



ARTÍCULO EDITORIAL / EDITORIAL ARTICLE

TWENTY YEARS OF THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MEDICINE AND SCIENCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT

VEINTE AÑOS DE LA REVISTA INTERNACIONAL DE MEDICINA Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA Y EL DEPORTE

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November 2020 marked the 20th anniversary of our Journal. Twenty years that are reflected in this, issue 80. There are four issues published per year, always appearing punctually online.

The Management Team of the International Journal of Medicine and Science of Physical Activity and Sport, through these lines, want to recall all those incidents which occurred during this time, our decisions, intentions and our careers, as well as our thoughts.

In 2000, we decided to launch this International Journal of Medicine and Science of Physical Activity and Sport in the field of the Virtual Community of Sports Science. It was a bold decision at a time when it was said that publishing in electronic journals had no value and no future.

This step was taken thanks to the facilities provided by RedIRIS (<https://www.rediris.es/rediris/index.html.es>) for the creation of content in Spanish by Spanish-speaking researchers, with which we had been collaborating since 1996 when we created the first mailing lists. RedIRIS has provided us with tools and a safe, stable and permanently maintained platform. For 20 years we have always had permanent help and never a major problem. In particular, this permanent help and collaboration has been organised by Mr. Jesús Sanz de las Heras, to whom this Journal pays tribute, as well as to his organisation, on this twentieth anniversary, as a token of gratitude.

In 1996 we created the RedIRIS EDUFIS mailing list, aimed at connecting physical activity professionals and students.

Between 1998 and 2002 the editor of this journal was proposed for the management of the professional journal in print, the Spanish Journal of Physical

Education and Sports (REEFD: Revista Española de Educación Física y Deportes), published by the General Council of Teachers and Graduates in Physical Education.

The tools provided by RedIRIS were added to the Editor's experience in the management of a professionally printed journal, and to the problems and high costs that this format implied. In 2000, the Editorial Board rejected a proposal to publish the professional journal online, among other reasons because online journals were unworthy, so we ventured to create a new Journal published in this format.

In 1999 we created the second RedIRIS mailing list MEDEPOR for students and doctors connected with sports, which was related to the previous one. Both lists remain active today.

In 2000 we went one step further because RedIRIS provided us with the necessary tools to create the Virtual Community of Sports Science, which was the framework where the Journal appeared.

We must remember it is said that in 2006, 50% of the Spanish population used the internet.

In the beginning, the Journal published articles that had been reviewed by students of the doctorate in Physical Activity and Sports in the UAM (Autonomous University of Madrid) supervised by the professor, anonymously, using and learning the double-blind review method. We knew about the importance of choosing the reviewers carefully and this aspect has been one of the priorities taken into account during all these years. They had to be professionally trained but with a broad, tolerant and independent vision. Anyone with the slightest hint of unethical behaviour has not been invited and anyone involved in an incident at some point or who did not collaborate on an ongoing basis with no reason has been excluded.

In the beginning, the most complicated part was receiving articles, as any journal which is starting.

The first Management Team was formed by Dr. Vicente Martínez de Haro as the editor and Dr. Francisco Javier San Miguel Bruck as the associate editor. The editorial board was formed by the doctors, Mr. José Antonio Casajús, Mr. Vicente Ferrer López, Mr. Manuel Guillén del Castillo, Mr. Ignacio Martínez González-Moro, Mr. Francisco Miguel Tobal, Mr. José Antonio Ruiz Caballero (Died: February 2020), Mr. Fernando Santonja Medina, Ms. Lourdes Sarmiento Ramos and Mr. Juan Carlos Segovia Martínez.

The first Advisory Board, which was initially and wrongly named Editorial Board, included Dr. Luis Gómez Pellico, Dr. Roberto Hernández Corvo (Died: 2015), Dr. Julio Cesar Legido Arce, Dr. Antonio Sicilia Sicilia (Died: March 2020) and Dr. Manuel Vitoria Ortiz.

The most relevant facts about the journal are the following five:

- First published in the year 2000
- Included in the JCR (Journal Citation Reports)
- The FECYT Seals of Quality
- The DOI (Digital Object Identifier) was included by the UAM (Autonomous University of Madrid)
- The enthusiastic participation of almost 150 contributors

We would also like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to those who have passed away, in recognition of their work during all the years they collaborated with us, they are the doctors: Mr. Cipriano Romero Cerezo (2011), Mr. Roberto Hernández Corvo (2015), Mr. J. Gualberto Cremades (2016), Mr. José Antonio Ruiz Caballero (2020) and Mr. Antonio Sicilia Sicilia (2020).

