

Articles

Trends and Overview of the Fitness Sector in Colombia for 2027

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Abstract: The fitness sector has experienced remarkable expansion in recent years, making it essential to analyze its current situation. This study aims to identify the main fitness trends at the national level for 2027. Using a quantitative, non-experimental methodology and a descriptive-comparative approach, it analyzes the adaptation and evolution of fitness centers in response to growing market demands, characterized by more demanding, digitally savvy, and results-oriented users. This scenario raises several questions about the future of the sector. These concerns must be addressed from multiple perspectives, such as sector growth, its strategic vision, business management, innovation in equipment and services, as well as user needs and loyalty. The findings indicate that the fitness landscape in 2027 points toward holistic well-being, a personalized approach to services, the integration of technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), and greater attention to specific population groups. Furthermore, it is anticipated that mental health will occupy a prominent position in the sector's strategies. Services will tend towards hybrid models that combine continuous care with innovative tools and creative methodologies. All of this is geared towards ensuring effective results for users through interprofessional and multidisciplinary work.

Keywords: Fitness Trends, Technology, Physical Activity, Health, Survey

Introduction

Fitness has become a fundamental pillar within the realm of movement and corporeality, giving rise to a wide range of methodologies, equipment, activities, infrastructure designs, and interdisciplinary connections. According to Pulgarín et al. (2023), it is crucial to conduct a detailed analysis of the sector, considering aspects such as supply, services, and human talent. This allows for the evaluation of the impact of fitness at both individual and collective levels, guiding its development towards continuous improvements that promote the professionalization and deepening of the processes inherent to this discipline.

The recognition of the fitness sector has been made possible through the joint effort of its various actors, who have contributed to its growth and consolidation. Over time, greater awareness has been generated regarding the benefits of physical activities and their positive impact. In this context, La Rosa and Vilchez (2024) highlight how physical activity can significantly affect public health, promoting active lifestyles that prevent chronic diseases and strengthen holistic well-being. Furthermore, they underscore the importance of designing activities that respond to the specific needs of diverse groups and contexts, emphasizing the need to produce scientific knowledge adaptable to different environments.

The scientific approach to fitness is based on contributions from the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), which has promoted technical, scientific, and technological development in this area to build a more active society grounded in solid academic foundations. For example, Cardona et al. (2021) conducted a study on emerging sports practices in Medellín, identifying a boom in these new activities. Their research concludes that it is necessary to structure, analyze, and professionalize them to maximize their benefits and reduce associated risks. This conclusion extends to the fitness field, where the proliferation of disciplines demands a more rigorous approach for their effective and safe development.

Since 2006, the fitness sector has had an international trends survey led by Thompson (2019, 2021, 2022, 2023). This study annually presents a ranking of the 20 most relevant activities of the moment, allowing for the evaluation of results and the implementation of continuous improvement strategies.

Franco et al. (2024), in one of the most recent studies based on this survey, highlight the integral benefits of promoting physical activity as a healthy habit. They insist on the need to unify communication processes within the realm of movement and corporeality through educational policies and programs that reinforce its responsible practice beyond mere muscular components, aiming for the comprehensive development of the human being. To achieve this objective, each involved actor—coaches, facilitators, and practitioners, among others—must assume an active role in the dissemination and promotion of physical activity in all possible contexts.

In Colombia, as part of the ninth edition of this global survey, the objective was set to analyze the national landscape of the fitness sector, evaluating the characteristics of its professionals and projecting trends towards 2027. The aim is to involve various key actors to deepen the analysis of ongoing processes and activities, connecting academic initiatives with the specific needs and concrete actions of the market. This seeks to achieve a comprehensive vision that strengthens each of the spaces that make up the sector at the national level.

The expansion and international projection of the fitness sector is also evidenced through the replication of similar surveys in different countries. Spain was a pioneer in this practice, according to Cámara et al. (2020), while Veiga et al. (2017, 2026) continued this effort in different periods. Likewise, Mexico (Gómez et al., 2020-2026) and Portugal (Franco et al., 2021-2023) have joined these studies, reflecting the global interest in establishing common parameters and sharing knowledge that enhance the development of fitness internationally.

The expansion and visibility of the fitness sector are clearly reflected in the implementation of surveys conducted in different years and their adaptation in various nations. Notable examples include Spain, which positioned itself as the first country to replicate the study by Cámara et al. (2020), followed by Veiga et al. (2017, 2026). This effort extended to Mexico with Gómez et al. (2020, 2026), Portugal with Franco et al. (2021, 2023, 2024), and Colombia with Valcarce et al. (2021, 2022) and Morales & Gómez (2022, 2026). These studies provided a comprehensive analysis of global trends in the fitness field, as illustrated by research from Ketcher et al. (2021, 2023), Newsome et al. (2024, 2025), and McAvoy et al. (2026).

