

ANALYSIS OF JOB SATISFACTION AS PERCEIVED BY WORKERS IN THE SPORTS SECTOR: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

ANÁLISIS DE LA SATISFACCIÓN LABORAL PERCIBIDA POR LOS TRABAJADORES PERTENECIENTES AL SECTOR DEPORTIVO: UNA REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA

González-Bravo, J^{1ABC}; Yanci, J^{2BC}; Cayero, R^{2BC}; Martínez-Aldama, I^{2ABC}

¹ Universidad del País Vasco (UPV/EHU), España, javiergzb@gmail.com

² Universidad del País Vasco (UPV/EHU), España, javier.yanci@ehu.es

³ Universidad del País Vasco (UPV/EHU), España, ruth.cayero@ehu.es

⁴ Universidad del País Vasco (UPV/EHU), España, inmaculada.martinezdealdama@ehu.es

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Correspondence:

Javier Yanci. javier.yanci@ehu.es

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to carry out a systematic review of the existing scientific information on job satisfaction as perceived by workers or professionals in sports organisations. This systematic review followed the considerations established by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). The present systematic review included published research papers whose subject matter was related to the job satisfaction of the worker or professional in the field of sport and especially in municipal sports services. After an initial papers analysis of 168 articles, we excluded those that did not meet the inclusion criteria (n = 147); thereby, we obtained the final selection of 18 articles. The results of this systematic review seem to indicate that the job satisfaction of workers or professionals in sports organisations is fairly moderate and that there may also be differences depending on gender, type of work and the sector (public or private) to which they belong. Furthermore, the results analysed in this systematic review show that there is no uniformity in the evaluation systems for measuring workers' job satisfaction.

KEY WORDS: internal client, organisational climate, management, sports service, sport monitors, human resources.

RESUMEN

De la ruptura del tendón Aquileo se tiene conocimiento desde la antigua Grecia, la cual ha ido en aumento en los últimos años, por ende, se busca implementar mejores herramientas para el tratamiento de la misma, siendo una de ellas los ejercicios pliométricos. Estudios tipo meta-análisis, ensayos controlados aleatorizados y experimentales observaron que la aplicación de ejercicios pliométricos en la mayoría de los participantes mejoraba la calidad del tendón, aumentando elasticidad y disminuyendo su rigidez ($p<0.01$) en 14 estudios y en los 3 estudios restantes, no mejoraba la estructura del tendón, sin embargo, mejoraba la sintomatología y funcionalidad del mismo en estudios tardíos ($p<0.01$). La aplicación de ejercicios pliométricos es una herramienta adicional para tratar a los sujetos sometidos a una operación de ruptura de tendón Aquileo, el cual debe ser aplicado en estadios finales en rehabilitación, mejorando la rigidez del tejido, aumentando la funcionalidad y disminuyendo el dolor crónico.

PALABRAS CLAVE: ejercicios pliométricos, tendón aquileo, tendón calcáneo, rehabilitación.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the importance that the practice of physical activity and sport has on the education, health, well-being and leisure time of the population (1), the sport sector must offer a service with the appropriate quality standards and that adjusts to the needs of changing environments and with high levels of uncertainty (2). Although the concept of sport service quality has been changing over the last decades (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10), sport service quality is currently understood as the search for excellence in management and in the satisfaction of all stakeholders involved in the product or service process, i.e. what is considered integral or total quality (11, 12). In this sense, the improvement of integral quality aims to improve the organisation, promote the development of workers, ensure the achievement of the entity's results and create satisfaction in both external clients (users) and internal clients (professionals, workers or employees) (6, 13, 14). Therefore, a correct quality management in sports organisations leads to an evolution with respect to the demands established by the market (2).