Today we can see on the covers of each issue, the names of all the contributors (one hundred and sixty different people) who have participated at some point. The names of those who are still active are in the Directory on the main cover and in the last issue.

Title

The first decision made was the title. We were certain it had to be an international journal, so it seemed essential that this aspect appeared in the title.

Secondly, we searched for a title that would not be a copy of any other journal in the same field at that time.

The use of the word “medicine” was decided because most of the articles were related to this field, in addition to being one of the editor's fields, and it was also a way to draw attention to publish with us. Due to the title, it was classified as a journal of health only. It has been very difficult to get it classified and evaluated in the field of social science, specifically in education. It is a multidisciplinary journal in the field of Sport Science, as the guidelines specify. However, we have never been evaluated, for instance, in the field of psychology. Although we publish many articles related to it.

From the beginning, the decision was made not to change the title to be identified by the same name and have continuity.

Finally, we are easily recognised by the title, despite the fact that a few years ago another Journal was created with a very similar title that could lead to confusion, so it was reported and it had to change its title. This has been one of the few incidents we have come across over the years.

Next, we requested the corresponding ISSN for the electronic version.

In 2009, we had to rectify the mistake of incorrectly naming the Scientific Advisory Board, Editorial Board. So we decided to change the name and, consequently, what was previously named Technical Editors was renamed Editorial Board and Technical Editors to avoid the confusions that all this could

create.

In the beginning, the articles that were published were almost entirely reviewed by doctoral students who at that time were studying at the Autonomous University of Madrid. At that time we received few articles, so all those that were accepted were automatically published with no delay. Currently, we have an excess of articles and therefore there is a publishing delay of approximately two years. Some top-tier journals have created second-tier versions to provide themselves with feedback.

Design and Management

The current design is a functional design derived from the early years.

In the year 2000, the design was based on programming with HTML codes. Nowadays, a wide variety of programmes can be used, but their management and control present difficulties. The page was designed considering functionality to facilitate quick access and easy navigation.

Some changes have been introduced since its creation, such as incorporating the logo and classifying the articles into different areas on the homepage in 2011, incorporating on the cover of each issue the percentages to calculate and show the inbreeding coefficient in 2012, and changing the design of the homepage in 2013. In 2013, we decided to stop publishing the international events calendar for professionals specialised in sport science, due to the considerable amount of time that had to be devoted to maintaining it, which made it impossible to accomplish, even though we were aware that we were leaving out a great added value.

Many people contribute altruistically with the Journal. Currently, we have 158 contributors.

Not being a "professional" journal where everyone should get paid for their work, a much more personalised management is required. We have two possibilities to use the Open Journal Systems (OJS) software, one provided by the FECYT thanks to the seal of quality, and the other one provided by the UAM, but we are not able to use its entire functionality, since we cannot treat all processes automatically, in particular, the contributors who are making great efforts, offering their knowledge and hard work. Sometimes the managers and reviewers of the organisations do not understand this aspect. In addition, it must be taken into account that contributing to a Journal is not academically recognised.

It is an open-access journal, with an OA-APC license, although a fee is charged to the authors who want to publish. The publication fee was set as a requirement for publication as a filtering mechanism for the reception of articles. Since 2010, when we obtained the first impact factor, we have received a flood of articles that practically paralysed the journal's management so we decided to charge a fee as a filter. First, we considered charging a fee for the article review, but the authors of rejected articles were not going to accept it easily. Even

though those articles are the most detrimental since they are time-consuming, they get two or three reviews for free, and despite all that, the journal does not benefit from their publication. In addition, unfortunately, the rejection rate has increased enormously for two reasons: the authors send numerous articles to find out if they can be publishable and, in many cases, the articles do not conform to an acceptable level. It is evident that the level of rigorousness required from the articles in order to be published has increased with time, and many articles are now rejected. Finally, only accepted articles are those that are charged the publication fee. It should be noted that the fee is adapted to the per capita income of each country. Contributors who sign an accepted article are exempted from their proportional part of the fee as a small compensation for their contribution.

A relevant fact for the journal was the inclusion of the DOI in its issues and articles.

Regarding management, it has been a wise decision to put everything into the hands of the management team and that each contributor has his or her specific area of work with immediate alternatives available if any unforeseen circumstance occurs.