Achieving a unique characterization in the fitness sector is crucial for recognition and positioning. According to Ruiz (2020), developing a strong personal brand within this field will allow one to stand out and achieve success. This brand should include general characteristics along with a distinctive and authentic component capable of making a difference. In a landscape where both supply and demand are growing rapidly, fitness centers and trainers need to implement differentiating strategies that allow them to scale, position themselves, and excel.

A key element in the sector's success is the professionals who guide and supervise processes within physical activities, commonly called trainers or instructors.

These experts must not only develop technical and scientific knowledge related to movement and corporeality but also strengthen interpersonal or soft skills. Simón (2020), in his study, highlights that health professionals are exposed to stressful factors during the execution of their

duties, making it essential to pay attention to the development of their emotional intelligence.

This includes reinforcing skills such as emotional management, coping with complex situations, and appropriate expression of emotions. Users seek not only professional guidance based on science and technology but also a comprehensive approach encompassing emotional aspects, thus offering a service that promotes both their well-being and that of the trainer.

In this sector, a great diversity of offers is observed, aimed at different population groups and individuals with specific needs. Suárez & Velasco (2020) identified factors limiting the adoption of physical activity habits, such as lack of motivation, economic resources, and time. However, they also pointed out how many people aspire to establish healthier lifestyles through these activities. Fitness centers play a fundamental role in addressing these challenges by incorporating not only basic exercises but also the characterization of current or potential populations. This allows for the design of flexible activities adaptable to different profiles, seeking to gradually integrate the responsible practice of physical activities into users' daily routines. Additionally, they identified other notable spaces or modalities such as low-cost gyms, specialized studios, or outdoor activities.

Motivation is a determining factor in guaranteeing regular and satisfactory physical practice. Ruiz et al. (2021), although their research focused on anthropometric variables and physical activity levels, underscored the importance of promoting it, especially among the child-youth population, to build a more active and healthy society. This has a direct impact on the dynamics of the fitness sector by encouraging participation in different activities and spaces intended for this population.

For their part, De Vargas (2020) analyzed how motivational processes vary between genders in adolescents, finding greater interest in males towards regular physical activity practice and formal physical education.

This finding highlights the need to implement strategies to awaken motivation and generate meaningful experiences that promote youth adherence to these practices, making them an essential part of their daily habits as a key aspect of leading a healthy lifestyle

The role of the trainer in the fitness sector is fundamental and transcends the sporting aspect, being considered a role model for their users. However, this perception can become a risk factor for the trainers themselves. According to Bustos et al. (2023), due to constant exposure to psychosocial tensions such as body dysmorphia, eating disorders, stress, or burnout, it is crucial to implement effective monitoring of the mental state of these professionals. Trainers are promoters of healthy habits and well-being, so they must develop a comprehensive vision encompassing both the physical and emotional aspects.

Currently, it is essential for movement professionals to work not only on the physical aspects but also on the emotional component of the individual, as this is structural in daily development. It would be advisable to guarantee safety in their work environment through fair conditions: balanced schedules, equitable rotations, adequate rest and meal spaces, as well as fair remuneration.

On the other hand, Franco et al. (2025) highlight that conducting surveys and studies in the fitness field at the national level significantly contributes to market growth and the identification of its specific characteristics. Gujer (2023) emphasizes the importance of trained professionals in physical training spaces and the

the need to understand the reasons behind some people's decision not to participate in these environments. This reinforces the relevance of exploring, analyzing, and interpreting the sector's dynamics to propose effective solutions.

Technology has played a crucial role in this industry, facilitating changes for both trainers and users. According to Estrada et al. (2020), although this tool has proven useful and efficient, it does not replace the work of professionals in guiding and facilitating physical activities. Studies such as those by Estrada et al. (2020), Valcácer (2020), and Gómez et al. (2022) show how technology has been successfully integrated into the fitness sector, acting as a flexible and adaptable tool that optimizes numerous operational actions and improves the experience for both trainers and users.

Methodology

In general terms, the design of the national survey for Colombia planned for 2027 is based on an international model adapted to the particularities of the sector and the country's population. This process includes adjustments derived from the experience gained through previous national surveys, considering the progress recorded in the sector's dynamics and orienting towards a comprehensive analysis of market supply and demand. The methodological approach used in the national survey "Trends and Overview of the Fitness Sector Colombia 2027" aligns with the structure proposed by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM).

The primary instrument will be a questionnaire specifically designed to collect data responding to the main research objective: to explore and establish a comprehensive diagnosis of the fitness sector landscape, along with the predominant professional characteristics for the year 2027.

Similarly, it seeks to identify the most prominent trends that will mark the sector during that period.

The selected research method is quantitative, non-experimental, and descriptive-comparative, following the guidelines proposed by Guevara et al. (2020). This research structure facilitates data collection and descriptive comparison based on the observation of phenomena within a natural environment.

