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2020 **Eva Soares Moura**

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Sport for Development in Brazil: A Gendered Perspective

Dissertation Thesis

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Author: **Mgr. Eva Soares Moura**

Supervisor: **doc. PhDr. Dino Numerato, Ph.D.**

Year of the defense: **2020**

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

Prague, July 25, 2020 Eva Soares Moura

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References

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Keywords

Sport for development, Empowerment, Gender, Brazil, Ethnography

Abstract

The sport for development and peace (SDP) sector has become a fast-evolving field which has received significant academic and public attention. Given the continued commitment to gender equality in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, sport has been positioned as a vessel for women's empowerment, a term which continues to be the object of much academic debate and dispute. Drawing on feminist theories of development and empowerment, the purpose of this thesis is to explore (a) how young people engage in the development project and (b) to critically examine the potential of such programmes in advancing transformation in gender relations and in offering new opportunities for challenging gender stereotypes inside and outside of sport. This thesis draws upon eleven months of ethnographic research undertaken between 2017 and 2018 in two organizations in São Paulo, Brazil, which use sport—mainly football—to empower women and achieve broader societal objectives within low-income communities. I conducted participant observations and fifty semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, managers, and educators as well as the participants of the projects and their parents. The findings of this research suggest that there is ambiguity regarding the role of sport-for-development (SFD) programmes in fostering social change, which might be characterized by friction between SFD as a *primary vehicle* of change and an *indicator* of change. Moreover, I suggest that the delivery of gender-focused projects in Brazil was a complex, problematic, and contested process resulting in unintended consequences. While projects facilitated women's 'empowerment', and provided them with different knowledge and self-esteem, patriarchy and social inequalities restrain the programmes' effect. In addition, findings shed new light on boys' and men's experiences. I suggest that empowerment is negotiated, revealing that men can be *allies* in women's struggles toward social justice and gender equality, but may experience new situations of vulnerabilitites as an effect of their participation in gender-focused project. Finally, whilst both initiatives provided a relatively supportive environment regarding the free expression of queer desires, it also creates rather *safe(r)* spaces and temporary refuge for queer individuals. These are some of the important issues which might contribute to the decolonization of SDP research and practices. Overall, this thesis makes empirical and methodological contributions to the fields of SFD and sport sociology.

Abstrakt

Sport pro rozvoj a mír (SDP) se stal dynamicky rostoucí oblastí, která v posledních letech přitáhla akademickou i veřejnou pozornost. Vzhledem k pokračujícímu závazku v oblasti Cílů udržitelného rozvoje OSN (SDGs) v oblasti genderové rovnováhy se sport stal nástrojem 'zplnomocnění' žen a posílení jejich postavení ve společnosti. Práce si skrze feministické teorie rozvoje a také skrze využití konceptu 'zplnomocnění', který je úzce spjat s konceptem moci, klade za cíl prozkoumat, a) jakým způsobem se mladí lidé zapojují v rozvojových projektech, a b) potenciál těchto programů napomáhat transformaci genderových vztahů a nabourávat genderové stereotypy uvnitř sportu i mimo něj. Práce čerpá z jedenácti měsíců etnografického výzkumu realizovaného mezi lety 2017 a 2018 ve dvou neziskových organizacích v Sao Paulu v Brazílii, které využívaly sport — zejména fotbal — k dosažení širších společenských cílů ve znevýhodněných komunitách. V těchto komunitách bylo provedeno zúčastněné pozorování a realizováno padesát polostrukturovaných rozhovorů se zúčastněnými stranami, manažery, lektory, účastníky projektů i jejich rodiči. Výsledky práce naznačují nejednoznačnost role programů sport pro rozvoj (SFD) v kontextu realizace společenské změny. Tato nejednoznačnost spočívá v rozporu mezi rolí SFD programů coby *hybatelů* společenské změny a jejích rolí coby *indikátorů* změny. Výsledky dále naznačují, že způsob realizace genderově orientovaných projektů v Brazílii je komplexním, rozporuplným a problematickým procesem, z něhož plynou nezamýšlené důsledky. Přestože programy umožňují posílení pozice žen, patriarchát a sociální nerovnosti tyto efekty omezují. Výsledky práce rovněž poskytují nový pohled na zkušenosti chlapců a mužů. Posílení pozice žen je vyjednávaným procesem, v němž muži mohou být nápomocni realizaci sociální spravedlnosti a rovnoprávnosti. V důsledku však mohou v kontextu svého zapojení do genderově orientovaných projektů zažívat nové zkušenosti vulnerability. Optika queer studií zde umožnila odhalit, že studované iniciativy poskytly relativně inkluzivní prostředí, co se vyjádření queer potřeb týče, a vytvořily "bezpečnější" prostor, v němž lze najít dočasný únik před heteropatrialchální společností. Tyto aspekty by mohly významně přispět dekolonializaci výzkumu SDP a jeho praktikám. Celkově tato práce empiricky a metodologicky přispívá do oblastí sportu pro rozvoj a sportovní sociologie.