One aspect to take into account regarding management is that some Spanish public administrations request certificates of articles that are published and, that therefore, would not need the issuance of that certificate. This involves a lot of work and we consider that it could easily be avoided by checking the publication as it is published in an open-access journal.

Contributors and reviewers

All contributors have been chosen for their professional relevance in the indicated field. The incorporation of all the people who are part of the different teams in the Journal has been gradual throughout all these years, and we must say that the contribution of each of them has been fundamental and that all of them have been relevant to the improvement of all the aspects of the journal reaching the level in which we are at the moment.

For the election of the contributors, one of the criteria taken into account is that all Spanish-speaking countries are represented among the different commissions and reviewers, to increase internationalisation. We are still in need of representation from El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay. A curious fact is that we have a large representation of non-Spanish-speaking countries: Portugal, the USA, Australia, France, Belgium, Brazil, the UK, China and Greece. We are proud to have representation from so many different countries, and we hope to increase collaboration with more Spanish-speaking professionals from all countries in the world.

We also aim to increase the number of female contributors, who are a clear minority, specifically 45 out of a total of 158 contributors, representing only 28.48%.

Among the important facts regarding the contributions, it is worth noting the incorporation of Dr. Lourdes Cid as associate editor replacing Dr. Javier San Miguel, who had to leave office due to personal and professional issues, although he continued with his permanent relationship and commitment as part of the Advisory Board.

The official representative of the School of Physical Education of the Spanish Army also deserves special recognition. Located in the city of Toledo (Spain) it is the oldest in the country. Its 100th anniversary was celebrated in 2019, and for this reason, we invited them that year. Its current representative is Mr. Juan Ramón Godoy López. Special recognition is also granted to the Artillery Academy of the Spanish Army, located in Segovia (Spain), as it is the oldest active military academy in the world, and is represented by Mr. Benjamin Muñoz Herrera. Both Centres have been, and are very important in the field of physical exercise.

The reviewers have fulfilled their role very satisfactorily, even proposing different review methods. The Management Team allow freedom of choice of the type of format used as long as the recommendations and reviews meet the required criteria. We have only had to exclude those who committed but did not meet deadlines, thus causing serious delays. Fortunately, these delays could be made up due to our rule of publishing in order according to the date of the reception of the article and not of the reception of the review. To reduce the inordinate amount of time spent on the review, it was decided that the third reviews should be carried out by the Editorial Board, taking into account the criteria provided by the two reviewers and, in some cases, carrying out a third anonymous review by one of the members of the Editorial Board.

We have had 145 reviewers, 32 of them with more than 20 reviews, standing out Dr. Carlos Tejero with 34, Dr. Juan José Ramos with 33 and Dr. Manuel Delgado and Dr. Francisco Miguel with 31 reviews.

On the web, we can see the statistics of the reviews after the information for contributors.

One of the problems is not being able to have different editors in each area. As the work is done altruistically, the specialisation in different areas delayed and made it even more difficult to review the article.

Guidelines

One of the most problematic aspects is receiving articles that do not comply with our specific author guidelines, since, as each Journal has its own rules, the authors often send their articles following guidelines from other Journals and this causes discomfort to the Editorial Board.

The most positive aspect of the Journal is that articles are published strictly in the order they are received.

One of the guidelines developed over time, which we did not have from the

beginning, was that an article could not be sent to different Journals at the same time, because if an article was withdrawn in the middle of a review process or even at the end of it, it caused great inconvenience to the organisation of the review process and we considered that it was not fair, neither for the Journal nor the reviewers.

Ethical standards have been essential as we will mention later on.

The publication of the articles in Spanish is our hallmark, although they can be published, once accepted, in other languages too. One of the key aspects is that they have to be sent in Spanish, we have to remind this rule very often, since many authors want to send us the original article in English and, for the moment, we have not considered that option, since the Journal would need reviewers who mastered the language and at this moment, this is unfeasible.

Regarding citation, no specifications have been established. The only requirement is that all citations have the same format. It is expected that, regardless of the guidelines followed, it is easy to precisely locate the cited source. Therefore, the author is free to choose any guidelines, although the APA, Vancouver and UNE guidelines are recommended. No further specifications are defined.

Language and translation

The Journal reviews articles in Spanish, once accepted they have to be translated into English and recently, it also offers the possibility to publish them in any languages that the authors decide, so we have articles to publish also in Portuguese.