The results are obtained through analysis based on the perceptions, knowledge, and experiences of the participants, who interact directly with the real context of the fitness sector in Colombia. Subsequently, the collected data are analyzed considering previous editions of the national survey, allowing for the evaluation of the evolution of the processes carried out within the sector and generating substantial conclusions regarding said progress.

The questionnaire is structured in an online format using Google Forms and organized into four sections with specific objectives. The first section addresses the demographic characterization of the participants, including eleven multiple-choice questions related to aspects such as sex, age, work experience in the sector, occupation, employment status, and number of hours worked.

The second section evaluates perspectives on the fitness sector landscape for 2027 through fifteen closed Yes/No questions, focusing on topics such as infrastructure, activities, and human resources from the participants' experience and perception.

In the third section, the professional profile required by fitness sector facilitators is examined. This part consists of twenty-four items assessed on an importance scale from 1 to 5, allowing participants to express which qualities they consider essential for professionals who facilitate and accompany activities in this field.

Finally, the fourth section is dedicated to evaluating a list of forty-eight trends distributed across seven subcategories: elements and activities, scenarios and context, business models, target population, programs, technology, and therapies. Each trend is evaluated using an importance scale from 1 (low importance) to 10 (very high importance), based on the previous analysis of the sector and earlier editions of the survey. This design aims to reflect both the demands and offers that have characterized the fitness market during its evolution.

The model developed for the 2027 survey has been refined according to the advances observed in the fitness sector in recent years. This approach allows for the consolidation of strategies that foster sustainable improvements, continuous progress, and transversal adherence among its different areas. Participation to complete the questionnaire will be open between May 1 and June 5, 2026.

Participant selection was carried out using non-probabilistic sampling, considered adequate for the study's objective due to its practicality and ability to capture a wide range of perceptions from various actors involved in the analyzed phenomenon. For this purpose, representative profiles from the fitness sector were selected, such as trainers, teachers, users, and practitioners. The differentiation between these groups was considered key to comprehensively evaluate the general perception of the sector and its components. The inclusion criteria established that participants must be of legal age, have experience and active involvement in the fitness field, and have sufficient time to complete the data collection instrument. Conversely, exclusion criteria considered aspects such as being a minor, lack of time availability, or not playing an active role within the sector.

Results

In the results of the national survey on the fitness sector in Colombia, a total of 578 responses were collected. Table 1 allows for the analysis of the demographic characterization of the participants who completed the questionnaire, highlighting its heterogeneous nature. This reflects the richness of diverse experiences, perspectives, and knowledge within the sector, contributing to a deeper analysis of its impact and development.

Regarding participation by sex, a higher percentage of men was observed. However, female participation has increased considerably in recent years, evidencing efforts to promote gender equity in the sector. It is recognized that women have played a fundamental role in the growth and expansion of the fitness field.

Concerning age ranges, 38.9% of participants are between 22 and 34 years old, while 24.9% are in the 18-to-29 age range. This indicates that young people and young adults are the predominant groups in the sector. This constant participation of new generations suggests a dynamic generational shift and allows for the incorporation of innovative approaches. Furthermore, it promotes updating in the sector's communication processes, aligning with the demands and characteristics of contemporary societies.

Table 1.
Demographic Characterization of the Sample

Item	Variable	Porcentaje
What is your sex?	Male	54.0%
	Female	40.5%
	Non-binary	5.5%
What is your age?	22 to 34 years	38.9%
	18 to 21 years	24.9%
	35 to 44 years	19.4%
	None	91.9%
Ethnic group	Afro-descendant	6.6%
	Raizal	1.0%
	Professional in the area/sector	27.7%
What is your academic background?	Technician in the area/sector	27.0%
	Currently a student in the area/sector	17.6%
	3 to 5 years	36.7%
How many years have you worked in the fitness field?	1 to 3 years	25.1%
	0 to 1 year	16.4%
	Staff Trainer	29.1%
What position do you hold in the fitness field?	Personal Trainer	17.6%
	Student in the sector	17.6%
	Private Center	34.4%
What type of institution do you work for?	Public Center	21.6%
	Home (Domestic)	11.6%
	Full-time work in the fitness sector	32.0%
Express your current employment status concerning the fitness field.	Part-time work in the fitness sector and no other job	28.0%
	Part-time work in the fitness sector and have another job	11.2%
	40 hours per week or more	44.9%
Does the employment you carry out in the industry involve a weekly dedication of?	20 to 29 hours per week	39.3%
	30 to 39 hours per week	8.0%
	1 to 2 minimum wages	63.8%
What monthly income do you obtain from working in the fitness sector?	3 to 4 minimum wages	30.1%
	Less than 1 minimum wage	2.7%
Where is your main center or workplace located? (indicate Region)	Andean	65.9%
	Caribbean	19.7%
	Pacific	13.5%

Note: Demographic characterization questionnaire of the sample designed by the authors, created in Google Forms. In each item, the three components with the highest representation are presented. * According to Decree 159 of 2026 issued by the Ministry of Labor and the Presidency of the Republic. For 2026, the minimum wage was \$1,750,905 + transport allowance of \$249,095, for a total of \$2,000,000. For 2027, the increase stipulated by the national government as of January 1st of that year must be awaited.

