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The management of sports movement: current state at the University of Pinar del Río “Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca”

La gestión del movimiento deportivo: Estado actual en la Universidad de Pinar del Río “Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca”

A gestão do movimento esportivo: estado atual na Universidade de Pinar del Río “Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca”

Abstract

Introduction: university sports play an essential role in the comprehensive development of students, as they promote physical activity, teamwork, and values such as effort and personal improvement. Therefore, its management constitutes a key subprocess within university extension. **Objective:** to present the diagnosis of the management process of the sports movement at the University of Pinar del Río Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca”. **Method:** a qualitative approach was employed, combining theoretical methods such as historical-logical analysis and modeling with empirical methods including interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis. **Results:** the diagnosis allowed for the identification of regularities that evidenced current limitations in the management of the sports movement. These findings corroborated the need to transform the process to make it more systemic, efficient, and of higher quality. **Conclusion:** the analysis conducted underscores the importance of considering the management of the sports movement as a strategic component to strengthen the comprehensive education of university students. This involves not only addressing the identified limitations but also fostering an integrative vision that better articulates human, material, and institutional resources to achieve a sustainable impact over time.

Keywords: sports movement, management, University

Resumen

Introducción: el deporte universitario desempeña un papel esencial en el desarrollo integral de los estudiantes, debido que promueve la actividad física, el trabajo en equipo y valores como el esfuerzo y la superación personal. Por lo que, su gestión constituye un subprocesso clave dentro de la extensión universitaria. **Objetivo:** presentar el diagnóstico del proceso de gestión del movimiento deportivo en la Universidad de Pinar del Río “Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca”.

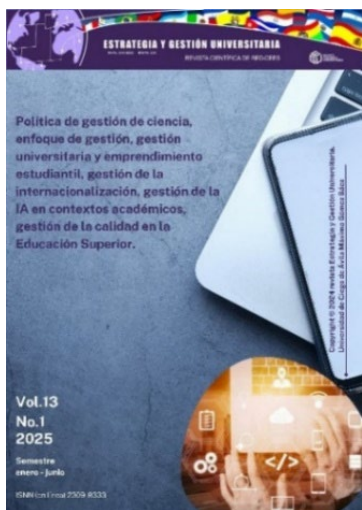
Método: se empleó un enfoque cualitativo que combinó métodos teóricos, como el histórico-lógico y la modelación, con métodos empíricos, tales como entrevistas, cuestionarios y análisis de documentos. **Resultados:** el diagnóstico permitió identificar regularidades que evidenciaron las limitaciones actuales en la gestión del movimiento deportivo. Estos hallazgos corroboraron la necesidad de transformar el proceso para hacerlo más sistémico, eficiente y de mayor calidad. **Conclusión:** el análisis realizado resalta la importancia de considerar la gestión del movimiento deportivo como un componente estratégico para fortalecer la formación integral de los estudiantes universitarios. Esto implica no solo atender las limitaciones detectadas, sino también fomentar una visión integradora que articule mejor los recursos humanos, materiales e institucionales para alcanzar un impacto sostenible en el tiempo.

Palabras clave: movimiento deportivo, gestión, universidad

Resumo

Introdução: o esporte universitário desempenha um papel essencial no desenvolvimento integral dos estudantes, pois promove a atividade física, o trabalho em equipe e valores como o esforço e a superação pessoal. Assim, sua gestão constitui um subprocesso fundamental dentro da extensão universitária. **Objetivo:** apresentar o diagnóstico do processo de gestão do movimento esportivo na Universidade de Pinar del Río “Hermanos Saiz Montes de Oca”. **Método:** foi utilizada uma abordagem qualitativa que combinou métodos teóricos, como o histórico-lógico e a modelagem, com métodos empíricos, tais como entrevistas, questionários e análise de documentos. **Resultados:** o diagnóstico permitiu identificar regularidades que evidenciaram as limitações atuais na gestão do movimento esportivo. Esses achados corroboraram a necessidade de transformar o processo para torná-lo mais sistémico, eficiente e de maior qualidade. **Conclusão:** a análise realizada destaca a importância de considerar a gestão do movimento esportivo como um componente estratégico para fortalecer a formação integral dos estudantes universitários. Isso implica não apenas tratar as limitações identificadas, mas também promover uma visão integradora que articule melhor os recursos humanos, materiais e institucionais para alcançar um impacto sustentável ao longo do tempo.