The scientific literature has defined that one of the fundamental pillars in the quality of sport services are the workers who make up the public or private entity and who provide services to citizens or users (2, 15). In fact, studies carried out in sport services highlight the importance of workers in user satisfaction, even above tangible resources (facilities or physical evidence) (16, 17, 18, 19). Therefore, it is important to know the level of satisfaction of the workers involved in a sports service, since, as several authors state, this professional satisfaction could have a significant influence, not only on user satisfaction, but also on the internal functioning of the service itself, i.e. it affects its effectiveness and efficiency (20, 21). Several authors (22, 23) affirm that having a professional with high levels of satisfaction means an increase in productivity and a more favourable working environment. In view of the above, professional satisfaction seems to imply an improvement in the perceived quality of service provision (16, 17, 24, 20, 25, 26, 27). For this reason, one of the objectives of organisations can

be aimed at improving the degree of satisfaction of their workers, in order to achieve greater labour involvement with the company's objectives, as well as an increase in productivity and a more favourable working environment (22). This improvement will have a direct impact on customer satisfaction and, consequently, on service quality (28). Thus, knowing and analysing the variables that affect the satisfaction of professionals can contribute to improving their work in organisations. It is therefore necessary to pay attention to the role of the worker or professional in a context of quality management as a strategy that seeks excellence in organisations (29).

In line with these arguments, several authors (23, 30) have indicated that employees' job satisfaction can be influenced by multiple factors such as the salary received, professional achievements, the possibility or not of promotion within the organisation, leadership, responsibility, working conditions and the relationship with colleagues. In this way, job satisfaction seems to be directly influenced by the work climate, which in turn takes into account the environmental factors that encompass the company, i.e. the perceptions that the professional has regarding the company's policies, practices, procedures and relations with colleagues (31, 32, 33, 34). In this sense, it has been specified that work climate influences satisfaction and in turn productivity (11). Work climate is the human and physical working environment, and if this organisational environment is good, i.e. if relations with co-workers are good, an increase in perceived job satisfaction is to be expected (35, 36). Considering that a considerable amount of research on organisational climate and job satisfaction of employees in sports organisations has been published in the last decades (37), it might be necessary to have a comprehensive knowledge of the available information in the scientific literature.

Therefore, the aim of this research was to find out the degree of satisfaction perceived by the internal or professional customer of sports entities.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Table 1. Descriptors used for the literature search.

English	Spanish
Sports service, internal client, job satisfaction, sports facilities, questionnaire, sports technician, human resources, sports monitor, organisational climate.	Servicio deportivo, cliente interno, satisfacción laboral, instalaciones deportivas, cuestionario, técnico deportivo, recursos humanos, monitor deportivo, clima organizacional.

Search strategies

The present systematic review followed the considerations established by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) for systematic reviews (38). The search strategy was based on consulting the ERIC, ISOC, SciELO, Dialnet, TESEO and Google Scholar databases. Different keywords were used for the search in both English and Spanish (Table 1). In order to improve the search process, in the databases where possible, different boolean markers were used (AND, OR and NOT), with field identifiers or qualifiers (Title, Title/Abstract, All, etc.) and truncations. The

search was only carried out on articles in English and Spanish and those articles were excluded if, although the title and abstract were in the aforementioned languages, the full text was written in another language. The time period considered in this review was until the end of May 2021 and the review period from January to May 2021. The Strengthening the Reporting of Observational studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) Initiative Statement was used to analyse the quality of the included studies.

Inclusion criteria

In this systematic review, we included published studies whose subject matter was related to internal customer satisfaction in the sports field and especially in municipal sports services.

Included:

- Studies using instruments to measure internal customer satisfaction.
- Studies measuring internal customer satisfaction in the sports field (public and private).
- Studies analysing job satisfaction of sport service professionals, as well as satisfaction, motivation and organisational climate within public and private sport organisations (39).
- All included studies had to be peer-reviewed journal articles or doctoral theses.

Excluded:

- Studies that did not have an assessment of job satisfaction of professionals in the sports sector.
- Studies with an evaluation in the field of sport but which belonged to teachers from public and public schools and institutes.
- Non-scientific studies, literature reviews, systematic reviews and meta-analyses or books.

Selection of studies.