We have already explained that it was essential that mainly Spanish-speaking people published in the Journal to express their thoughts correctly, although the articles were also necessarily translated into English for dissemination. For this reason, only originals in Spanish are received and reviewed. This decision was reconsidered at a certain point since originals in English were received mainly from non-Spanish speakers, who were neither English speakers and wanted to publish in our journal. Even the reviewers were asked if they could and wanted to review in English, but finally, we maintained our initial decision. We decided that there were already many journals that published in English which could receive those articles. If the authors want to publish in our journal, they must send the document in Spanish, and if it is accepted in Spanish, besides being published in Spanish and English, the authors are also allowed to publish it in their native language as a third language, as long as we have a reviewer who confirms that this version is the same as the Spanish one.

Once the language in which the articles should be received and reviewed was decided, the dilemma about whether it had to be translated into English or not arose. It was clear that if we pursued international expansion we had to publish in English. We considered that the journal should do it, but we did not have the financial nor human capacity. Even the variety of English we would accept was discussed, if we were going to define it and if accuracy in writing would be

guaranteed. We decided that the authors would choose the translators and that they should appear in the English version as translators. That way it becomes clear that the original is the Spanish version and the translation is the responsibility of the translators.

We thought that at least we could facilitate the translation. We checked the prices of translation services and considered it was not feasible to do it in this way, so internally, we decided to use a list RedIRIS had for calls and offers to invite each potential applicant to submit their application and we received more than 2500, setting out the translators their conditions. They agreed to translate the articles accepted by our journal at a fixed price, including taxes, regardless of their length, the translators negotiated the terms and payments directly with the authors and could issue invoices. We selected five translators and nowadays we can say that thanks to these translations some small businesses have been able to establish themselves, the translations are published publicly. Of course, it is not compulsory for the authors to choose one of these translators and, except for the agreement between the journal and the translators, the Journal is not an intermediary between them.

Authors

Currently, more than 1500 authors have published in our Journal and most of them work in Spanish centres. We receive more than 100 articles per year for their review, approximately 62% are rejected, 40% by the editors and the other 22% by the reviewers. Only 1% have been accepted without any modifications by both evaluators.

Most of the articles need 1 to 3 months to be reviewed (40%), 35% need 4 to 6 months and the rest need over 7 months.

According to Web Science, the five most cited articles are:

Calabuig, F.; Burillo, P.; Crespo, J.; Mundina, J.J. & Gallardo, L. (2010). Satisfacción, calidad y valor percibido en espectadores de atletismo. *Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y el Deporte* vol. 10 (40) pp. 577-593.

[Http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista40/artsatisfaccion182.htm](http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista40/artsatisfaccion182.htm), with over 48 citations.

Abarca - Sos, A.; Zaragoza Casterad, J.; Generelo Lanaspá, E. & Julián Clemente, J.A. (2010). Comportamientos sedentarios y patrones de actividad física en adolescentes. *Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y el Deporte* vol. 10 (39) pp. 410-427.

[Http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista39/artcomportamientos170.htm](http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista39/artcomportamientos170.htm), with over 38 citations.

Arruza, J. A.; Arribas, S. ; Gil De Montes, L. ; Irazusta, S. ; Romero, S. & Cecchini, J.A. (2008). Repercusiones de la duración de la Actividad Físico-deportiva sobre el bienestar psicológico. *Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y el Deporte* vol. 8 (30) pp. 171-183

[Http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista30/artrepercusiones83.htm](http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista30/artrepercusiones83.htm), with over 33 citations.