Palavras-chave: movimento esportivo, gestão, universidade



Introduction

The sports movement and its social importance are linked to the benefits it provides in various aspects of people's lives, particularly in terms of physical, psychological, and social activity. This transforms the sports movement into a matter of general interest, deserving of promotion by institutions, which play a crucial role in addressing the needs of the population. In universities, specifically, this topic has gained increasing importance due to the participation of various stakeholders in sports activities.

At the international level, there are multiple management models and funding mechanisms that guide this activity within institutions of higher education. In alignment with this reality, policies are being implemented that promote university sports, prioritizing diversity, equity, and accessibility for all students (Tontodonati and Groot, 2021). However, in many cases, these institutions also lack adequate relationships with local stakeholders (Orts Delgado, 2021; Borges Machín and González Bravo, 2022).

Within this framework, the management process of the sports movement in universities acquires special relevance. Universities should be viewed as an extension of the social environment, as their operations occur within the specific context. The university sports movement benefits society by providing valuable resources, highlighting the crucial importance of universities and the role of students in the current landscape (Angosto, 2023).

This encompasses not only the organization of competitions and sports events but also encourages participation from the university community and promotes healthy lifestyles. Borrero and Gómez (2021) define this process as the set of activities and strategies designed to plan, organize, direct, and control sports activities in institutions of higher education, aiming to optimize resources, increase student participation, and create a competitive and healthy environment.

On the other hand, the provision of sports services in universities is carried out through collaborations among various entities and local governments. There is no fixed model for the organizational structures adopted, with various management models (Avila et al., 2021). In any context, the university sports movement must respond to the social, cultural (Vélez Jiménez and Balderas Gutiérrez, 2025; Gutiérrez Caiza and Granda Vidal, 2025), and legal conditions of each country, territory, and university, establishing organizational principles that facilitate effective and continuous participation of students and teams. To achieve this goal, higher education institutions must work collaboratively towards well-defined goals and actions within a comprehensive operational system.

At this point, it is pertinent to clarify that the sports movement in universities is a process that enables students to acquire a beneficial physical education for their well-being while cultivating skills that can positively impact their professional environment (Corrales and Rovira, 2023). Furthermore, management is defined as the action of developing and evolving an organization based on the planning, organization, and control of resources, in accordance with the principles of administration and human performance (Moreno, 2001).

In another context, Alvarez et al. (2020) address the fundamental premises for managing university extension from the academic department. The authors highlight the importance of involving teachers in the planning and execution of extension activities to strengthen the university's connection with the community. Additionally, there is a need to develop strategies that promote active student participation in university extension projects, thus fostering a more comprehensive and engaged learning experience with the social environment. In line with the descriptions provided by the authors, the management of the sports movement in universities has proven effective in the comprehensive training of future professionals, contributing to the physical development and health of both intra- and extra-university communities.

At the University of Pinar del Río (UPR), this process is designed to ensure the quality and effectiveness of sports activities, including planning, organization, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as promoting inclusion and equity in the sports domain. In this regard, there is a contradiction between the need for an articulated and systematic management approach and the reality of disjointed and unsystematic practices. To address this issue, the variable "management process of the sports movement at UPR" was defined, along with its dimensions and indicators, each accompanied by precise qualifications.

The university sports movement coordinates and manages activities, both internal and external competitions in sports facilities, reconciling academic life with sports and ensuring a comprehensive and quality education. It also includes attention to athletes, organization of sporting events, and maintenance of facilities (González Aportela et al., 2020).