The initial search yielded a total of 168 articles obtained from the databases analysed and those extracted by reference tracking (figure 1). After searching the existing literature, the references were imported into a reference manager (Mendeley Desktop, version 1.19.1, Amsterdam, The Netherlands). Using this manager, duplicates were eliminated on the basis of matches in Digital Object Identifier (DOI), title and/or authorship. The analysis of matches was completed manually by comparing the references. Once the duplicate articles (n = 3) had been eliminated, the selection or screening process was initiated. A total of 165 articles were evaluated. First, both the title and abstract of the articles were analysed to determine their relevance for inclusion in the review. After this first analysis, the remaining articles were assessed using the full text, excluding those that did not meet the inclusion criteria (n = 147) and thus, the final selection was obtained (n = 18).

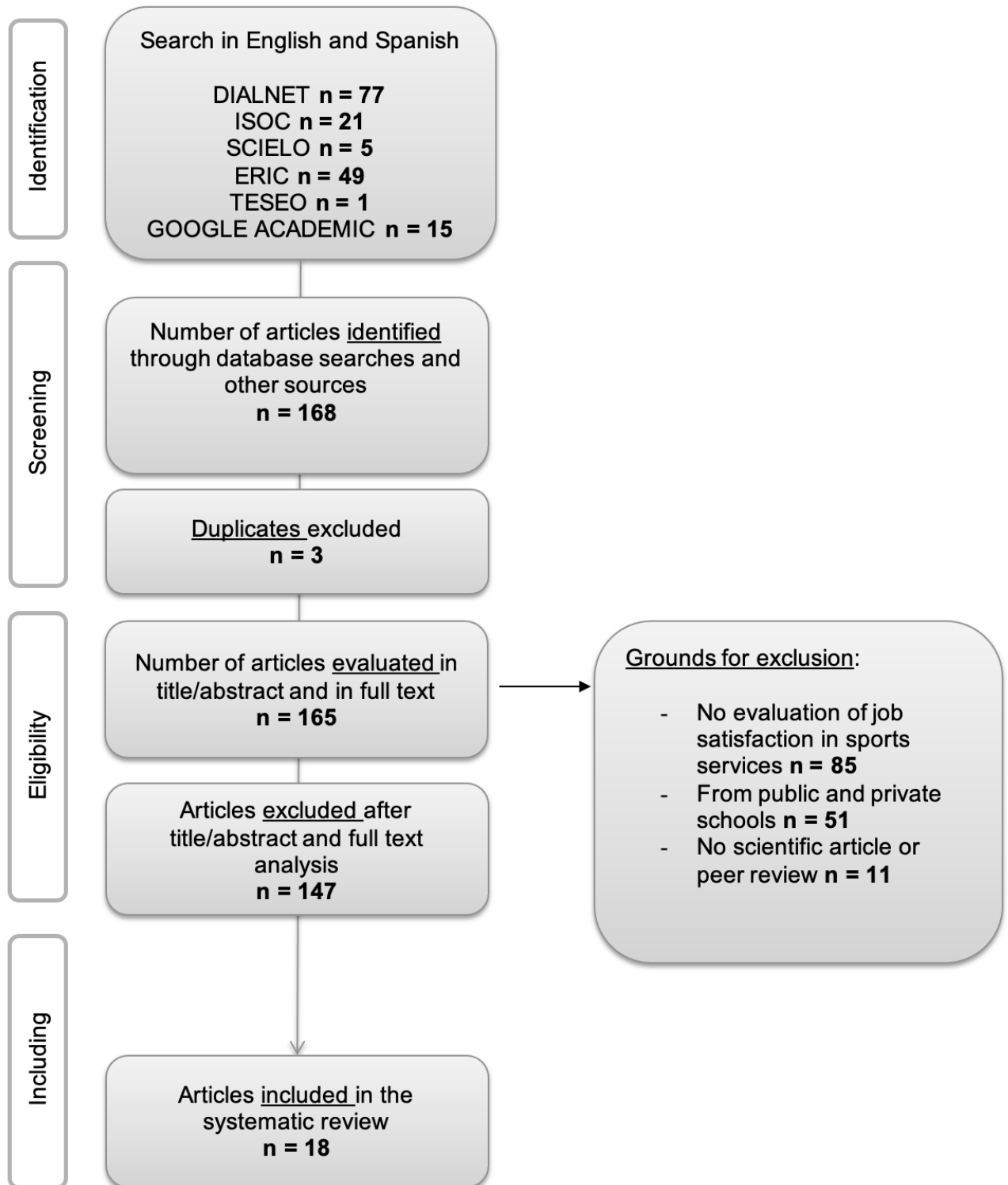


Figure 1. Diagram of the process of searching for, excluding and selecting articles.