Regarding ethnic distribution, it is observed that 91.9% of respondents do not identify with a specific ethnic group, while 6.6% belong to the Afro-descendant population and 1% are Raizals. This demonstrates diverse participation within the fitness sector, generating greater adaptability

and flexibility to respond to different contextual and regional needs, thus promoting a more inclusive and segmented offering.

In terms of training and education of professionals who perform roles as facilitators in

facilitators in systematized physical activities, there is a significant emphasis on academic processes: 27.7% have professional training, 27% have technical training, and 17.6% are active students in the field. These data reflect progress towards the professionalization of the sector to guarantee safe practices and quality services.

Regarding work experience in the fitness sector, a notable 36.7% of respondents have between 3 and 5 years working in the area, while 25.1% have between 1 and 3 years of experience.

This suggests that the information gathered in the survey is not only relevant due to its experiential and academic value but also because it was provided by professionals with practical knowledge in the field. The results obtained constitute a valuable basis for designing future strategies.

Regarding the predominant occupations within the fitness sector, it stands out that 29.1% of participants are staff trainers, followed by 17.6% who work as personal trainers. Interestingly, a similar proportion (17.6%) corresponds to students in training, and 15.2% work as group class instructors. Likewise, 9.2% come from the medical-health field, showing an interdisciplinary perspective that enriches the diversity of approaches within the sector.

Finally, the scenarios where fitness sector activities take place were analyzed. According to the data obtained, 34.4% work in private centers, while 21.6% do so in public spaces, and a notable 11.6% provide services directly at users' homes.

This reflects the diversity of environments available to implement fitness-related activities in the country. It is evident that the fitness sector constitutes a significant factor in economic development, both nationally and globally. This impact is reflected not only in its growth and diversification but also in its ability to enter various markets and generate new offers.

In this sense, the data show that 71.3% of respondents are linked to the fitness sector, of which 32.0% work full-time, 28.0% part-time, and 11.2% combine their work in this sector with another. These findings highlight the role of the fitness sector in job creation and professional development. However, 28.7% of respondents still report not working in this field; within this group, 12.6% are in training processes, and a notable 11.8% report being unemployed. This demands an in-depth evaluation from both academic training and industry needs to optimize labor insertion in the sector.

Employment in the fitness sector allows for the analysis of both the hours dedicated and the income of workers. It is relevant to note that the gradual implementation of Law 2101 of 2021 in Colombia will reduce the weekly working hours from 48 hours in 2022 to 42 hours by July 2026. According to the collected data, 44.9% of participants work 40 hours or more per week in this sector, while 39.3% dedicate between 20 and 29 hours weekly, and 8% work between 30 and 39 hours. In terms of income, 63.8% receive between one and two minimum wages, 30.1% between three and four minimum wages, and 2.7% report income less than one minimum wage; this latter figure may be related to factors such as the nature of the contract and hours worked.

Regarding projections for the sector towards 2027, the results presented in Table 2 highlight a scenario of consolidation and expansion for the fitness field in Colombia. A more pronounced focus on health and well-being is foreseen through close collaboration with health professionals.

This development is especially relevant as it positions the fitness sector as a key agent in promoting healthy habits among the population.

Furthermore, the importance of strengthening training and professionalization processes is underscored to comply with current regulations, such as the Coach's Law, and to guarantee proper guidance by highly trained personnel. This approach seeks to improve the quality of systematized physical activities, mitigate associated risks, and offer responsible and timely attention.

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mitigate associated risks and offer responsible and timely attention.

On the other hand, greater attention to different population groups is envisioned, adapting to their characteristics and specific needs.

This implies designing innovative programs that promote integration and encourage participation in physical activities as an essential component of daily well-being and health.

Table 2 displays the results compared to the sector's forecast for 2027, noting:

Table 2.
Overview of Fitness Trends 2027

		<i>n=578</i>	
Position	Items	Yes	No
1	It should be oriented towards activities focused on health, well-being, and collaboration with the healthcare team.	84.6%	15.4%
2	There will be an increase in the demand for trained and certified professionals.	82.4%	17.6%
3	It is necessary to focus on different types of users and population groups.	81.1%	18.9%
4	The development and application of technology must continue to advance.	75.3%	24.7%
5	The fitness sector should be considered by various state actors as an area for promoting healthy lifestyles.	71.3%	28.7%
6	It will be directed towards processes through actions and activities oriented towards health and integral well-being (physical, psychological, and emotional).	69.4%	30.6%
7	Artificial intelligence will have a considerable and significant impact.	68.9%	31.1%
8	Personalization and individualization characteristics in training will increase.	67.8%	32.2%
9	Biosecurity protocols will continue to be implemented.	66.6%	33.4%
10	It is necessary to establish greater regulation regarding situations and activities.	65.4%	34.6%

Note: Questionnaire on the Overview of the Fitness Sector Colombia 2027; designed by the authors, created in Google Forms. The ten components with the highest representation are presented.