University extension promotes the movement of amateur artists, facilitating their development and participation (González et al., 2021). This includes the management of each of the processes that, in their view, integrate university extension, such as training and capacity building, promotion of culture, management of the sports movement, management of cultural facilities, project management, and management of the movement of amateur artists. Therefore, the management process of the sports movement at UPR must consider the following essential elements:

- Achievement of interrelated stages.
- Direction from the Department of Physical Education and Services.
- Organization, planning, execution, and control of activities and competitions.
- Provision of services to the university community and its environment.
- Reconciliation between academic life and sports.
- Focus on the comprehensive education of university students.

All of the above allows for the consideration of the variable: management process of the sports movement at UPR. Consequently, the objective of this research article is to present the diagnosis of the management process of the sports

movement at the University of Pinar del Río, identifying the main limitations and needs to ensure its effectiveness, quality, and sustainability within the university context.

Methods and materials

To conduct the research, a critical analysis of the literature related to the thematic cores (sports movement, management, university) and the research context was performed. Theoretical methods, such as historical-logical analysis and its procedures (analysis and synthesis, induction-deduction), were employed to determine the background of the management process of the sports movement (MPSM) and to understand the connections between these aspects.

An analysis was conducted on the following documents to verify how aspects of the sports movement and its management were addressed in universities. Additionally, other documents issued at the university, faculty, and the Department of Physical Education and Services (DPES) of UPR were analyzed:

- ✓ International University Sports Federation (FISU).
- ✓ Ministry of Higher Education (MES).
- ✓ National Institute of Sports and Recreation (INDER).
- ✓ National University Extension Program (2004).
- ✓ “ABC” of the University Student Federation.
- ✓ Extension strategies of the Department of Physical Education and Services.
- ✓ Extension strategies of the faculties of the UPR.

As part of the empirical methods, teacher interviews were conducted to collect key information about the investigated process. Additionally, statistical methods were employed for the processing, interpretation, summarization, and presentation of the data obtained through the applied instruments. The study population included the vice deans of university extension, students affiliated with the sports movement at the UPR, and all professors from the DPES. From this population, a sample was selected using simple random sampling, which included:

- ✓ 7 vice deans responsible for the university extension process in their respective faculties.
- ✓ 19 professors from the DPES.
- ✓ 7 sports coordinators from the faculties.
- ✓ 54 student athletes.
- ✓ 42 sports promoters.
- ✓ In total, the sample consisted of 131 participants.

Dimensions and Indicators of the MPSM at the UPR: to analyze the behavior of the research object and the manifestations of the problem, dimensions and

indicators were defined based on the criteria of Álvarez (2020), Jiménez (2022), and Pulido et al. (2023). These dimensions, aligned with the UNESCO proposal (2011), encompass institutional, administrative, pedagogical, and community aspects, described as follows:

- Institutional dimension: It identified how professors and the DPES are organized to enhance the functionality of the MPSM actions. It included the construction of roles, task distribution, methodological work, time management, and utilization of spaces to efficiently develop sports activities.
- Administrative dimension: It encompassed actions and strategies related to the management of human resources, objective setting, and decision-making for the MPSM. It focused on planning, organization, coordination, control, and monitoring of sports activities, optimizing human and financial resources to achieve institutional objectives.
- Pedagogical dimension: It considered the level of awareness and appropriation of those involved regarding the importance of sports for quality of life, health, and skill acquisition. It included the teaching-learning process aimed at managing the sports movement, promoting efficiency, effectiveness, and significant knowledge to refine this process.
- Community dimension: It evaluated how the institution interacts with the community to promote sports, considering its demands, needs, and expectations. It analyzed the participation of faculties and the DPES in programs and projects that fostered the integration of sports into community culture.

These dimensions served as a starting point for defining the variable and the indicators that allowed for diagnosing the current situation of the MPSM at the UPR.

