

Impact Of The COVID-19 Pandemic On The Performance Of Physical Education Professionals: A Systematic Literature Review From 2020 To 2022

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Abstract:

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has possibly negatively impacted the provision of Physical Education services.

Materials and Methods: Thus, the objective of the study was to analyze the consequences of the pandemic, which has been occurring since 2020, on the performance of Physical Education professionals. For this purpose, the following databases were used: PUBMED, Scopus, in addition to the Latin American databases LILACS and Scielo. The search was carried out between 2020 and 2022. The search strategy used the descriptors “Personal trainer” and “COVID-19” combined with the Boolean operator AND, without adding search filters.

Results: Finally, we hoped to identify the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work of Physical Education professionals, with a special focus on the performance of the bachelor's degree course, in addition to evaluating what measures were taken by professionals to maintain the provision of Physical Education services.

Conclusion: The studies analyzed demonstrate that there have been significant reductions in professional activity linked to personalized training, with a consequent reduction in financial resources for professionals. In addition, it was found that there was a transition from the physical training model carried out in gyms and clubs to a virtual training model, due to the periods of confinement, which provided a possibility for Physical Education professionals to bond with their students/clients.

Key Word: COVID-19, pandemic, Physical Education

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I. Introduction

The outbreak of viral pneumonia that occurred at the end of 2019, caused by an unidentified microbial agent, had a major impact on the city of Wuhan, China. Subsequent studies showed that this outbreak of a type of pneumonia with a high mortality rate arose among a group of traders who worked in the seafood market and some live animals in the region itself (MIGUEL et al., 2020). The cases of contamination were quickly verified and it was shown that human transmission was observed as the main factor of contagion at the beginning of 2020. The main symptoms range from a common cold to more severe illnesses such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). Thus, the disease caused by the new coronavirus was named COVID-19 (Lu et al., 2020; WHO, 2020). Following this line of reasoning, most activities have moved to the home environment, and establishments have been forced to close, with the exception of those that cater to basic essential needs. Exercise centers (gyms, clubs, gyms) have also had to suspend their activities because they promote crowds of people, especially at certain times, leaving practitioners with only two options: seek out public places to exercise or structure strategies to do so at home. On March 21, 2020, the WHO European Committee officially published a letter within the institution's daily report, requesting that any physical activity be performed only in domestic environments. This request was made after the alarming rise in COVID-19 cases in Italy and Spain (WHO, 2020).

Economically, COVID-19 has had a major impact worldwide, with several sectors suffering alarmingly from the spread of the virus. The crisis in economic systems is a reality, and several professionals who work independently have suffered enormous losses due to the quarantine model. In reports in the literature, it is observed that the macroeconomic effects of the SARS epidemic in 2003 demonstrated significant declines in economies, due to the reduction in the consumption of services and goods, which led to an increase in business operating costs and assessment of country risks. The greater the susceptibility to the disease, the higher the levels of economic shock, where global costs were significant and were not limited exclusively to the countries directly affected (MCKIBBIN; FERNANDO, 2020).

II. Material And Methods

This study was carried out in the form of a systematic literature review, with the aim of analyzing the relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic and professional performance in Physical Education. For this purpose, the following databases were used: Pubmed and Scopus, in addition to the Latin American databases LILACS and Scielo. The search was carried out between 2020 and 2022, covering the entire period of existence of the databases.

The descriptors “Personal trainer” and “COVID-19” combined with the Boolean operator AND were used as a search strategy, without adding search filters. The option for the terminology “personal trainer” was chosen due to the various terms that refer to the characterization of the Physical Education professional, especially in countries that do not have the Latin language. Thus, the term “personal trainer” was more appropriate for the professional who works with physical training, whether personalized or collective. The inclusion criteria for the articles were original articles, with the main objective of evaluating the impact of COVID-19 on the performance of Physical Education professionals, both in bachelor’s degree training, published in English, Spanish or Portuguese. The studies were categorized according to the authors, countries where the study was carried out, sample evaluated and main results obtained.

III. Results And Discussion

The first search yielded a record of 188 articles with the established theme. The second stage consisted of selecting the articles based on the title and abstract, with 86 articles being excluded, leaving 14 articles. The third stage consisted of the eligibility of the studies, with the reading of the articles in full, in which 9 articles were excluded, as they did not meet the objective determined in this study. Therefore, the final inclusion included 5 articles (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Information flow of the article selection process.

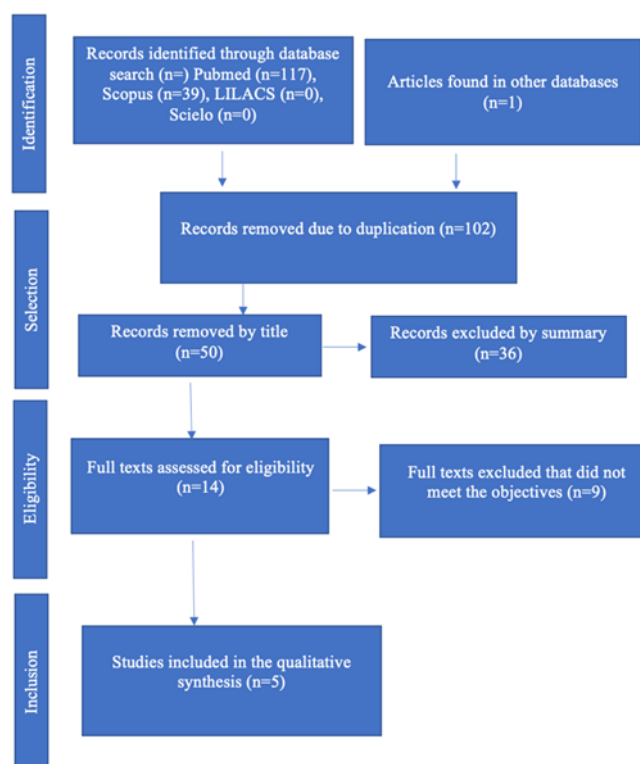


Table 1. Result of bibliographic search.

