



**Analysis of the academic offerings in professional programs of sports management
and administration in Latin America**

**Análisis de la oferta académica en programas profesionales de administración y
gerencia deportiva en América Latina**

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Abstract

The present work intends to analyze the academic offer both at the professional and postgraduate level around the careers of the administrative and managerial field related to the sports sector in the different university institutions of Latin America. Making use of different portals and databases specialized in educational matters, the pertinent data was collected regarding the academic offer of different programs to establish trends, positioning, fields of study, and main characteristics that make up administrative and managerial careers. An attraction for the sports sector. Subsequently, in the development of this document, it was sought to establish some of the possible causes that make this type of professional programs a new academic trend that turns out to be greater in South American countries.

Key words: sports administration and management, offer, academic trend.

Resumen

El presente estudio se propone analizar la oferta académica tanto a nivel profesional como posgradual en torno a las carreras del campo administrativo y gerencial relacionadas con el sector deporte en las diferentes instituciones universitarias de América Latina. Haciendo uso de diferentes portales y bases de datos especializadas en materia educativa, se recolectaron los datos pertinentes frente a la oferta académica de diferentes programas con el fin de establecer tendencias, posicionamientos, campos de estudio, y características principales que hacen de las carreras administrativas y gerenciales un atractivo para el sector deporte. Posteriormente, se buscó en el desarrollo del presente documento establecer algunas de las posibles causas que hacen de este tipo de programas profesionales una nueva tendencia académica que resulta ser mayor en los países Sudamericanos.

Palabras clave: administración y gerencia deportiva, oferta, tendencia académica.

Introduction

The influence of different sciences on sports is becoming increasingly evident, and as a result, academic offerings are evolving in relation to these areas of knowledge. Likewise, emerging needs in communities influence the diverse portfolio of professional careers offered by institutions.

When discussing the importance of administration and management in the field of sports, the focus is on the outcome and the process it entails. The performance of an athlete tends to be better when there is a strong administrative and managerial process behind them.

Epistemological processes historically have classified sciences and their disciplines into two different but complementary categories. The former is a broad field of study, and the latter consists of more specific areas of knowledge. Administration as a science and sports as a discipline are part of a formative process leading to a new knowledge different from the traditional understanding of sports and movement or administration and processes.

Speaking of administrative sciences and sports implies looking at sports activities beyond movement and physical exertion. The theoretical foundation of sports shows that this activity generates an academic and scientific field due to the administrative, managerial, and social conditions in which it operates. This involves the execution of the four basic phases of the administrative process: planning, doing, checking, and acting. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the reason why these two converge, turning this process into a new field of study offered by various institutions, aiming to professionalize administration and management within sports.

The sports sector is made up of various public and private organizations that aim to ensure its proper development through the application of the administrative process. This is known as sports administration or management (Medina, 2018). The

essence of sports, in all its forms, requires the support of other sciences for its development. The paradigm that defines it as an activity strictly linked to physical movement is fading away, thanks to the introduction of various professional-level study fields that connect sports activities to different areas of knowledge, allowing for a better functioning of sports processes.

Current needs in the sector have led to the creation of various academic programs offered by institutions to contribute to the current job market for this science and its accompanying discipline.

Currently, training needs in the areas of sports administration and management are gaining importance to achieve greater efficiency for organizations in the sector (Colorado & Lopez, 2018). The role of sports in executive and managerial levels requires the acquisition of new organizational competencies to perform well in the sports field. This has resulted in a broad academic offering that has become a trend and is oriented towards professional administrative and sports levels (Colorado & Lopez, 2018).

The function of administration has always been a subject of debate regarding its true significance within sports organizations, in light of different historical concepts through which various authors have defined administration in relation to organizations as their main *raison d'être* (Sanabria, 2007).

There is currently a new debate on the benefits that management provides in sports matters. The empirical manager prefers to condemn this relationship, but those who see beyond understand the importance of the sports manager or administrator in the current era. Academia teaches that for professionalization, it is necessary to understand what society specifically demands in terms of knowledge from those who obtain it. A sports manager or administrator is precisely the one who serves the function of putting sports at the service of society. Therefore, educational spaces in this field tend to become a new academic offering.

Sports laws represent the most noticeable link between the administrative and sports realms (I Calvet, 2015); consequently, sports activity gains a place in the public debate of any state, and through this, managerial, governmental, and sports aspects become part of academic development once again.