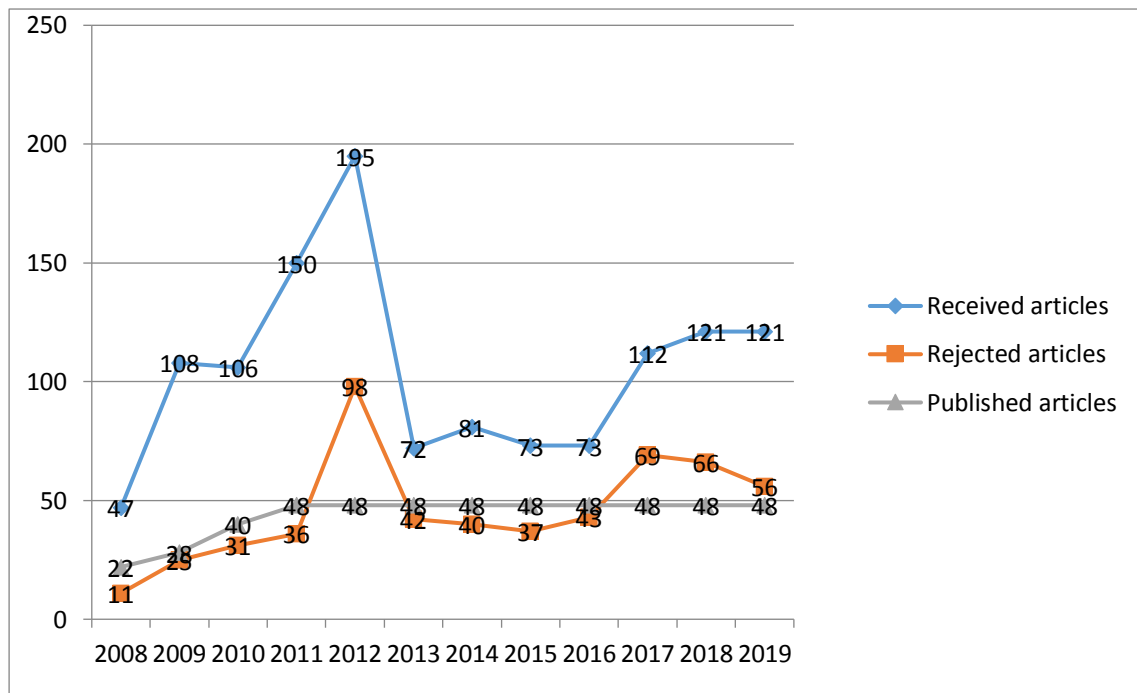
Devís-Devís, J., Valenciano Valcárcel, J., Villamón, M. & Pérez-Samaniego, V. (2010). Disciplinas y temas de estudio en las ciencias de la actividad física y el deporte. *Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y el Deporte* vol. 10 (37) pp. 150-166.

[Http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista37/artdisciplinas147.htm](http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista37/artdisciplinas147.htm), with over 31 citations.

Beltrán-Carrillo, V.J.; Devís-Devís, J. & Peiró-Velert, C. (2012). Actividad física y sedentarismo en adolescentes de la Comunidad Valenciana. *Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y el Deporte* vol. 12 (45) pp. 122-137.

[Http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista45/artactividad266.htm](http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista45/artactividad266.htm), with over 28 citations.

The chart represents the articles received, rejected and published:



There are 27 authors who have published more than 5 articles, standing out among them Mr. Jose Antonio Moreno Murcia, with 11 articles published, followed by Mr. Javier Fernández Río and Mr. José Antonio Martínez García, both with 10 articles published.

Ethics

Regarding the ethical standards applied to authors, we follow the best practice guidelines by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) (<http://publicationethics.org/>) and the recommendations for the Conduct, reporting, editing and publication of scholarly work in medical journals (ICMJE)

(<http://www.icmje.org/>)

When an ethical issue is found, a committee formed by three members of the editorial team gathers the data, requests further explanations, and offers the authors the possibility to defend themselves, and they study the case applying the codes of conduct. Over the past years, 2% of the articles received have been penalised for ethical misconduct.

The withdrawal of the article penalised two groups of authors. They were also banned for three years from publishing in our journal for trying to publish an article identical to another one that was already published in a different journal (duplicate or similar publication).

Another group of authors were banned for one year from publishing in our journal on account of “redundant publication”.

Two groups of authors were banned for one year from publishing in our journal on account of “redundant publication due to splitting”.

A group of authors were warned about self-plagiarising literal sentences in the article taken from communication at a congress and a thesis.

The withdrawal of the article penalised two groups of authors and they were banned for one year from publishing in our journal for submitting the article simultaneously to several journals.

And finally, a group of authors were warned and their article rejected for suspicious similarity with another article on the same topic.

A relatively frequent matter is to try to include an author once the article is accepted. When reminding them that, if it is true, the article must immediately be withdrawn and evaluated by an Ethics Committee, they have given up on the idea.