Technological integration represents another key challenge for the fitness sector. Its use will not only optimize areas such as marketing, planning, and administrative management but should also be oriented towards making services more flexible and adaptable to the changing demands

of users and contemporary contexts.

It is essential to highlight that these technological tools should not displace professionals in the sector but complement them through processes that maintain the humanization of service and prioritize close

customer attention.

Finally, it is imperative that the fitness sector be recognized within public policies as an essential pillar for promoting active and healthy lifestyles. Comprehensive attention to practitioners guarantees significant contributions both to individual development and collective well-being.

Likewise, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence are expected to play a crucial role, allowing for more enriching experiences for users and strengthening the relationship between specialized knowledge and human value as the central axis of the fitness sector.

Social integration constitutes an essential aspect within the fitness field, particularly concerning the formation of groups and the development of collaborative activities. However, the specificity and individualization of training plans acquire even greater relevance, as they allow for adjusting interventions and dosages according to the characteristics, needs, and particular objectives of each participant.

The experience derived from the public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has left significant lessons. In this context, biosecurity processes and protocols have gained renewed importance, consolidating themselves as an essential pillar in the organization and execution of sports and recreational activities.

In this way, the fitness sector reinforces its position as a space dedicated to integral health and well-being, directly contributing to public health initiatives in societies.

Consequently, the spaces and facilities for fitness practice will be subject to more rigorous regulation, with special attention to aspects related to infrastructure, equipment, hygiene measures, and specialized personnel, among other factors.

The results in Table 3 highlight the suitability of personnel who facilitate and energize processes in the sector, indicating that they must possess characteristics, capacities, and skills such as:

In relation to the findings presented in the results of Table 3, the relevance of the professional profile of the personnel responsible for facilitating and energizing processes in the fitness sector stands out. This personnel must possess various characteristics, capacities, and skills that guarantee the proper development of activities.

The importance of having specific training and certification programs is fundamental to ensuring the suitability of professionals.

Table 3.
Profile of Fitness Sector Professionals 2027

		<i>n=578</i>
Position	items	%
1	Develop sessions and physical activity and sports programs, adjusted to the objectives and characteristics of the participant or user.	3.69%
2	Guarantee the well-being and safety of participants.	3.69%
3	Competencies in customer, user, and participant service and attention.	3.69%
4	Technological skills.	3.59%
5	Possess solid educational training (academic degrees and professional license).	3.55%
6	Experience working with diverse demographic groups (age, illnesses, disabilities, among others).	3.46%
7	Know how to listen and maintain active listening processes.	3.45%
8	Team collaboration.	3.44%

9	Ability to adapt to transformation.	3.37%
10	Conflict and problem management and resolution.	3.25%

Note: Questionnaire on the Profile of Fitness Sector Professionals 2027; designed by the authors, created in Google Forms. The ten components with the highest representation are presented.

In particular, ten priority characteristics were identified, according to the perception gathered in a survey of the participants. One of the most prominent aspects is the personnel's ability to design and execute systematic physical activity plans and programs that consider the individual goals and specific characteristics of the users.

In parallel, from a bioethical perspective, the need to prioritize the well-being and safety of those participating in these activities is emphasized. For this, it is essential to implement clear and effective communicative practices that include the detailed explanation of procedures, guiding towards a correct and adapted execution of systematized physical activity.

Although fitness sector professionals have traditionally been valued for their technical competencies, it has been identified that these are often insufficient. Frequently, those lacking interpersonal skills or "soft skills" fail to consolidate in their roles.

In this sense, developing competencies related to customer service and attention will be crucial to fostering proper guidance, strengthening adherence, and facilitating the integral development of each person within the sector.

Likewise, it is worth noting that the incorporation of technologies has not only revolutionized the fitness field, but its correct application has become an inescapable necessity.

Professionals must use technological tools not only to disseminate information through digital media and social networks but also to implement advanced monitoring, tracking, and feedback systems that optimize processes directed at each individual.

The recognition that each participant presents unique and unrepeatable characteristics is a guiding principle for sector facilitators. This implies understanding that exercise prescription and dosing processes must be flexible, adaptable, and personalized according to factors such as age, general physical condition, pathological conditions, or other specific determinants.

In turn, communicative processes play a transcendental role in the dynamics between facilitator and participant. It involves not only verbal exchange but also the effective use of various channels and media, along with mastery of body and gestural language. The use of respectful, clear communication based on active listening significantly contributes to strengthening interpersonal bonds.