Results and discussion

The analysis of documents from the International University Sports Federation (FISU) revealed that, although these documents establish general guidelines for the management of university sports, they have been insufficient in terms of specific adaptation to national or local contexts. While valuable guidelines are provided at the international level, they do not address in detail how these strategies should be adjusted to the particularities of the Cuban university system, which has hindered their effective implementation in universities. Therefore, the guidelines have not sufficiently taken into account the specific sociocultural environment and resource limitations of Cuban universities.

Whereas, the analysis of documents from the National Institute of Sports and Recreation (INDER) showed that, while broad-reaching sports policies are defined, they do not sufficiently address the connection between the sports movement and other territorial or national aspects. Mechanisms for cooperation between INDER and universities were not adequately managed, limiting the effectiveness of sports

policies at the university level. The proposed strategies did not fully consider the need to adapt national policies to university contexts, especially in the management of the university sports movement.

The National University Extension Program (2004) establishes general guidelines and projections for university extension and specifically includes the sports movement. It has provided a solid foundation for extending academic and cultural activities; however, a more integrative and coherent approach is needed for the specific management of the university sports movement, allowing universities to manage sports more efficiently, inclusively, and sustainably.

One of its achievements is the focus on the comprehensive education of students, which encompasses not only the academic sphere but also physical and social development. Although it does not exclusively dedicate itself to sports, the program recognizes the importance of sports activities in the personal and collective development of students, contributing to fostering a culture of well-being and physical health within the university community. This comprehensive approach is crucial for training professionals with a broader and more complete vision of their role in society.

The program also promotes active student participation in various extension activities, including sports and recreational activities. While not exhaustively detailed, this indirectly promotes student participation in the sports movement.

The program merits recognition for encouraging the use of existing sports infrastructure in universities. In many cases, universities have adequate sports spaces for physical activities, but these are not always used optimally. Furthermore, the program promotes the use of these resources for both competitive and recreational activities, contributing to maximizing the use of available resources and improving the quality of life for students, as well as fostering interconnections between various university extension activities. This allows sports activities to naturally integrate into the broader context of university life. Although not always managed effectively, many universities leverage university extension activities to offer sports events within cultural festivals or themed weeks, which encourages greater student participation. This interrelation between academic, cultural, and sports activities contributes to the development of a dynamic and multidisciplinary university environment. Additionally, the social and community value of sports is recognized as a tool to strengthen social ties within universities. Through extension activities, sports are utilized as a means to promote social cohesion, foster mutual respect, and improve the quality of life in university communities.

This perspective of sports as a means of social transformation is an important value in higher education, as it promotes inclusion and the development of social skills among students. It also addresses the connection between universities and the community through their extension activities, including sports.

This aspect is key to training professionals committed to society, as it allows them to interact with the community beyond the classroom. The sports activities organized by the university not only benefit students but also serve to strengthen the university-society relationship.

Although the National University Extension Program (2004) presents some

challenges regarding the management and coordination of the sports movement, its positive aspects are clear. The promotion of comprehensive education, encouragement of active participation, utilization of existing infrastructure, and recognition of the social value of sports are fundamental elements that contribute to the well-being of students and the creation of a physical culture within Cuban universities.

"ABC" of the University Student Federation (FEU): the "ABC" document of the University Student Federation (FEU) provides a valuable guide for student organization; however, it has not sufficiently addressed the active role of students in the university sports movement. While the FEU plays a crucial role in student life, student participation in the creation of sports policies or decision-making related to university sports is not adequately managed. This limits students' role in building an effective and participatory sports management system based on the sports movement.

Extension Strategies of the Department of Physical Education and Services (DPES): the extension strategy of the DPES is not sufficiently integrated with other extension strategies at the university level. There is a lack of effective coordination between the DPES and other university departments, which hinders a cohesive and coherent management of sports activities within the broader context of university extension. Furthermore, strategies for the continuous evaluation of the impact of these activities are not widely included.