Since sports was declared a fundamental right through the international physical education charter issued by UNESCO (2015), where it is specifically stated that "access of each individual to different sports and physical activity spaces will be the responsibility of governmental, sports, and educational institutions, and these will support sports activities as a strategy to achieve equality and inclusion within the community." Governmental promotion strategies explicitly show the importance of the new field of study analyzed in this paper. Questions like why it is important, how it is being offered in this part of the world, and what social impact it is leaving are likely the main concerns that this exploratory and documentary work seeks to address.

Methods

To analyze the offerings of each administrative and managerial program in sports, the two most widely used academic information portals in Latin America were consulted. These portals have comprehensive information about private and official institutions for each country in the region. These portals are: Portal Universidades y Profesiones (UP) and Orientación Universia. In some cases, for countries like Guatemala and Costa Rica, direct consultation was made with the academic database provided by each country's public ministry website.

Subsequently, information on professional and postgraduate programs was obtained from 19 higher education institutions in 10 countries in the region: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico,

Paraguay, and Peru. Once the information was obtained from the mentioned portals, a check was conducted on the official portals of each institution to confirm the validity and currency of these academic programs in each institution, thus confirming the information previously consulted. All the programs consulted are active within their respective institutions and are valid for the development of this study.

The selection of information had three inclusion criteria: 1) that it be a program at least at the professional level, 2) that it is being offered at a university institution in Latin America, and 3) that it belongs to the field of administrative or business sciences. Short-term non-formal programs, such as courses, diplomas, or certifications, were not considered. Technical or technological programs were also not included.

The interpretation of the results was carried out in three phases. The first phase involved characterizing the collected information to establish the main parameters of analysis for each program found in different countries and university institutions. Subsequently, through the qualitative and quantitative characteristics identified in the first phase, efforts were made to establish the reasons why the offering of programs in sports administration and management is considered a "trend" in the region. Finally, some of the current needs of these professions and their impact on the environment were analyzed.

Regarding the theoretical aspects of the research, relevant literature was consulted through keywords in three multidisciplinary databases: Redalyc, Scopus, and ScienceDirect, to obtain authors and reference documents for the research. The process is represented in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Synoptic chart of articles and authors found by keyword within the consulted databases.

The figure above represents the search methodology implemented in the reference section. For the search in each of the selected databases, two key concepts related to the central theme of the research were used, and then the figures were recorded in terms of the number of authors and articles found for each database.

For the first concept, a total of 38 authors and 20 reference documents were obtained.

The second concept encompasses a total of 35 authors and 18 documents.

The ScienceDirect database yielded the highest figures with a total of 37 authors and 19 documents, followed by Redalyc with 28 authors and 15 documents, and Scopus with 8 authors and 4 documents. This is the sum for the two concepts reviewed.

Finally, the data and information were organized and distributed to relate them to the thematic axes proposed, aiming to develop a descriptive analysis of the fulfillment of the objectives of this study.

Results

Characterization of Found Academic Programs

Latin America has a large number of institutions offering various programs at both professional and postgraduate levels in administrative and managerial matters for sports. The preliminary search yielded a total of 19 institutions and 20 accredited programs in the region.

Table 1. Academic offerings in professional programs of sports management and administration for Latin America.

Institution	Country	Affiliation	Program	Level
Argentine Business University (UADE)	Argentina	Private	Bachelor's Degree in Sports Management.	Professional
National University of Tres de Febrero		State	Bachelor's Degree in Sports Management.	Professional
River Plate University Institute (IURP)		Private	Bachelor's Degree in Sports Management	Professional
Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais	Brazil	Private	Specialization in Sports Management	Postgraduate
Francisco José de Caldas District University	Colombia	State	Sports Administration	Professional

Manuela Beltrán		Private	Sports Management	Professional
University (UMB)				
National Open and		State	Sports Management	Professional
Distance University				
(UNAD)				
Sergio Arboleda		Private	Specialization in	Professional
University			Sports	
			Administration	
University of		State	Specialization in	Postgraduate
Antioquia			Sports	
			Administration	
University of Santo		Private	Master's in Sports	Postgraduate
Tomás			and Recreation	
			Management	
La Salle University	Costa Rica	Private	Master's in Physical	Postgraduate
			Culture and Sports	
			Administration	
University of	Cuba	Private	Bachelor's Degree in	Postgraduate
Physical Culture			Sports Management	
and Sport Sciences				
University of the	Ecuador	Private	Master's in Sports	Professional
Americas			Management	
International		Private	Bachelor's Degree in	Postgraduate
University of			Sports Management	
Ecuador				