Finally, another essential competency for the facilitating personnel in the fitness sector is the ability to work in a team, fostering the collaborative construction of initiatives and ideas aimed at enhancing the strategic development of the sector, involved institutions, and the professionals themselves. This approach allows for generating innovative solutions to emerging challenges, promoting positive change in the face of growing current expectations.

Given that the fitness sector operates within an essentially human environment, it is crucial that its actors adequately handle conflictive situations, prioritizing dialogue as a fundamental tool for resolving differences and establishing sustainable agreements for continuous improvement.

Table 4 identifies the top 20 trends of greatest relevance for 2027 according to the vision of the participating group; this top is formed as follows:

The projected Top 20 for 2027 focuses on having qualified and certified personnel, prioritizing attention to specific population groups and the integration of advanced technologies. All of this is focused on promoting healthy habits through movement, thereby enhancing individual well-being and generating a positive impact on society.

The list comprises 20 trends organized into eight subcategories according to their characteristics and levels of development. They are distributed as follows: four trends related to elements, activities, or modalities; one trend associated with the scenario or context; three approaches linked to the business model; three focused on the populations served or linked; six correspond to specific programs; two point to technological advances; and finally, one trend addresses the field of therapy and readaptation.

Compared to the previous year's ranking, thirteen trends remain present, although with variations in their position. Seven trends have left the list, while another seven new ones make their appearance for 2027.

However, outside the Top 20, other high-impact dynamics stand out, likely to gain relevance throughout the year, such as outdoor activities, rehabilitation exercises, mega-gyms, specialized sports clubs, monitoring technologies, and spaces designed for specific needs.

Heading the list for 2027 is the regulation of professionals in the fitness sector. This point continues to set the standard for the need to professionalize this field and connect academic training with professional practice.

In second place is personalized training, reaffirming the importance of designing plans adapted to each person's characteristics, goals, and time. Additionally, the weight of close accompaniment, rigorous follow-up, and the generation of motivational processes through structured and guided programs are highlighted.

Technology occupies a prominent role in the Top 20, with applications and artificial intelligence placed in fourth and fifth position, respectively. The incorporation of technology into physical activity practices allows for personalizing experiences and promoting progress tracking. However, it is crucial to emphasize that these tools are a complementary support, not a substitute for qualified fitness sector professionals.

Table 4.
Ranking of Fitness Trends (Top 20) Colombia

n=578

	<i>Colombia Trends 2026</i> <i>(Morales & Gómez, 2026)</i>	<i>Colombia Trends 2027</i> <i>(Present study)</i>
1	Regulation of the practice of fitness professionals / Hiring of professionals	Regulation of the practice of fitness professionals / Hiring of professionals
2	Strength Training	Personalized Training
3	<i>Free Weights Training</i>	Applications - Exercise Apps for Mobile Devices
4	Exercise Programs for Psychological/Mental Health	<u>Artificial Intelligence-Powered Fitness Technology</u>

5	Personalized Training	Multidisciplinary Work Teams
6	<i>Bodyweight Training</i>	Strength Training
7	Fitness Programs for Older Adults	Physical Activity Initiative for Healthy Lifestyle
8	Exercise Programs for Populations with Diseases	Conditioning Programs for Older Adults (Sports and Recreational Clubs)
9	Multidisciplinary Work Teams	Exercise Programs for Psychological/Mental Health
10	Low-Cost and Affordable Gyms	<u>Exercise is Medicine®</u>
11	<i>Wearable Technology</i>	<u>Subscription Affiliation / Flexible Memberships</u>
12	<i>Body Weight Control / Obesity Training</i>	Exercise Programs for Populations with Diseases
13	Body Weight Control / Obesity Training	<u>Small Group Training</u>
	Exercise Programs for Children and Adolescents	Low Cost and Affordable Gyms
14		
15	Monitoring of Training Results	Exercise Programs for Children and Adolescents
16	<i>Sports Prescription</i>	Functional Physical Training (FPT)
17	Functional Training	<u>High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)</u>
18	<i>Wellness coaching / Health Coaching</i>	<u>Pilates / Yoga / Meditation / Percussion / Vibration / Compression (Neuroregulation)</u>
19	Apps de ejercicio para dispositivos móviles	<u>Competitive Fitness Events</u>
20	<i>Inclusive Fitness Service</i>	Body Weight Control / Obesity Training

Note: Questionnaire on the Ranking of Fitness Trends (Top 20) Colombia; designed by the authors, created in Google Forms. Trends in bold show trends repeated in the top 20 between the 2026 and 2027 national surveys. Trends in *italics* are those that disappear in the 2027 national survey. Trends underlined are those that enter new for the year 2027.

On the other hand, science has underscored the significance of strength training at all stages of human development. The popularity of this form of conditioning has grown due to its proven positive impact on health.

However, its implementation must be carefully guided by professionals to ensure safe and effective exercises adapted to each person. This approach requires responsibility and individualized attention.