RESULTS

The quality results of the included studies scored 19.0 ± 2.9 according to the STROBE Statement (RANGE = 11 - 21 points) on a 22-point scale.

Table 2 shows the studies included in this systematic review that measure the job satisfaction of professionals in the field of sport. The dimensions used to analyse the research are: author, year and reference number, objectives of the study, characteristics of the sample, public or private sector, evaluation tool, most relevant results.

Table 2. Synthesis of studies related to the measurement of job satisfaction and organisational climate of internal customers (professionals) in the field of sport.

Author and year	Objectives	Characteristics of the sample	Sector	Evaluation tool	Results
Koehler (1988) - (40)	To assess the job satisfaction of sport managers.	30 sports managers, of which 23 women and 7 men.	Private	Self-designed and validated questionnaire.	- Overall job satisfaction averaged 78.67 out of a possible 100 points.
Snyder (1990) - (41)	To measure the job satisfaction of sports instructors in university programmes.	117 male and female coaches from 17 universities in California, USA.	University audiences	Leader Behavioural Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ). Job Descriptive Index (JDI) by Ironson et al. (42).	- Lower values for satisfaction with supervision at work. - Significant differences in favour of men in relations with colleagues, and for women in integration in the company.

Author and year	Objectives	Characteristics of the sample	Sector	Evaluation tool	Results
Li (1993) - (43)	To learn about the effectiveness of the organisation of leisure time sports schools in China.	640 male and female coaches of Chinese nationality.	Public (leisure schools)	Questionnaire with twelve self-designed and validated organisational variables.	- Work motivation, incentive systems and leader behaviour directly influence the satisfaction of sports coaches more than other variables.
Parks & Parra (1994) - (44)	To compare the job satisfaction of male and female trainees in a sports management programme.	118 students, 60 women and 58 men, belonging to an internship programme in sports management.	University audiences	Job Descriptive Index (JDI). - Job in General Scale (JIG) (42).	- Students with non-sport related jobs have the same expectations of achieving job satisfaction as graduates with sport related jobs. - Significant differences in satisfaction as a function of pay.
Gil and Zubimendi (2006) - (45)	Measuring the job satisfaction of sports instructors in sports centres in the Basque Country, Spain.	108 sports instructors from the Basque Country, Spain.	Public	Adapted and validated Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) questionnaire (46).	- Monitors have an average satisfaction rating of 4.35 out of 7 on the Likert scale. - Values below the mid-point was that for wages, - Highest rated values were the relationship with colleagues and the nature of the work.

Author and year	Objectives	Characteristics of the sample	Sector	Evaluation tool	Results
Moodley & Coopoo (2006) - (47)	To identify the various factors that play a determining role in the level of job satisfaction in self-employed trainers and employees of private gyms.	353 male and female coaches from South Africa. Only the results of 160 trainers from private gyms and 140 from self-employed trainers were valid.	Private	Self-designed and validated questionnaire.	- Higher satisfaction values for self-employed trainers than for trainers working in private gyms.
García Tascón (2008) - (39)	To measure the perception of satisfaction with the working environment of workers in municipal sports organisations in Castilla-La Mancha.	385 professionals, including 242 men and 143 women, from Castilla-La Mancha, Spain.	Public	Self-designed questionnaire. 33 items with Likert-type scale (1-7) and 2 open questions.	- Value of 4.65 (medium-low) for overall satisfaction with the work climate in organisations in Castilla-La Mancha.
Medina et al. (2009) - (48)	To identify the most significant factors in determining the satisfaction of professionals in sports management positions in the Municipality of Monterrey.	175 professionals from Monterrey, Mexico.	Public	The instrument used was an EFQM model questionnaire (49).	- The lowest rated variables were material resources (62.51 men; 52.78 women), and recognition of job performance (70.29 men; 60.28 women). -The best rated were organisational aspects (83.39 men; 79.36 women), and overall satisfaction (85.44 men; 79.84 women).