Extension Strategies of the Faculties of the UPR: they provide a framework for various academic and cultural activities but do not adequately address sports management. While some faculties include activities like the Juegos Guamá, there is no common or integrated strategy among the faculties to coordinate efforts to promote a robust university sports movement. The management of sports activities is often fragmented and insufficiently integrated within the university's general extension policies.

In summary, the analyzed documents reveal that, although there are guidelines and strategies mentioning sports and recreation, they do not manage the integration of the sports movement into the university structure effectively or specifically.

Policies and strategies at different levels do not often detail adaptation to local contexts or coordination among various actors within the university context of the UPR, limiting the ability to apply these guidelines coherently and effectively within universities.

The analysis of interviews conducted with the vice deans of extension, the head of the Department of Physical Education, and professors from the same department revealed that they recognized the importance of the Management Process of the Sports Movement (MPSM) as a comprehensive training process for workers, professors, students, and the broader community. However, several aspects requiring attention were identified. There were no observed professional development actions for professors in sports management topics.

The DPES showed deficiencies in projects aimed at developing general

comprehensive culture, leading to a lack of awareness about the potential impact of the process on the university and external community. Consequently, the actions taken regarding the management of the sports movement have been sporadic and spontaneous, lacking efficient planning. It is perceived that the diagnostic needs and avenues for participation in the sports movement within the university community and its surroundings are still insufficient.

The questionnaire applied to the vice deans of extension from the seven faculties of the UPR provided insights into their opinions regarding the investigated process. The results of the questionnaire are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Main Themes Related to the MPSM Identified in the Questionnaire

Result	Percentage
MPSM management according to each faculty's strategy	86%
Consider current MPSM management to be insufficient	100%
Unawareness of MPSM management strategies	100%
Training of vice deans	79%
Recommendation to train all actors in theoretical and methodological foundations	100%
Absence of improvement actions in development plans	100%

Source: Own elaboration.

Seventy-nine percent of respondents indicated they felt qualified to manage the sports movement, which is contradictory since they also acknowledged a lack of knowledge regarding the theoretical foundations supporting the process. This reliance on experience and practice is further illustrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Results of the Survey Applied to First-Level Directors

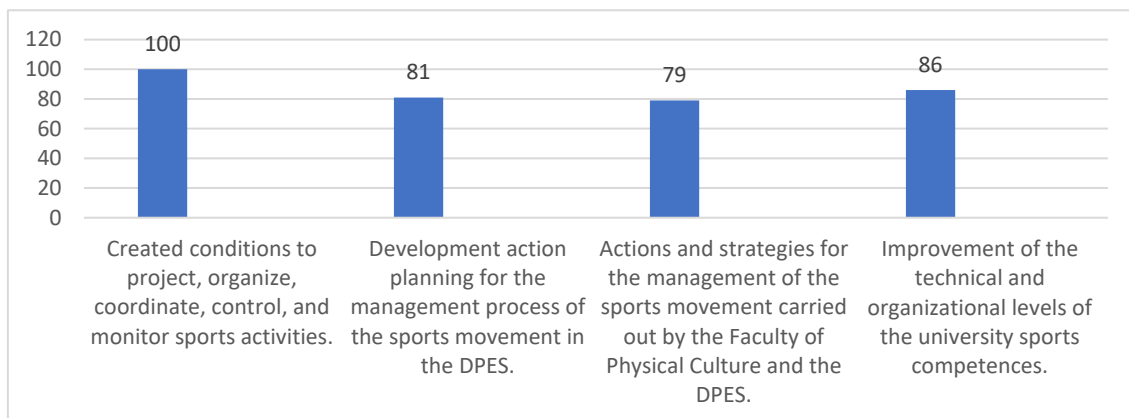
Indicators	Vice Deans of Extension
Structures created for the functionality of actors involved in MPSM actions	86% report no knowledge of the actors targeted by the observed actions. Other faculties act according to their own strategies.
Distribution of tasks assigned to enhance sports movement management	23% indicate that functions and tasks are not effectively established to achieve articulation and integration of actors and the institution.
Interaction of the UPR in the social life of the province regarding the development of sports and recreation	100% state that cultural institutions both within and outside the university are not sufficiently utilized.