Evaluation of the journal and evolution of the different indexes

A study carried out by Devís et al. in 2004 (Devís-Devís, J, Antolín Jimeno, L, Villamón Herrera, M, Moreno Doña, A, & Valenciano Valcarcel, J, 2004) presented two indexes: the 2004 GGN Index (general normalisation grade) of Spanish Journals of Physical Activity and Sport, in which we scored 0.84 (out of 1), and the 2004 GFN Index (fundamental normalisation grade) of Spanish Journals of Physical Activity and Sport, in which we scored 0.97, establishing ourselves at the head of all the journals analysed in the field.

In 2007 we submitted the Journal to the first round for evaluation of scientific journals that was convened by the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT), and reached the second stage. James Testa, editor (now Vice President Emeritus) of the company Thomson Reuters, owner of the Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) which publishes the famous Journal Citation Report (JCR), was invited to this evaluation and said that there were

journals that were being evaluated that had not made the cut but would be selected by their company. Among those journals was ours, as we discovered three months later. We did not expect it, we had not even tried, since we knew that access to the JCR was gained only in two ways: By request and payment for the journal to be evaluated, which was discarded due to lack of funding, or by express invitation, which we didn't even dream of.

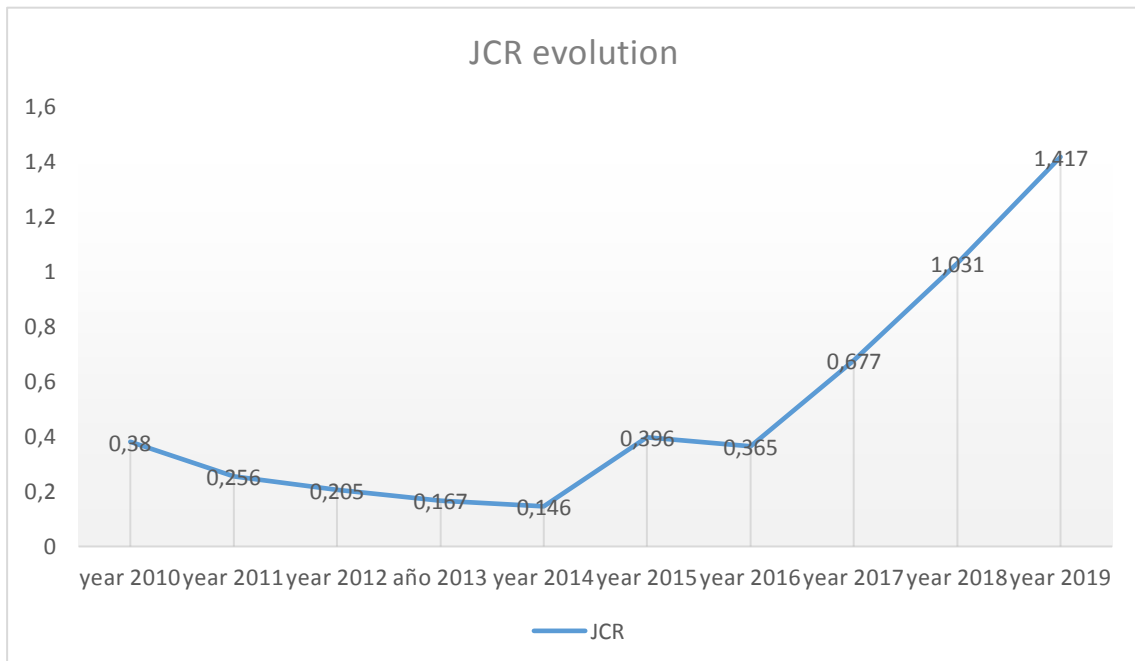
Until 2008, the journal was evaluated depending on the visits and downloads received and the monthly visits. Specifically that year we had, on average, approximately 9,000 monthly visits and 10,000,000 monthly Kb downloaded. We suppose that such high figures were the indicator to be invited by the JCR.

On October 24, 2007, we received a brief email from Ms. Katherine Junkins, Selective Coverage Supervisor of the Editorial Development Department, informing us of the following:

“Thomson Scientific (TS) is interested in indexing Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y del Deporte (Revista) in the Web of Science, Science Citation Index Expanded, and Focus On: Sports Science & Medicine”.

Additionally, she gave us some guidelines. From that moment on, with no further communication, we knew that during 2008 and 2009 they would be evaluating the citations. In effect, in the 2010 JCR, our first index appeared (0.380), which became the most important landmark of our journal.