Author and year	Objectives	Characteristics of the sample	Sector	Evaluation tool	Results
Morquecho et al. (2012) - (50)	To determine the perception of job satisfaction and its effects on the organisational climate of university sports organisations.	43 professionals from the sports centre of the Autonomous University of New Mexico.	Public	ISO Job Satisfaction and Organisational Climate Questionnaire.	- Job satisfaction was high. - Indicators of teamwork, communication and workload distribution were at a medium level of satisfaction.
Sánchez-Alcaraz (2012) - (51)	To measure the level of job satisfaction of beach lifeguards.	56 Spanish beach lifeguards	Public	Meliá and Peiró's S10/12 labour questionnaire (52).	- Beach lifeguards were moderately satisfied with their work (4.75 out of 7).
Sanchez-Alcaraz and Parra-Meroño (2013) - (53)	To design and validate an instrument that reliably measures the level of job satisfaction of sports coaches.	46 sports technicians of which 39 men and 6 women from Murcia, Spain.	Unknown	Self-designed questionnaire (54) Job Satisfaction Questionnaire for Sports Technicians (CSLTD).	- Technicians were moderately satisfied in their work (4.4 out of 7 points).
Sánchez-Alcaraz et al. (2014) - (37)	To assess the level of job satisfaction of padel and swimming coaches.	125 paddle and swimming coaches of which 78 were men and 47 women from Murcia, Spain.	Public	Cuestionario de Satisfacción Laboral para Técnicos Deportivos (CSLTD) by Sánchez-Alcaraz and Parra-Meroño (53).	- Sport technicians showed average levels of job satisfaction (4 and 5 points on a scale of 1 to 7).

Author and year	Objectives	Characteristics of the sample	Sector	Evaluation tool	Results
Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2016) - (55)	Analyse the organisational climate considering the three sectors involved in sport management: public, private and associative	303 professionals from public, private and associative organisations in the Valencian Community, Spain. 63% men and 37% women.	Public and private	PSCLADE Organisational Climate Perception Questionnaire C23/6 (39). - Self-designed scale consisting of a total of 22 items.	- The perception of the climate was significantly lower among employees in the public administration (4.97) compared to those in the private (5.34) and associative sectors (5.85).
Grimaldi Puyana et al. (2017) - (56)	To analyse the satisfaction of active tourism workers and their working conditions, and the effect of these on their job satisfaction in the autonomous community of Andalusia.	218 professionals from the active tourism sector in Andalusia, Spain. 73.8% were men and 26.2% were women.	Public and private	Overall Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (57).	- Active tourism professionals were satisfied. - Those working in the private sector (6.42) were more satisfied than those working in the public sector (5.51).
Bernabé et al. (2018) - (58)	To find out the job satisfaction of Spanish fitness instructors, and how satisfaction levels vary according to the variables age, sex, work experience and level of studies.	519 fitness instructors of Spanish nationality, of which 301 were men and 218 women.	Public and private	PROAFIDE questionnaire: Human resources of sport and physical activity (59).	- Fitness instructors experienced a moderate to high level of job satisfaction (3.92). - They showed dissatisfaction with the lack of promotion opportunities (3.13), training (3.23) and financial remuneration (3.29).