Casa Grande University		Private	Bachelor's Degree in Sports Entities Management	Professional
Galileo University	Guatemala	Private	Postgraduate in Sports Administration (Specialization)	Professional
		Private	Bachelor's Degree in Sports Direction and Administration	Postgraduate
Marist University	Mexico	Private	Master's in Sports Management	Professional
American University	Paraguay	Private	Sports Administration and Business	Postgraduate
Peruvian University of Applied Sciences (UPC)	Peru	Private	Bachelor's Degree in Sports Management	Undergraduate

The offering at the professional levels is greater than at the postgraduate levels.

The first variable of analysis, according to the distribution of information described in Table 1, is established in the level of each academic program, statistically represented by 8 postgraduate programs compared to 12 professional programs, resulting in an average of 1.5 undergraduate programs for each postgraduate program.

It can be observed that, compared to the previous figure, the professional programs currently offered are creating an academic space and a tendency towards

postgraduate levels in the field of administrative sciences with a focus on the sports sector. This indicates a growing trend for these programs at all academic levels.

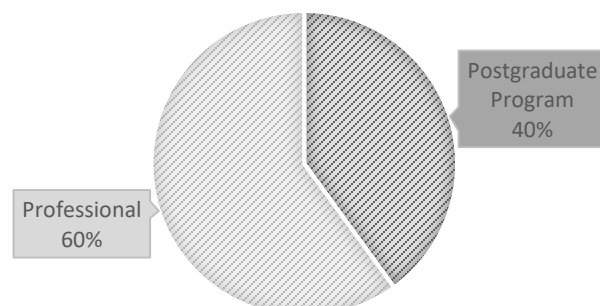


Figure 2. Distribution of undergraduate and postgraduate programs in sports administration and management for Latin America.

Based on the data from Table 1, the above graph was created to illustrate the contrast between the two levels of education considered for the development of this article. The data obtained represent the percentage difference between one level and another in relation to the total of the 20 programs found in the preliminary search (Table 1).

From the information obtained, the programs are divided as follows: 4 master's degrees, 4 specializations, 7 bachelor's degrees, and 5 with a focus on decision sciences.

Another analyzable aspect of the academic offerings is the origin or nature of the institutions that offer each program.

It is observed that the offering of these programs predominantly comes from private institutions compared to public ones, as shown in Table 1. For every public university, there are approximately 3 private ones.

However, in this aspect, the offering is primarily focused on the private sector, but with a significant quantity from the other side (public higher education

institutions), allowing for a comparison between the two fields regarding the central theme of development considered in this work.

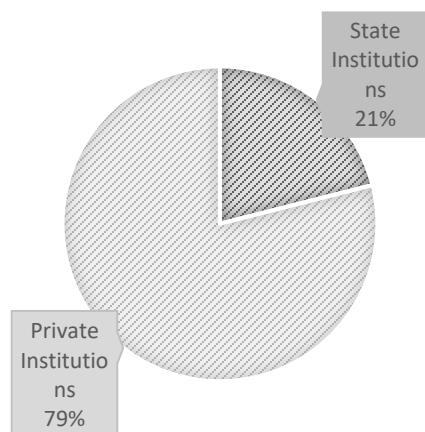


Figure 3. Origin of HEIs offering various programs for Latin America.

It is important to note that access to this academic offering has fewer barriers in the public sector. Similarly, as more graduates show interest in sports, administrative, and managerial areas, the number of these programs in other countries in the region is likely to increase. This will result in a growing acceptance of various professionals in these areas in the job market, making a significant contribution to the sector.

The nature of each institution is a crucial aspect to consider due to the relationship between the level of educational access to these programs and the support they receive through the training of more professionals. With a higher academic offering, there will be a greater degree of accreditation within specific interest sectors, and with more graduates, there will be an increased interest from individuals to enroll in these programs.

Sports are emerging as a catalyst for improving people's quality of life (Moreno Polo, 2014). The sports activity, becoming a public debate, needs professionalization

in the sectors that currently regulate it, particularly in terms of management and administration.

Understanding the previous proposal has led educational sectors to provide more training in sports-related areas compared to decision sciences.