In parallel, physical activities aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles are gaining ground within multidisciplinary teams that ensure comprehensive care for participants.

These non-pharmacological and non-invasive practices are based on individually adapted medical prescriptions, avoiding risks such as physical overload and attending to the particularities of each individual.

The widely recognized benefits of regular physical exercise not only affect the body but also mental and emotional health. In this sense, programs integrating exercises oriented towards psychological well-being have become consolidated to respond to a growing demand.

At the same time, specific proposals are being developed to address differentiated needs according to population group, including older adults, people with chronic diseases, children and

adolescents, or those facing conditions such as obesity. This emphasizes that physical activity must adapt both to the characteristics of each group and the unique needs of each individual.

Finally, among the highlighted trends are also aspects related to the spaces and scenarios where these activities take place. Flexibility in memberships or subscriptions allows users to choose options that best fit their preferences, schedules, and availability. This model includes a greater focus on low-cost conditioning centers, which are accessible to a wider audience while offering adequate facilities to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

The socialization processes that develop during physical activity practice play a crucial role in the consolidation and refinement of communicative and social skills. In this context, a strategy known as shadow training has gained relevance by facilitating these processes.

However, criticisms have been raised regarding the effectiveness of activities organized in large groups, as this could limit individualized follow-up and adequate attention to each participant.

In response to this issue, the small group training model has emerged. This methodology allows for adjusting levels of demand and providing personalized feedback and corrections in more timely ways, thus optimizing training results.

Today, people attending fitness centers are not only seeking to improve their aesthetic appearance. There is a growing interest in achieving an integral state of health, well-being, movement, and independence. In this scenario, functional training acquires great relevance, as it connects structured physical activity with its applicability in daily life.

Furthermore, including variability in training provides multiple benefits, both physical and cognitive. A practical example of this trend is high-intensity interval training, which combines high physical demand with the stimulation of different capacities.

Movement, as a means to achieve well-being, also fosters comprehensive body recognition through segmental work and the development of joint mobility ranges.

This approach has popularized practices such as Pilates and yoga, which not only contribute to physical conditioning but also offer an attractive alternative to integrate physical exercise with relaxation and self-knowledge purposes, thus favoring adherence to regular physical activity.

On the other hand, sports and recreational events have gained significant importance as catalysts for personal effort and physical development. These activities are often valued not only as individual or collective competitions but also as opportunities to foster a motivational approach related to self-improvement. Under mottos like "today I was better than yesterday," people find in these events—ranging from athletic races to recreational competitions in physical capacities—a way to improve their quality of life. It is important to highlight that these activities should not always be oriented towards high performance but can be designed around objectives linked to entertainment, leisure, and healthy recreation.

Looking ahead to 2027, a promising perspective is envisioned based on a wide range of proposals to encourage healthy lifestyles through movement. These initiatives seek to involve as many people as possible, promoting more active societies through the use of technological tools guided by certified

guided by certified professionals.

In this way, it aims to maximize the contributions of the fitness sector to health and collective well-being, highlighting its relevance as a driver for improving quality of life in communities.

Discussion

The implementation of this national survey facilitates the precise identification of specific conditions within the Colombian fitness sector. This directly contributes to the design of strategies aimed at improving internal processes and strengthening the overall quality of the service offered. Furthermore, adopting a global perspective based on international standards invites nations to deepen the particularized study of their internal dynamics, promoting cross-sectoral communication that supports the consolidation, application, and strengthening of the fitness sector.

Beyond exclusively addressing motor actions and bodily aesthetics, the need to evolve towards an integral approach that articulates science, technology, and humanism is highlighted. This progress must be grounded in the principles of knowing (technical-scientific knowledge), doing (practical execution), being (personal and professional development), and coexisting (effective social interaction), thus promoting a more robust and sustainable development of the sector.

When analyzing the fitness sector from its needs, characteristics, offerings, and demands, a strong correlation is observed between the results projected for 2027 and surveys conducted in Colombia and internationally in previous years. This sector has faced multiple challenges, both due to specific issues within its field and global conditions.

In 2021, according to the sector survey in Colombia conducted by Valcácer et al., the

implementation of remote classes and activities was prioritized, aiming to keep people active and linked to the sector. This implied the adoption of technological tools that, due to circumstances, had to undergo evaluations and reengineering processes. By 2027, not only the consolidation of these technologies is observed but also the incorporation of new resources that favor the sector's development and improve customer service. Strategies such as digital marketing and data-driven training stand out, highlighting the need to integrate technology responsibly, without losing sight of the humanization in the execution of activities and services.

In 2022, Valcácer et al. pointed out trends oriented towards serving specific population groups through different models and care elements. This focus towards systematized physical activity, adapted to the particular needs of different groups, has driven the emergence of new trends aimed at offering comprehensive support. Thus, activities have been developed that seek to promote well-being by reducing risks associated with physical practice through the professionalization of personnel, individualization of conditioning plans, and interprofessional work that enriches the quality of service.

