysed through the on-line questionnaire was selected from the emails from the databases of clients or associates of different organizations of national level related to the fitness sector.

It is worth mentioning that the scores obtained in the analysed variables through the traditional method (n=766) and the on-line method (n=896) did not present noteworthy differences that might disrupt the adjustment to the study.

The main socio demographic features of the analysed sample are described in Table 2. The participants in this study had an average age between 32 and 33 years old (M=32.14; SD=6.80) within a range between 17 and 60 years old, and included in equal proportion males (50.7 %) and females (49.3 %).

Table 2. Distribution of the sample according to gender, the held position and the educational level (n=1,662)

	n	%	Age (SD)		n	%	Age (SD)
Gender				**Educational level**			
Males	842	50.7	32.03 (6.73)	Primary	117	7.0	34.41 (6.90)
Females	820	49.3	32.26 (6.88)	Secondary	240	14.4	33.94 (7.87)
Total	**1162**	**100.0**		Professional training	463	27.9	31.84 (7.18)
Position				University diploma	316	19.0	31.84 (6.19)
FRS	351	21.12	30.59 (6.27)	University degree	373	22.5	31.01 (6.05)
SCC	861	51.81	31.99 (6.90)	Postgraduate	144	8.7	31.84 (5.85)
PT	173	10.41	32.43 (6.76)	No opinion/No reply	9	0.5	31.90 (6.81)
TD/C	277	16.66	34.40 (6.58)				
Total	**1662**	**100.0**		**Total**	**1662**	**100.0**	

51.8 % of the sample was SCC, 21.1 % FRS, 10.4% PT and 16.7% TD/C.

3.2 INSTRUMENT

The CSSL-PSF self-administered questionnaire was used (questionnaire on the labour situation of the fitness sector professionals) to perform the data collection. This tool was designed *ad hoc* with the aim of collecting the necessary information to cover, among other things, the objectives of the present study.

A first draft of the instrument was designed on the basis of previous studies similar to the present one (García, 2011; López de Viñaspre et al., 2003). Afterwards, this first draft was submitted to the attention of a panel of experts composed by 5 university doctor professors specialized in Sports Management and dedicated specifically to the fitness sector, in order to refine the contents and the quality of the proposed items. Once the first version of the tool was defined, a pilot test was done on several fitness centres (n=20) in order to assess the average duration of the test and the suitability and the adequate comprehension of the questions posed. Finally, the definitive questionnaire was elaborated. This questionnaire was published in a traditional format in paper to be supplied physically and in electronic format to be filled with an on-line application designed for that end.

The socio demographic variables used were: age (quantitative), gender (dichotomy), marital status and educational level achieved (both nominal of single choice).

The variables related to the development of the professional career were: type of specific training related to the physical activity or sport (all training alternatives were presented as a dichotomy and afterwards a single nominal variable was constructed which picked up the different training profiles), other training courses (open question which was categorized afterwards), simultaneity

of work and university studies (dichotomy), professional experience and time during which the present position has been held (both quantitative).

3.3 PROCEDURES

Field work took place during the period between February 2011 and January 2012.

Data collection, using the traditional self-administered questionnaire, was done by collaborators in the research project who travelled from Madrid to the different Spanish cities where events, fairs and exhibitions focused on this type of professionals took place. The collaborators selected randomly the participants from attendees and visitors, asking before handing in the questionnaire whether the pertinent persons worked in any fitness club and whether they held any of the positions object of the study. Once a participant was selected, the collaborator handed them the questionnaire and informed them of the place where it was to be handed back once filled. The information was transferred manually to the SPSS v.18.0 software.

Data collection, using the on-line questionnaire, was performed with the assistance of different organizations related to the Spanish fitness sector (professional associations, employers and fitness material and equipment suppliers). Participants received a message in their on-line mail inbox related to the objective of the study, the characteristics of the instrument and of the access to the questionnaire by means of a link to an URL address. Participants answered the questions in the same application and, when finished, that information was transferred automatically to a database of the SPSS v.18.0 software.

3.4 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS.

Regarding the techniques of statistical analysis employed, it is worth mentioning for starters that none of the variables studied presented a normal distribution, as they were submitted to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. For this reason tests of a non-parametric character were chosen when selecting the procedures and techniques of statistical analysis.

The Chi-square test was used to analyse the values observed, in relation to those expected in the comparison of nominal variables. *Post hoc* tests were applied by means of the analysis of typified residues in the cases in which differences turned out to be significant. Cut points were established for the values of Z in ± 1.96 and ± 2.57, corresponding to significance values of 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.