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding the level of acceptance of the MPSM, the results obtained from the previous analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Results of the Survey Applied to First-Level Directors



Source: Own elaboration.

Regularities identified in the diagnosis of the dimensions of the MPSM:

- In the institutional dimension, the MPSM at the UPR lacks theoretical and methodological foundations that contribute to the comprehensive education of professionals. Additionally, there is a lack of clarity regarding the roles of organizational structures and the actors involved in the process, resulting in limited effectiveness in strategic planning to enhance the process.
- In the administrative dimension, deficiencies were identified in personnel management, particularly in the assignment of roles and performance evaluation of the actors involved in the MPSM. Actions are also insufficient to achieve efficient integration among the process actors, the university community, and the surrounding territory.
- In the pedagogical dimension, there is a notable lack of contribution from the sports movement to the comprehensive education of students, with limited engagement with students who are the primary beneficiaries of the process. This leads to inadequate preparation for those involved in managing the sports movement.
- In the community dimension, there is a weak relationship between the sports movement and cultural institutions, both within and outside the university. A dissatisfaction with performance in this area is expressed, along with deficiencies in the relational system (coordination, subordination, and hierarchization) that hinder efficient integration among the process actors and university life.

It was observed that the management of the sports movement at the UPR was centralized, inflexible, and disconnected from the needs of students. The criteria outlined regarding the aspects of the MPSM at the UPR were considered key references for research related to university sports movement and its management. From this analysis, it can be concluded that the UPR has a comprehensive approach to managing the sports movement. Its organizational structure includes compliance with the guidelines established by the Ministry of Higher Education regarding the planning, direction, guidance, and execution of sports activities within the university context, establishing the norms to be followed for sports competitions. The DPES is responsible for promoting sports in both academic and extracurricular settings, providing advice to faculties, and mediating the link among the UPR, INDER, and the intra- and extra-university community.

According to D'Arcy (2020), strategic planning is essential for the success of sports programs in universities. Some authors argue that effective management allows for aligning available resources with institutional objectives, positively impacting the student experience. Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize planning, organization, execution, control, and evaluation of the process, especially regarding assigned tasks and their functionality, as established by the Ministry of Higher Education and the UPR, to ensure adequate management of the process.

From the results obtained, the main challenges highlighted were the capacity to conduct appropriate organizational diagnostics that provide a clear and objective view of the internal and external environment. Based on this diagnosis, it is proposed to redesign the process, necessitating the improvement of each administrative structure to achieve the objectives of the UPR, with the support of the actors involved in the MPSM.

According to Cardona & Cardona (2021), understanding the trends and challenges arising from environmental demands is essential for the MPSM. The surveys conducted also revealed that the MPSM at the UPR lacks theoretical and methodological foundations to contribute to the comprehensive education of professionals. This implies the need to establish strategic alliances among institutions, such as the Scientific Research Center for Sports, the UPR, and other centers dedicated to scientific research in this field. This collaboration represents a significant challenge. Planning, on the other hand, is fundamental, providing guidance that considers the particularities of each territory and the opportunities offered by collaborators and stakeholders. This planning enables an understanding of the methodology used and the social function of sports (Orts Delgado, 2021).

Currently, the participation of professionals from diverse fields—such as lawyers, engineers, journalists, economists, and accountants—alongside physical education and sports professionals, is required, demanding greater preparation for sports management. Rovira et al. (2024) argue that this is part of university extension, considered a comprehensive training process that positively impacts both students and the university community. This presents a challenge for sports organizations, as emphasized by Espronceda et al. (2024), who consider an entire information system necessary for university sports projects, a facet that has been minimally addressed in the diagnostic assessment.