Professionalization has taken a new direction in Colombia since 2022, when the obligation to have a professional license for workers in this sector was established, according to Morales and Gómez. This effort to guarantee suitable and trained personnel has been supported by studies such as that of Reed et al. (2024), which underscores the importance of connecting scientific and academic knowledge with its operational application in the fitness sector.

This alignment seeks to generate significant improvements and foster sustainable processes of expansion and consolidation.

On the other hand, Morales (2024) presents a comparative analysis between Colombia and international surveys, highlighting a positive

the sector beyond traditional approaches in bodybuilding and aesthetics. Conde et al. (2022), for their part, explored the relationship between physical activity and mental health, finding notable benefits in aspects such as stress management, self-esteem, and self-concept.

In their study, they conclude that systematic and regular practice contributes to the integral well-being of the individual, favoring their emotional health and general perception of control.

Gómez and Morales (2024) projected that by 2025, key trends would emerge in Colombia, such as a greater valuation of qualified personnel and recognition of the fitness sector by government instances.

These trends coincide with significant sector growth, a reality that for 2027 promises to remain relevant according to current findings. Likewise, the rise of personal training as a differentiated service within the fitness market stands out.

According to Morales (2025), this type of training is valued for elements such as personalized motivation, individualization of plans, and continuous accompaniment during sessions, characteristics that users recognize as differentiating and essential for their satisfaction.

This analysis shows how the fitness sector constantly evolves to adapt to both global and local demands, integrating technological innovation with a humanized approach that places people's needs and aspirations at the center.

Silveira et al. (2024) present a study highlighting how the sports industry encompasses various areas of action that contribute to the strengthening of the national economy. This analysis is based on factors such as job creation, entertainment, marketing strategies, and the promotion of wellbeing, among others.

Thus, it is recognized that the fitness sector contributes to economic development at both local and national levels by identifying market needs, analyzing existing demand, and offering activities oriented towards entertainment and integral well-being. The study concludes that the sector has great potential to continue expanding and offering new services.

For his part, Ju-Hyoung (2026), in his research, highlights the relevance of international surveys in the fitness field to identify trends, evaluate their applicability, and examine their adaptability to different social contexts. In this way, the expansion and consolidation of the sector are facilitated, in addition to highlighting the benefits it generates at both individual and collective levels.

Simultaneously, the importance of an international network of actors involved in responsible and safe physical activity practices is underscored, all oriented towards integral well-being.

Conclusions

Looking ahead to 2027, the fitness sector is expected to orient its efforts towards professionalization, a focus on specific population groups, the promotion of health and well-being, and the integration of technologies in various processes. In this sense, the increasing professional certification of involved personnel prevails as a prominent trend, which underscores the relevance of technical and academic support in sector activities. Surveys conducted among the actors involved in the fitness sector represent a fundamental tool for gathering information on the characteristics, preferences, and needs of users, professionals, and other members of the ecosystem. This approach allows for identifying predominant demands and annual trends to optimize the services offered. Likewise, the

categorization of these trends into subgroups based on specific characteristics provides a more precise vision of the differentiated approaches adopted by activities and actions within the sector. A growing technological implementation in the fitness sector is observed, particularly in the design and integration of innovative activities and elements. These initiatives contribute to both individual and collective well-being, addressing key areas such as integral health, attention to diverse populations, and the development of activities adapted to varied contexts.

Furthermore, the need to adopt processes supported by scientific, technological, and humanistic principles through adequate strategic planning that integrates rigorous analysis and substantiated argumentation is emphasized. These elements are essential to dynamize and consolidate the fitness sector, guaranteeing its strengthening and maximizing its social and individual benefits.

The global and particular analysis of the fitness sector allows for identifying common characteristics that unify this field internationally, as well as the specificities that arise in response to local supply and demand dynamics. In this context, new technologies should not be perceived as substitutes for the fundamental role of movement and corporeality professionals; on the contrary, it is crucial to integrate these tools to enhance sector performance. The existence of certified personnel with advanced technical capabilities is central to supporting processes within the sector. This, together with the effective use of technologies at an industrial level by trainers, highlights their determining role in the sustainable growth of the fitness field. Finally, the importance of continuing to develop systematic analyses of the sector's internal dynamics in national and international contexts is underscored.

This comparative approach will not only allow for expanding its scope and establishing more effective communication networks among global agents but will also contribute to the strategic and competitive positioning of the fitness sector in international markets.

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Idea conception 60%, literature search and review 50%, instrument creation 60%, instrument application 50%, compilation of information resulting from applied instruments 50%, statistical analysis 50%, table creation 50%, database creation 50%, general advisory on the addressed topic 70%, article proofreading 50%, authorship coordinator 50%, translation of terms or obtained information 50%, review of application of bibliographic standard 50%, drafting of the original first version 50%, review and final version of the article 50%.

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