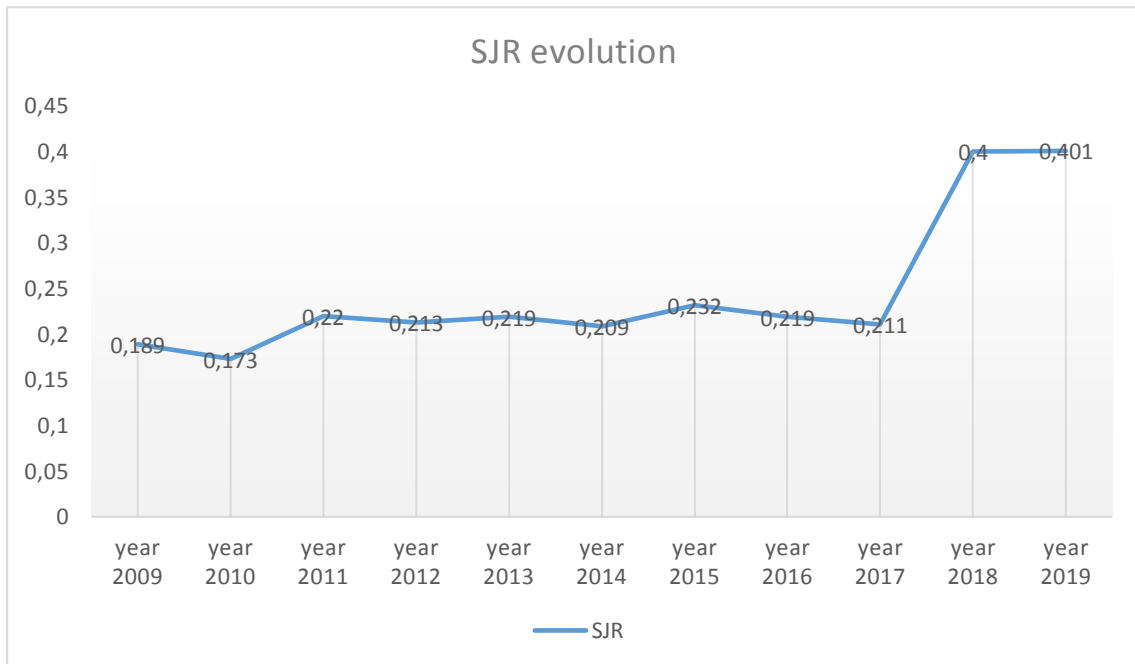
The following chart shows our evolution in the JCR so far:



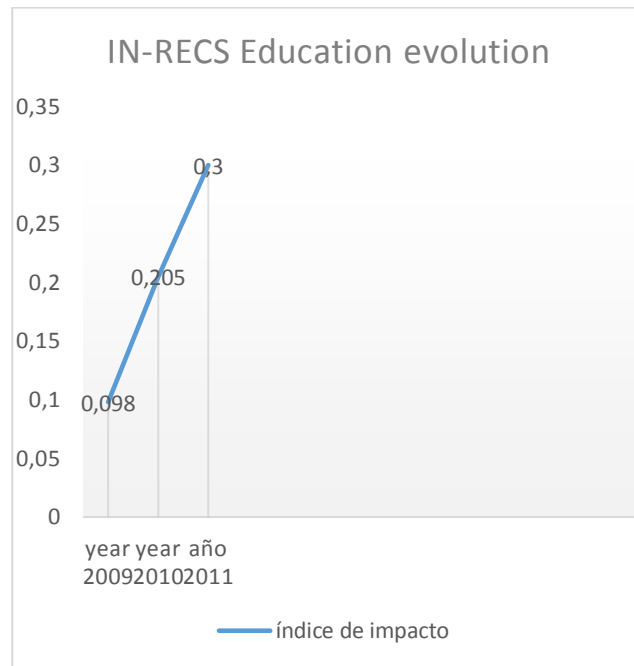
We attribute this decrease in the impact factor to the editor's bad decision, contrary to the collaborators' opinions, to increase the number of articles per issue from 7 articles in 2009, to 10 articles per issue in 2010 and 12 articles per

issue in 2011 since, as it is known, the number of articles published during the two evaluated years constitute the denominator of the index, which decreases if the citations do not increase (the numerator). When we reach 2 points, we plan to increase the number of articles per issue slightly, since we will be able to face a small drop in the index and, this way the waiting list will be reduced.