Author and year	Objectives	Characteristics of the sample	Sector	Evaluation tool	Results
Grimaldi-Puyana et al. (2018) - (60)	To analyse the existing differences in the job satisfaction of workers and volunteers who work with athletes with intellectual disabilities.	112 professionals from organisations dedicated to athletes with intellectual disabilities. 47.2% men and 52.8% women of Spanish nationality.	Unknown	Overall Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (57).	- Moderately satisfied professionals (84.3), with differences between job satisfaction if they performed their role with financial remuneration (87.18), or if they were unpaid volunteers (81.74).
Sidera et al. (2019) - (61)	To determine the satisfaction of internal clients of group fitness and wellness classes in public and private sports centres in the Community of Madrid.	165 fitness class teachers from sports centres in the Autonomous Community of Madrid, Spain. 72 were men and 93 were women.	Public and private	Melia and Peiró Job Satisfaction Questionnaire 20/23 (52).	- The results showed that the overall internal customer satisfaction was 8.03 out of 10.
Alcíbar et al. (2020) - (62)	To determine the level of job satisfaction in sports monitors, through a quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional research.	26 monitors from sports centres in Murcia, Spain, of whom 69.2% were men and 30.8% women.	Public and private	Font Roja Primary Care Questionnaire (23 items) (63).	- The job satisfaction of the sports instructors surveyed was found to be moderate. - The monitors in private companies were more job satisfied (60.9%) than those working in public companies (40.8%).

DISCUSSION

The aim of this systematic review was to analyse the existing scientific knowledge on the satisfaction and organisational climate perceived by professionals working in different sports organisations, as it has been described that the satisfaction of a sports organisation's employees can influence the quality of the services it provides (15, 2). Obtaining clear and organised conclusions in relation to this issue it may be relevant in order to find out which aspects influence the satisfaction perceived by workers and, consequently, to provide the management teams of sports organisations with solid arguments that allow them to know which aspects condition the degree of worker satisfaction. This knowledge will subsequently enable them to design strategies aimed at improving worker satisfaction.

The present systematic review has analysed whether the type/sector of work can influence job satisfaction of workers in the sports sector. The studies included in the review analyse the job satisfaction of sports managers, monitors, coaches or sports technicians, lifeguards, active tourism monitors and monitors of physical activities and sports for people with disabilities. Specifically, 11 studies have been carried out with people working as monitors, trainers, sports technicians or fitness personnel. Their job satisfaction was moderate, reaching 4 out of 7 on the Likert scale (58, 39, 45, 47, 53) and high, obtaining more than 6 out of 7 (56, 48, 50, 44, 61). The job types/sectors with the lowest level of satisfaction are the professionals belonging to the group of swimming instructors or monitors, with a low level (37). In the case of tennis and paddle tennis instructors, moderate levels of satisfaction were observed (37). In contrast, active tourism instructors (56) and instructors working with people with disabilities report the highest levels of job satisfaction (60). It is likely that these results are due to the fact that working in active tourism involves working in natural environments or open spaces. Similarly, jobs related to people with a disability may help to improve job satisfaction outcomes due to the social benefit they bring (64). Based on the literature included in the review, it appears that the type of job can influence employee satisfaction.

On the other hand, the aim of this systematic review was to find out whether the perception of job satisfaction can be influenced by the gender of the workers. Specifically, this review includes (10) scientific studies that analyse the differences between male and female workers in terms of job satisfaction. The results obtained in a large number of studies show that in general there are no differences in the level of satisfaction between men and women, with the level of satisfaction being moderate (4 or more on the Likert scale) in the majority of male and female workers (62, 58, 39, 56, 60, 51, 37). However, there are (4) studies where differences in job satisfaction between men and women are reported, showing a lower perception of satisfaction among women than among men (62, 48, 47, 37). Similarly, women report lower levels of satisfaction with respect to the variable related to the salary received (48, 51, 37). According to Medina et al. (48), these differences may be due to the minority participation of women in the organisation, which means that they may feel or be in some way discriminated against. Another reason for this difference in satisfaction levels may be due to the lack of growth opportunities for women (67% of the participants) within the

company (47). This result coincides with the findings of Smucker's study (65) where 50% of female sports journalists left their jobs due to the lack of growth opportunities in the company. Possibly, the factors that contribute to job satisfaction are different for men and women (41), so it would be interesting for organisations related to physical activity and sport to delve deeper into the knowledge of why these differences occur. On the other hand, it could be interesting to apply policies that favour an increase in the satisfaction of workers in general and women in particular, specifically by trying to redefine and apply a new model for the preparation, recruitment, internal promotion and retention of women working in the field of sport. Among these measures, the results show the need to identify two priority areas for improvement in order to have a more profound impact: fostering training and capacity building policies, and establishing monitoring and recognition strategies in public or private entities (55).