In order to compare the average scores, a Kruskal-Wallis H test was used. When applying this last analysis, checks by pairs were done on those cases in which significant differences were found to determine the nature of these differences.

For all these tests a confidence level of 95.0 % was established, and a statistical significance level of $p<0.05$. Also, the exact significance for each of the tests was reported in all cases.

4. RESULTS

4.1 AGE, GENDER AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE FITNESS SECTOR STAFF ACCORDING TO THE POSITION OCCUPIED

The age of professionals in the fitness sector presented statistically significant differences according to the position held ($H=50.042$; $p<0.000$). When doing comparisons by pairs, it was detected that these differences were due to the fact that the average age of TD/C turned out to be significantly greater than that of FRS ($p<0.000$), that of SCC ($p<0.000$) and that of PT ($p<0.010$). The same thing happened in the case of FRS in relation to the rest of categories ($p<0.009$ with SCC; and $p<0.032$ with PT).

The gender of the professionals also presented differences according to the position held [$\chi^2(3) =155.321$; $p<0.000$]. The analysis of the typified residues showed that these differences were due to the fact that there was a higher count than expected of males as opposed to females in the FRS positions (71.2 %; IC95 %: 66.5-75.9; $p<0.001$), PT (63.6 %; IC95 %: 56.4-70,8; $p<0.001$) and TD/C (61.4 %; IC95 %: 55.7-67.1; $p<0.001$), whereas in the SCC positions, the higher count corresponded to females (63.8 %; IC95 %: 60.6-67.0; $p<0.001$) in relation to males.

The level of education reached within the Spanish regulated educative system uncovered that it seemed to be different depending of the principal activity taking place in the fitness centre [$\chi^2(15)=118.087$; $p<0.000$]. These differences were due to the fact that the TD/C presented a higher count than randomly expected amongst those that had reached postgraduate studies (19.6 %; IC95 %: 14.9-24.3; $p<0.01$). PT also presented a number of degree holders (32.9 %; IC95 %: 25.9-35.9; $p<0.01$) and postgraduates (14.5 %; IC95 %: 9.6-20.2; $p<0.01$) higher than was to be expected.

As for the SCC, results showed that the number of those that had secondary studies (18.3 %; IC95 %: 15.7-20.9; $p<0.01$) and professional training studies (31.8 %; IC95 %: 28.7-34.9 $p<0.01$) was in this group higher than was to be randomly expected. The educational level for FRS did not seem to justify the differences found.

It is worth mentioning that 13.6 % of professionals combined simultaneously university studies with their work in the fitness club, and it seems that this circumstance turned out to be different among the different positions [$\chi^2(3)=14.822$; $p<0.002$]. A posteriori contrasts showed that those differences were due to the fact that the number of SCC who were studying a university

degree was higher than expected (15.6 %; IC95 %: 13.2-18.0; p<0.05), while the number of TD/C turned out to be lower (6.9 %; IC95 %: 3.9-9.9; p<0.05).

4.2 SPECIFIC TRAINING RELATED TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT

Table 3 shows the distribution of the different profiles of specific training related to physical activity and sport depending on the positions held in the organization's technical staff, as well as their corresponding confidence intervals at 95 % and the residues typified corrected when undertaking the comparative analysis of the counts observed and expected in the Chi square tests.

Table 4. Presence of the different training profiles according to the position

	Technical staff positions				
	FRS (n=330) % (IC 95%) Residues	**SCC (n=796) % (IC 95%) Residues**	**PT (n=162) % (IC 95%) Residues**	**TD/C (n=268) % (IC 95%) Residues**	**TOTAL (n=1556) %**
DPASS	28.8 (23.9-33.7) 2.8**	11.6 (9.4-13.8) -11.0**	42.0 (34.4-49.6) 6.0**	38.8 (34.4-49.6) 6.7**	**23.1**
PET	13.9 (10.2-17.6) 1.1	11.7 (9.5-13.9) -0.7	9.9 (5.3-14.5) -1.0	13.1 (9.1-17.1) 0.5	**12.2**
STPSA	18.3 (14.0-22.4) 2.5*	14.1 (11.7-16.5) 0.1	11.7 (6.8-16.6) -0.9	9.7 (6.2-13.2) -2.2*	**13.9**
ST	24.2 (19.6-28.8) -1.4	32.7 (29.5-36.1) 5.0**	20.4 (14.2-26.6) -2.1*	19.0 (14.3-23.7) -3.3**	**27.3**
ND	14.8 (11.0-18.6) -4.2**	29.9 (26.7-33.1) 6.1**	16.0 (10.4-21.6) -2.4*	19.4 (14.7-24.1) -1.7	**23.5**

**p<0.01; *p<0.05 DPASS=Degree in Physical Activity and Sport Sciences; PET=Physical Education Teaching; STPSA=Senior Technician in Physical Sporting Activities; ST=Sport Technician of any level; ND=No Official Degree

It may be highlighted that the different training profiles presented statistically significant differences when analysing their distribution in each of the positions held within the technical staff of the organization [$\chi^2(12)=164.063$; p<0.000].