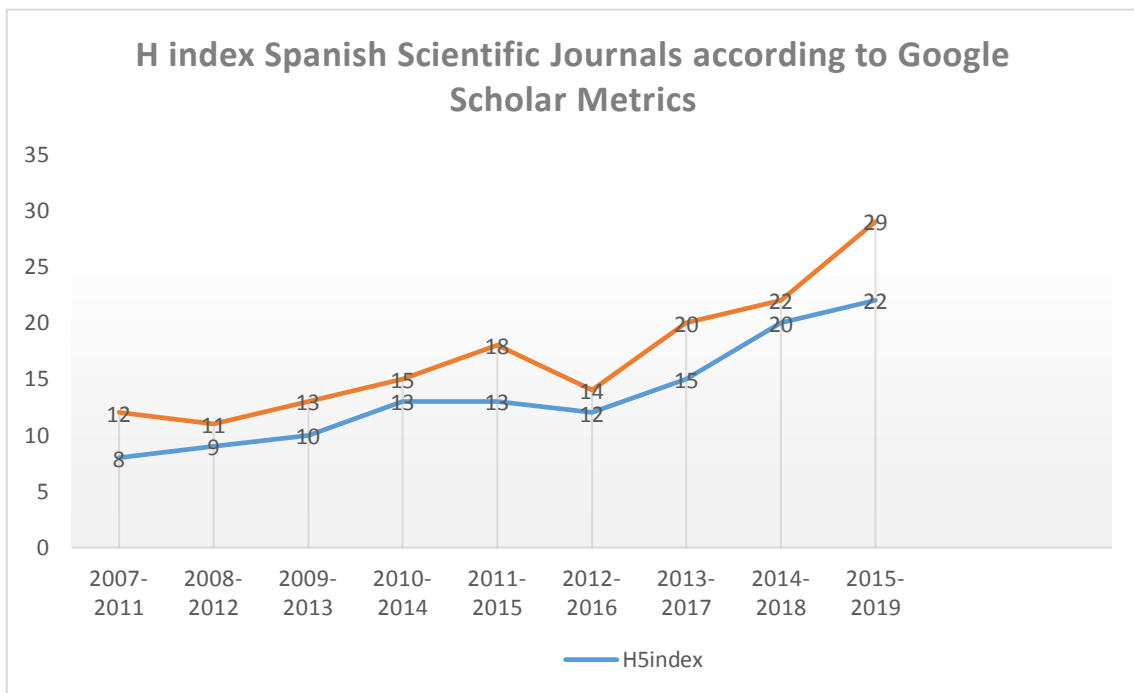
However, the first index we had was the SJR index (SCImago Journal & Country Rank) in 2009 with the following evolution:



We were also in the IN-RECS index (Impact factor - Spanish Social Sciences Journals) created by a group from the University of Granada and which, unfortunately, due to lack of funding, had to suspend its activity in 2011. So this great initiative for Spanish journals came to an end.



The H index, which associates the number of articles with the citations received, has also improved.



We have already said that in the first round for evaluation of scientific journals that was convened by the FECYT, we were excluded, but from the second round in 2011 and successively in 2013 and 2016 we rated "Excellent". This was accredited by the respective seals.



We have never used strategies to force improvement in impact factors, such as compelling to cite only articles from the last five years, publishing invited articles by authors with high impact factors, trying to include in accepted articles highly cited authors or others.

One of the most relevant facts to take into account is that the authors who publish in our journal are not cited in many of the national journals in this area, a fact that seems strange to us since, on many occasions these authors also publish in those journals. Therefore, we advise authors to check this aspect, since it would be beneficial for everyone, instead of mostly citing foreign journals as is currently the case.

CONCLUSIONS

The most important conclusion is that we believe it is a relevant shared merit having reached 20 years of age altruistically and we highlight our continuous desire to improve.

We wish to reach professionalisation, since this would solve many of the current problems, although others would undoubtedly appear. We would be able to have different editors in each area and reviewers of the complete English versions, not just the abstracts.

The international representation of all Spanish-speaking countries and the balance between the number of women and men are still pending.

Editing and publishing a scientific journal is a fascinating task that hopefully in the future will be adequately appreciated in our teaching profession.

REFERENCES

Devís-Devís, J., Antolín Jimeno, L., Villamón Herrera, M., Moreno Doña, A., & Valenciano Valcarcel, J. (2004). Las revistas científico-técnicas españolas de ciencias de la actividad física y el deporte: adecuación a las normas ISO y grado de normalización. *Ciência da Informação*, 33(1), 38-47.