Another of the aspects analysed in this review was the job satisfaction of workers according to the ownership of the institution (public or private) where they work. In relation to the area of work, public or private, to which the professionals belong, most of the studies included in the review have been carried out in the public sphere, with the majority obtaining moderate satisfaction, reaching more than 4 out of 7 on the Likert scale (55,39, 45, 56, 51, 37). However, there are some studies that directly compare the satisfaction of professionals in public and private organisations. Based on the results of these studies, it appears that professionals working in the private sector report higher job satisfaction than those in the public sector (62, 55, 56). According to Grimaldi Puyana et al. (56) these differences could be due to the fact that, over time, employees in the private sector have more opportunities to improve working conditions and increase their salary as they gain more experience. However, in the public sector, the job improvements that workers can have may be more limited. For this reason, and in order to increase the job satisfaction of public sector workers, special attention should be paid to intrinsic job factors such as job recognition, responsibility and job content aspects (56).

In addition to the aspects analysed above, this review has studied the effect that other aspects may have on job satisfaction. With regard to the type of working hours, the studies analysed suggest that having a full-time job seems to be more satisfying than having a part-time job (56, 41). Along the same lines, regarding the type of contract (temporary or permanent), the different studies show that there is no consensus (39, 37). For example, while Sánchez-Alcaraz et al. (37) found worse job satisfaction in workers with temporary versus permanent contracts, García-Tascón (39) found worse levels of job satisfaction in workers with permanent versus temporary contracts. Two of the reasons that may indicate such results are that work-life balance programmes are being implemented, or that working conditions in organisations are positive for workers (19). Similarly, studies analysing job satisfaction according to the qualifications of the participants do not establish any common pattern. Similarly, some researchers find no statistically significant differences when comparing workers with different levels of education (56), others find better satisfaction for workers with a higher level of education (39) while, on the contrary, other research points to higher satisfaction for workers with a medium level of education (58). Based on these results, there is no conclusive difference in satisfaction with regard to

the level of education. Similarly, some studies have shown that voluntary workers are more satisfied than workers in paid employment (60) and that volunteers are more satisfied than the self-employed and those in paid employment (47). These attitudes of volunteers are supported by the idea that they are motivated by a question of values and self-wellbeing, as well as a greater motivation to broaden their knowledge (66). Given that few studies have compared job satisfaction according to these variables of type of working hours, type of contract and level of education, more work may be needed to look at this aspect in more depth in order to draw more specific conclusions.

This systematic review is not without limitations. Firstly, no scientific studies have been found that analyse job satisfaction in some important sectors of the sports field, such as municipal sports services, non-profit associations or sports limited companies, among other entities. In this sense, most of the studies included in the review have been carried out in specific sectors (fitness, gyms, swimming activities, etc.). Secondly, the use of different questionnaires in the studies analysed, with different items and rating scales, makes it difficult to interpret and compare the results obtained. On the other hand, it is clear from the results of this research that there is no single, common questionnaire or assessment tool that would allow precise comparisons to be made between the results obtained in the different studies, so it would be interesting to look into this aspect in greater depth and unify the measuring instruments for measuring workers' job satisfaction. Finally, another limitation of the review is that no scientific papers in languages other than English and Spanish have been included, so there may be relevant information in other languages that has not been included.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the results presented in the different studies included in this review, the satisfaction of internal clients of sports organisations is mostly moderate, indicating that it may be necessary to increase the satisfaction of professionals working in sports organisations. Along the same lines, the data show that there may be differences with regard to the type of work, with the best rated being active tourism and work related to people with disabilities. Although some studies do not show differences in satisfaction according to the gender of the workers, most of the studies analysed show that satisfaction is worse among women than among men. Similarly, in terms of the sector of work, it seems that employees in the public sector score worse in terms of satisfaction than those in the private sector. On the other hand, it has been observed that there is a lack of scientific evidence to determine whether satisfaction may depend on the type of working day, contract or level of training. Based on these results, there seems to be a need to implement policies that favour the satisfaction of all workers, especially in public entities and in the female sector.

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