Sports Management as a Trend

The term "trend" defines anything that predominantly has an inclination towards a particular end by people. "Academic trend" is a concept that seeks to define the preference and inclination that currently exists towards certain training programs by aspirants.

In the current context, sports and society are not exclusive to each other. People seek to study sports beyond the physiological aspects, as is done with any other area, in order to better manage it through other scientific disciplines such as administration and management. This opens up the possibility of new professional opportunities, aiming to study the entire administrative process applied to sports entities and organizations, turning this field into a trend and academic necessity.

Currently, there is a growing interest in the region to analyze the context in which sports management develops and how it can be integrated with new fields of study, turning them into new academic trends in the future (Cuervo et al., 2019).

The theoretical approaches currently embraced by administrative sciences allow various agents in academia to develop new scientific concepts applicable to these sciences in collaboration with other disciplines. This encourages the emergence of several careers with multidisciplinary and innovative approaches for social development (Salazar & Moreno, 2021).

Latin America is beginning to consolidate itself as a pioneer of this trend, with 20 programs distributed among 19 institutions. Sports administration and

management at a professional level are present in 10 out of the 20 countries in the region, representing a 50% academic coverage for the region.

Studies grounded in the application of administrative theories are constantly evolving for the sports field (Cuervo et al., 2019). Sports organizations operate based on theoretical principles present in administration, and through this process, they find their place in various higher education institutions.

The data in Table 1 is indicative of a true trend for the sector. The distribution of programs by country correlates with other variables of supply and demand for these specific study programs. Both supply and demand are composed of the interest these types of programs generate in people.



Figure 4. Number of sports management and administration programs offered by each country.

In the graph above, it can be observed that most programs are offered in Colombia (6 in total), followed by Argentina and Ecuador (3 in total). It's worth noting the absence of countries such as Chile and Uruguay, considering that both have historically developed robust national sports systems, allowing them to achieve notable results and representations throughout history in various sporting events.

Multisport, regional, and international events (Muñiz, 2019). This should prompt them to join the trend of offering programs in this field to ensure effective administration within each sports organization they have.

Since the emergence of various sports administration and management programs, there has also been a growing interest in research in this new field. The contribution of this scientific foundation in shaping a new way of viewing and working in sports has become evident to the point of witnessing a transformation in how countries in the region currently compete in international sports events. This impact extends to academic, professional, and practical aspects of the sector.

Improving the quality of life through sports practices creates a social need that becomes the *raison d'être* of such programs. Considering that through new professions like sports administration, strategies are beginning to emerge, leading professionals in these areas to fulfill the sector's primary objective of improving people's living conditions. The planning, execution, and development of these strategies largely depend on the concepts taught in sports-focused administration and management.

It is increasingly noticeable that sports have an influence on academia, opening up new fields of study generated by sports activity beyond movement and physicality. In the professional realm, sports can be viewed as an economic, administrative, scientific, biological, and commercial activity, among others. Consequently, new and multiple avenues of academic access to sports are proposed (Gutiérrez, 1996).

The provision of quality sports services in different categories (whether professional, community-based, or school-based) depends on the managerial functions described in the administrative process by Chiavenato (1985). Organizing, directing, controlling, and evaluating are the foundations of optimal management. Through sports, results tend to be better in all aspects when the manager or administrator has previously implemented the process, meaning from an academic standpoint.

Administration is the result of integrating different concepts and theories from various disciplines and fields of study (Gutiérrez, 1996). Therefore, several authors classify it as the only universal science, as the administrative process is present in all organizations of any sector, and the functioning of these organizations depends on it. The sports field is no exception to this, and currently, it demands more knowledge than empiricism.

In concrete terms, numerous challenges constantly arise in the sports sector, and the solution to these issues lies in the integration of the sector with other sciences. This integration is facilitated through new professional programs aiming to provide effective solutions to the needs emerging from the sports sector. Latin America presents a wide variety of academic offerings in different administrative and managerial programs for the professional management of various national and international sports organizations.

Needs demanded by the new academic offerings in sports administration and management

The concept of professional sports and sports as a profession are two different things, but they are interconnected. The former provides services directly from the sector through athletes and their respective training cycles for specific competitions through an organizational structure, similar to any other business. The latter concept involves the development of activities relevant to the proper functioning of sports structures through knowledge converted into professional degrees in various sciences and disciplines within the sports sector, be they economic, social, or business-related, among others.