Another aspect that requires attention is the selection of personnel to work

in university sports services, typically conducted by staff from the Department of Physical Education and Services. There has not been sufficient consideration for ongoing training, nor has there been adequate training for territorial promoters or a specific focus on women (Avila et al., 2021). Rosa et al. (2020) highlight the importance of considering women in the planning of recreational activities. In the case of the University Gymnasium, this was not sufficiently addressed in the diagnosis. Rosa & Profice (2018) underline the importance of conducting evaluations to ensure the safety and efficacy of exercise programs prior to the prescription of physical exercises. Such considerations should be incorporated into the proposed management of the studied process to contribute to its improvement.

The support from local organizations is essential for addressing the social and economic needs of both individuals and entities beyond the university context. This support plays a crucial role in the growth and sustainability of sports at the local level (Calvet, 2015). Lovelock et al. (2016) analyze the participation of children, adolescents, and young adults in recreational activities, emphasizing their importance in the development and well-being of youth. This aspect, which encompasses necessary services, has not been adequately addressed and must be considered more specifically. Additionally, the current scarcity of funds allocated to university sports has limited student participation opportunities in territorial sports activities and has reduced the quality of possible local programs (Barlow, 2021). Furthermore, it is evident that there has not been extensive use of technology in this context, as noted by Quishpe et al. (2024).

A contemporary and underexplored aspect from the diagnosis is the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the university sports movement. AI in sports is defined as a tool that corrects errors, aids in decision-making, and enhances training and competition strategies (Sanabria Navarro et al., 2024). Its application in this realm is improving the management, competencies, and activities of sports within universities. Universities must consider AI when managing their sports programs. Through automated systems, institutions can optimize the planning and organization of sports events, manage facilities and resources, and improve communication between students and coaches. AI algorithms can analyze large volumes of data to predict trends and needs, enabling more informed and efficient decision-making. The bibliometric analysis of AI in sports shows a significant increase in scientific publications over the last decade, indicating a growing interest in the topic (Sanabria et al., 2024).

Another crucial aspect highlighted by Cardona & Cardona (2021) is the importance of understanding trends and challenges arising from environmental demands for the MPSM. However, research indicates that the MPSM at the UPR lacks solid theoretical and methodological foundations to contribute to the comprehensive training of professionals. Therefore, it is vital to establish strategic alliances with institutions such as the Scientific Research Center for Sports and other centers dedicated to research in this field.

Moreover, sports planning is essential to guide actions that promote sports, taking into account the particularities of each territory and the opportunities offered by collaborators and stakeholders. The incorporation of professionals from various

fields into the university sports sector also requires greater preparation and ongoing training.

Conclusions

The systematization of the evolution of the management process of the sports movement, both internationally and nationally, as well as its impact on the UPR, allowed for an approach to a set of essential references and indispensable concepts, as well as principles, characteristics, functions, tasks, and mechanisms that corroborated the need for this research.

The management process of the sports movement in Cuba has been carried out in a centralized, inflexible, and decontextualized manner concerning the needs of students. This process has been limited to supplementary educational activities, without considering the particularities of the professionals to be trained, nor the promotion of a culture of systematic physical exercise practice within the community. This restricts the comprehensive education of students, evident in their lack of knowledge of the theoretical and methodological references for management and the lack of linkage between university extension and other substantive processes.

The initial diagnosis confirmed the deficiencies in the management process of the sports movement at the UPR, highlighting the lack of structure and internal regulations to govern it. Additionally, theoretical and methodological limitations were identified that hinder the integration of the actors involved in the process, the institution, and its environment.

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Declaration of author responsibility

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Yudit Rovira Alvarez 2: Software, Supervision, Validation/Verification, Visualization, Writing/original draft, and Writing, review and editing.

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