Authors	Country	Sample	Results
Bratland-Sanda et al., (2020)	Norway	150	The number of personal training sessions per week was reduced during the lockdown, and most respondents reported a loss of clients and a negative impact on their working conditions. The lockdown period provided more personal training sessions, both online and outdoor. Living conditions were also affected, with reported losses in the private economy and reduced vitality ($p < 0.05$), with vitality being lower in female compared to male respondents during, but

			not before, the lockdown period.
Miguel et al., (2020)	Brazil	69	All participating professionals reported that they lost at least one client/student during the quarantine period. Regarding the amount of client loss, it was found that personalized in-person service fell by approximately 58.3%, while non-face-to-face services (modalities such as online consulting) fell by an average of 28.2%. The professionals surveyed reported an average drop of 51.6% in the normal amount collected in months prior to the pandemic, in terms of their financial income.
Winkelmann et al., (2021)	United States	611	Most professionals continued to work in some form of sport during the COVID-19 pandemic and expressed optimism about the likelihood of their work status and setting returning to normal. However, participants shared financial and mental health concerns due to reduced pay, stress, and uncertainty about the future. Diversity within the profession was identified as professionals were serving in new roles related to COVID-19 or adopting telework (41.1%). Athletic trainers were implementing all domains of professional practice via telework, but most did not consult legal counsel or have formal training in the delivery method prior to implementation.
Jankowska (2021)	Poland	10	The data obtained indicate a critical and rather negative attitude towards restrictions and their consequences for the fitness, physical activity and sports sector.
Kim (2021)	United States	378	The empirical results revealed that the digital content production experience was significantly affected by information quality, visual content, and physical attractiveness. In addition, YouTube channel satisfaction was significantly affected by social interaction, information quality, and visual content. Finally, behavioral intention was significantly affected by the flow experience and YouTube channel satisfaction.

The results in Figure 1 demonstrate that a limited amount of bibliographic production was found that met the criteria for the research, since the search was carried out with the purpose of identifying the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the performance of Physical Education professionals, in the bachelor's degree modality. It is noteworthy that several studies were viewed that analyzed the impact on the performance of the Physical Education degree area, focusing on the response of students when using online classes. The study by Bratland-Sanda et al., (2020), demonstrated that the working and living conditions of Norwegian personal trainers were negatively affected by COVID-19, during the lockdown period. Some gender differences were detected, with women reporting a reduction in working hours and subjective vitality, to a greater extent than men. Professionals recognized the need for lockdown and restrictions due to the high levels of contamination, however, they asked for specific concrete guidelines for their profession from the Norwegian government. Although most respondents reported continuing their physical activity and exercise during the lockdown, almost 40% were unable to maintain the same levels of training.

According to the first data published analyzing the effect of the pandemic on professional performance in Physical Education, there was a drop in clients, showing that personalized in-person service fell by approximately 58.3% (MIGUEL et al., 2020). Additionally, they reported that the reduction in activities was with the elderly public. Also according to the authors, the professionals surveyed reported an average drop of 51.6% in the normal financial value collected in months prior to the pandemic. Finally, regarding the normalization of the financial context, a small portion responded that they expect normalization within 1 to 3 months (12%), and 18% of those surveyed imagine that their income will return to normal within 4 to 6 months, starting in April 2020. Meanwhile, 29% of participants expect normalization only within 6 months, while the majority said they did not know when this normalization will occur. In the study by Winkelmann et al. (2021), many professionals were affected in some way by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some professionals were laid off or placed on unpaid leave, however, most of them continued to practice their profession. The individuals studied demonstrated the ability to adapt and, in many cases, add value to the health system during these unprecedented times in history.

Regarding the study by Jankowska (2021), it was seen that the fitness culture in the era of COVID-19 refers to the new reality and new problems associated with physical activity. Personal trainers as subjects in my studies emphasize the need to adapt to changes and seek new opportunities, but at the same time they look to the future with some fear. The changes mentioned by the professionals surveyed show how they can keep up with change over time and adapt to the current conditions.

Finally, the study by Kim (2021) demonstrates the transition from the in-person work model to an online model, with the use of video platforms for student/client engagement. Thus, it was seen that professionals

in the area of personalized training were able to adhere, in part, to the online class model, increasing the number of digital content about the fitness area and also about motivation for practicing physical activity.

IV. Conclusion

The conclusion of the study shows that there was little interest in the current literature in studying the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the performance of Physical Education professionals, within the bachelor's degree modality. The studies analyzed show that there were significant reductions in professional activity linked to personalized training, with a consequent reduction in financial resources for professionals. In addition, it was found that there was a transition from the physical training model carried out in gyms and clubs to a virtual training model, due to the periods of confinement, which provided an opportunity for Physical Education professionals to bond with their students/clients.

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