From an administrative and managerial perspective, there is a need to integrate these two fields in sports processes to achieve better results. Historically, sports have overlooked the organizational aspects and principles that govern any business with such a structure. Sport, not exempt from this, requires trained professionals to

effectively manage and administer its structures, leading to the growing and innovative academic offerings in professional programs of this kind.

Currently, a large percentage of people perform administrative and managerial functions within sports organizations without any formal qualifications (Campos, 2007). This presupposes a problem that directly affects the sector, considering that individuals engaged in activities for which they are not qualified will not yield the expected results within an organization. There cannot be good results where there is not good management.

Sport is an organization and operates under administrative principles; its structures are constantly changing. Therefore, it is vital to have more and more professional programs that allow individuals to acquire tools and knowledge to effectively lead sports organizations (Edu.co, n.d).

It is incorrect to think that sports are solely an activity based on results, and that only athletes can contribute to it. Similar to hospitals and clinics where not only doctors work, sports do not consist solely of athletes; many professions and careers are involved in it. This is the main reason why various institutions are interested in offering programs that contribute to the sector in its different professional fields.

The high interest of many individuals in contributing to this sector from a professional perspective has led to the increase in programs aiming to give a new direction to the sports field and its functional aspects.

The social construction through sports creates spaces where different professional activities are integrated to serve people (Rincón, 2016). This aligns with the main idea that has been developed regarding the new professional needs demanded by the sector, especially considering its high social value.

The dimensions that sports have acquired in the social and community realm play a significant role in important in the collective development of individuals, there has always been doubt about what sports can offer to society beyond results, joys,

and entertainment. Progress occurs when sports activity is universal and democratic, and those who make it possible are those who acquire a profession in this field, subsequently putting themselves at the service of the people (Cagigal, 1975).

Among the many followers of sports, two phenomena have arisen today: 1) Those who did not achieve their dream of becoming athletes still want to contribute to the sector, even if it means doing so from other fronts. 2) The majority of fans and followers see sports as an activity in which everyone fits, regardless of a specific role. This is nothing more than the conducive scenario for many to perform different functions with the sole purpose of generating social growth through sports events.

Sports occupy multiple spaces in daily life, economic, political, and cultural realms, hence its social relevance expressed in the need to bring new professions to maintain the optimal development of each activity according to the needs of people within the community they inhabit (Alabarces, 2004).

The variety of social and professional dynamics that arise around sports is the main reason for having greater academic training in undergraduate and graduate programs in sports linked to other sciences. Some of these programs have been analyzed in this work from the main qualitative and quantitative aspects to establish, through an analytical process, the main needs for which these types of careers have a high demand within various institutions today.

Conclusions

The significant impact of sports on society is the main reason for the academic trend in professional programs in sports administration and management, even surpassing several traditional careers.

Some of the countries that offer these programs the most are not considered sports powers in the world, as is the case with Colombia and Ecuador.

Currently, no country in Latin America has any doctoral programs, despite the growing number of master's degrees. The opening of doctoral programs in management and sports would represent further growth for the job market offered by the sports sector.

The academic offerings for these programs are predominantly in the South American region, where more than 50% of the programs are offered.

Only one country in the entire region has a program offered at both academic levels (undergraduate and graduate) by the same institution, and this is the case in Guatemala. It is worth noting that, in general terms, the relationship between the number of professional programs offered is proportional to the postgraduate programs in this field.

The number of programs offered indicates the current interest people have in these types of careers. The sports sector always.

The sports sector will continue to be an attraction in any field of study. It is important to set aside the paradigm that views sports purely as physical activity. Sports should be brought into different fields of study that value it as a business, economic, and social activity.

Future lines of research on the subject remain open, where more data on qualitative and quantitative aspects regarding other social, personal, and emotional characteristics of the educational supply and demand for these types of programs can be documented.

Sports has direct and indirect implications on personal development, generating emotions through competition that lead to the acquisition of an identity through it. This, in turn, determines the inclination of many individuals towards academic programs where sports have the possibility to integrate with other disciplines.

Nearly 40% of the programs analyzed in this study are not assigned to a faculty in accordance with the area of study. For future lines of research, it is recommended that a detailed analysis of the main aspects that influence the assignment of these programs to other faculties or departments be undertaken.

The growing availability of such programs allows for the creation of a broader job market for graduates, thereby preventing unemployment issues within this sector.

Conflicto de intereses

Sin conflicto de intereses.

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