Thus, analysing the nature of the different combinations, it was found that these differences were due to the fact, that, among other reasons, among the TD/C the count of degree holders in Physical Activity and Sports Sciences (from now on PASS) turned out to be higher than randomly expected (38.8 %; p<0.01), just like it happened in the PT positions (42.0 %; p<0.01) and FRS positions (28.8 %; p<0.01). Another reason behind these differences seemed to be the fact that there was a higher count than expected of FRS with a degree in Senior

Technician Instructor in Physical-Sporting Activities (from now on PSD) which turned out to be 18.3 % in this group ($p<0.05$), whereas in the TD/C position, the number of professionals with this profile turned out to be lower than expected (9.7 %; $p<0.05$).

On the other hand, the count of SCC who were merely sport technicians and those that did not have any degree within the educational system turned out to be higher than expected, reaching 32.7 % in the case of the first group and 29.9 % for the second (both with $p<0.05$), whereas, on the contrary, the number of those SCC with a degree in PASS turned out to be lower (11.6 %; $p<0.01$).

Table 4 shows the nature of the training courses of those who did not have any official title within the regulated educational system in Spain, including their distribution according to the position held in the technical staff.

Table 5. Distribution of the types of training courses of those professionals without an official title within the regulated educational system

Type of course	FRS (n=76) %	SCC (n=357) %	PT (n=42) %	TD/C (n=77) %	Total (n=552) %
Collective classes	37.0	64.9	37.4	53.9	57.3
Personal training	12.7	6.3	17.2	5.5	7.9
Trainer in fitness room	14.4	4.4	6.1	6.0	6.1
Health-related courses	9.4	5.5	16.2	7.8	7.2
Management-related courses	1.7	2.4	2.0	7.4	3.1
Other courses	24.8	16.5	21.1	19.4	18.4

4.3. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND TIME DURING WHICH THE PRESENT POSITION HAS BEEN OCCUPIED

The average years of professional experience of all workers turned out to be between 8 and 9 years ($M=8.43$; $SD=6.01$), presenting statistically significant differences between the different positions of the technical staff [$H= 95.604$; $p<0.000$]. When performing these tests by pairs, it was found that these differences were accounted for by the fact that the TD/C ($M=11.32$; $SD=6.01$) had more average years of experience in their positions than FRS positions ($M=7.13$; $SD=5.71$), PT positions ($M=8.86$; $SD=6.31$) and SCC positions ($M=7.98$; $SD=5.71$). Furthermore, the average years of experience in the profession turned out to be also different from the statistical point of view between FRS and PT.

Regarding the time during which workers held their current positions, it was found that the average time was between 4 and 5 years ($M=4.38$; $SD=4.35$).

This time also presented statistically significant differences between the different positions [$H=19.663$; $p<0.000$]. In this sense, TD/C turned out to be the professionals with more time in their positions ($M=5.17$; $SD=5.02$), justifying the

existence of differences between the different groups, given that FRS had about 4 years (M=3.86; SD=4.16), just as it happened with PT (M=4.06; SD=4.19). The remaining combinations did not seem to justify these differences.

5. DISCUSSION

The results obtained show, in the first place, that the socio demographic profile of Spanish fitness professionals has an average age of 32 years old and some kind of university degree or professional training studies.

Regarding gender, we find other studies (Alonso, Fernández, Gutiérrez & García; 2004) with similar proportions to those found in the present study. Other previous studies, however, indicate a higher presence of males than females in the fitness sector (López de Viñaspre et al., 2003). Likewise, within the physical activity and sport sector, in general terms, there is a higher presence of male than female staff (CEET, 2006; INCUAL-CSD, 2008; Telecyl Estudios, 2006). Therefore, we may conclude that currently the fitness sector has evolved more in terms of gender equality in the last few years when compared to the physical activity and sport sector.

It was also found that males were more numerous than females in FRS, PT and TD/C positions, while the contrary was true in SCC positions. These data support the conclusions of the studies of Campos et al. (2007), when studying the professional profile of sport managers; as well as those of (2011), when verifying that males predominated among PT, and females among the staff performing activities focused “on the care and maintenance of physical fitness in the group” by analysing a sample of 116 workers in the municipality of Coslada. Also, female employability in the "sports monitor" profile is the highest of the entire family of physical activity and sport according to the CEET (2006) and the INCUAL-CSD (2008).

Regarding the average age of workers (M=32.14; SD=6.80), similar values were found to those found in other studies on fitness professionals, (Alonso et al., 2004; Boned et al., 2004), which are substantially higher when comparing them to those found in Spain regarding workers in the sector of physical activity and sport (CEET, 2006; INCUAL-CSD, 2008), where a greater presence of workers with ages between 20 and 29 years of age was found.

When analysing age differences regarding the positions held, TD/C presented an age significantly higher when compared to the rest of positions in the technical staff (M=34.40; SD=6.59). Campos et al. (2007) show similar results, placing the age of workers linked to the “organization or management of services” between 30 and 44 years. These authors also conclude that as age increases it seems as though people look for positions with better working conditions. Following the same line of reasoning, TD/C also turned out to be those who had more experience in the profession (between 11 and 12 years).

The fact that 50.1 % of the people analysed had an university degree (19.0 % diploma holders; 22.4 % degree holders; and 8.7 % postgraduates) indicates that workers in the Spanish fitness sector have an elevated educational level, regardless of the nature of those degrees. However, if we take into account that 35.5 % of the workers claimed having either a PASS degree or a diploma in Physical Education Teaching, we may conclude that about 15 % (14.8 %) had studied some kind of degree unrelated to physical activity or sport.

These global data relative to the educational level differ from those found in other studies where a higher percentage of workers with professional training studies in the fitness sector was reported (Alonso et al., 2004; López de Viñaspre et al., 2003), and with secondary-level studies in the physical activity and sport sector in general terms (CEET, 2006; INCUAL-CSD, 2008; Telecyl Estudios, 2006). These differences may be interpreted from two different perspectives. Firstly, it seems that the fitness sector presents higher training levels than the rest of sectors related to physical activity and sport, and secondly it seems as though, with the passing of time, the labour market for physical activity is moving towards an ever greater professionalism and has at its disposal more prepared workers.

A more in-depth study of the specific training in physical activity or sport shows that the percentage of PASS degrees holders in the analysed sample is close to the 22.1 % found by Boned et al. (2004) in the fitness sector, significantly higher than the one found by Gallardo and Campos (2011) among workers related to physical activity and sport in the municipality of Coslada (2.5 %) and the one offered by Campos (2004) among the workers in la Comunidad Valenciana (15.9 %).

It has been found that 23.5 % of the workers were performing their duties without any degree related to physical activity or sport included in the Spanish regulated educational system. This piece of data differs from the info offered by Campos (2004), who found in la Comunidad Valenciana a 40.6 %. However, we must bear in mind that among the workers in this group, 81.6 % claimed having taken courses related to their professional duties and the fitness sector.

In the exploration of the specific training levels according to the position held, results show an elevated adaptation of professional profiles to the different positions. PASS degrees holders perform tasks of TD/C, PT and FRS in a greater proportion than randomly expected (around 40 % in each position). In the case of TD/C, it seems logical that the organization, coordination and monitoring of these services should require a professional worker with a better preparation from the academic point of view. The same thing can be said about professionals who undertake exercise prescriptions by means of personal training.

In the case of FRS, the predominant profiles turned out to be also degree holders, as well as senior technicians in PSD. This may be due to the fact that there are clubs in which this kind of professionals are in charge of tasks of

exercise prescription at times and at others merely of monitoring the correct performance of those exercises. It seems also logical that among SCC the predominant professional profile is that of sport technician or of someone trained by means of specific courses outside the regulated educational system. These courses were focused, in most cases, on the development of specific exercising techniques.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The predominant profile of the Spanish fitness sector professional is: single, between 32 and 33 years old, with an university degree or professional training, with professional experience of about 8 or 9 years, and between 4 to 5 years' time in the position they currently hold. They also possess a sufficient training level to perform the main task they are in charge of within the technical staff. Proof of that is the 78.1 % who has at least a professional training level. They also have ample experience in the profession, and there is an elevated concordance between the studies taken and the needs of the position they hold in the organization. TD/C and PT present higher training levels and more experience in the profession than the remaining positions in the technical staff. SCC positions are held more by women, and in spite of having the lowest training levels in the regulated educational system, a great majority of them have taken specific courses related to different exercising techniques.

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