Contents

1 | The Beginning of the Story

'Professora, você realmente acha que esse projeto muda nossas vidas?' (Coach, do you really think this project changes our lives?)[1], asked Daniel, a fifteen-year-old participant of the sport-based community project, with a doubtful tone of voice while looking into my eyes. Together with other young men, Daniel came that afternoon to play football at Campo, a community sports field sized according to official football pitches. The boys were resting on the grass, and I was sitting on the half-broken orange bench next to them. We were hiding from the burning Brazilian sun, waiting for football training to start. Meanwhile, some of them, including Daniel, agreed to be interviewed. Those interviews never happened as the young men started to disappear one by one from the project. Just before I started to *jogar bola* (play football) with those young men, I replied to several of the questions the boys had asked in that enjoyable piece of shade. I was new and they were curious. After having answered who I was and what I was doing in Brazil, Daniel's arresting question came like a flash. 'I don't know, does it?', I asked Daniel when he started to laugh.

Over the past decade, there has been significant academic and public attention devoted to what has become known as the *sport for development and peace* (SDP) sector. Since the late 1990s and early 2000s, a broad range of actors, such as NGOs, corporations, and high-profile elite athletes, have been involved in the organization and institutionalization of the SDP sector[2] (Darnell, Field, and Kidd, 2019).

The United Nations has played a key role in the expansion and broader legitimation of SDP, which subsequently nurtured the spread of SDP programmes, particu-

[1] As a tribute of respect to the region of the fieldwork and those who participated in the research, some quotes in this thesis are kept in the original language with a translation in English.

[2] In this thesis, I use SDP when reffering to the broader international sector of sport for development and peace. However, when reffering to activitites that do not contain the 'peace' element, I utilize the term 'sport for development' and SFD interchangeably. This is more of a personal choice, and I am aware that this field has other designations used throughout scholarly research, such as 'sport in development'. While using this term, I still acknowledge that sport might be detrimental to societies in the Global South, and that the mobilization of sport in international development is not automatically positive (as the denomination 'sport for development' might falsely suggest). For further reflection and discussion on the 'accuracy' of specific terminology which is beyond the scope and interest of this thesis, see Carney and Chawansky (2016), or Levermore and Beacom (2009).

larly within the Global South. The UN recognized sport's strategic role in promoting development within the UN's seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[3] and labelled 2005 the International Year for Sport and Physical Education. In April 2017, the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), introduced in 2001 by Kofi Annan, was closed and replaced by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) so it could be more centrally involved in SDP efforts.

A mixture of optimism and critique has characterized the international debates about the SDP sector, and the understandings of the mobilization of sport in international development are dramatically far from consensus. The attractiveness of sport and its popularity in development efforts originates from its non-threatening, romanticized, and non-conflictive appeal. Sport has been positioned as a pro-social force which 'improves' lives, as a vehicle for 'social good', and as an effective tool for personal development and collective benefit (Coalter, 2008; Crabbe, 2006; Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Darnell and Millington, 2019; Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011; Levermore, 2009).

Similar beliefs and claims presented and disseminated by 'sports evangelists' about the boundless transformative power of sport in international development exist along with scepticism and criticism about its potential to empower, heal social problems, and repair intractable inequalities. In recent years, SDP has started to represent a massively researched subject within sport studies within the academic community (Giulianotti et al., 2019). This body of literature has provided a foundation for rearranging and examining sport for development. Scholars critically appraised SDP initiatives as promoting universal and simplistic solutions to social problems regardless of the local context (Forde, 2015), placing them within a neoliberal model of development which reproduces broader global inequalities (e.g., see Darnell and Hayhurst, 2014) as well as within the neoliberal/Western/imperialist discourse of sport and development whereby Global North initiatives perpetuate the hegemonic idea of Western superiority (Darnell, 2012; Mwaanga and Banda, 2014; Nicholls et al., 2011).

Given the continued commitment to gender equality in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the women and gender agenda has grown in the field of international development, with women increasingly becoming the 'agents' of development (Cornwall and Brock, 2005; Parpart et al., 2002). The existing body of the literature also presents a diversified picture of the relationship between sports initiatives and gender development goals (e.g. Hayhurst, 2014; Jeanes and Magee, 2014;

[3]The UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ran from 2000–2015. SDGs are being advocated from 2015–30.

Oxford and Spaaij, 2019; Saavedra, 2009; Samie et al., 2015).

This thesis aims to critically examine the potential of such programmes to advance transformation in gender relations and offer new opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes inside and outside of sport. I explore how youth participation in SFD initiatives has impacted gender and sexuality relations, identities, and norms within participant's families and communities. I draw upon eleven months of ethnographic research undertaken between 2017 and 2018 in two sport-based organizations in São Paulo, Brazil, which use sport—mainly football—to achieve broader societal objectives within low-income communities. Through the analysis of these two sport-for-development initiatives, I provide empirical evidence on the topic from the perspective of the local community. This approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the culturally specific outcomes of the programme related to, mainly, the impact of the programmes on women's empowerment.

The thesis is situated in the sociology-of-sport field. Several authors alleged that most SFD programmes are still weakly theorised (Coalter, 2010; Spaaij and Schaillée, 2020; Whitley et al., 2019), which hamper the understanding and identification of how they work. As Spaaij and Schaillée (2020) argued in their recent study 'The range of theoretical frameworks that have been deployed in SfD research to date is narrow' (Spaaij and Schaillée, 2020: 2).

In order to move beyond the narrow theorizing of SFD programmes (see Schulenkorf and Spaaij, 2015; Whitley et al., 2019) and to discuss the role they play in fostering social development and the empowerment of women, it was essential to draw upon theoretical inspirations from development studies—more precisely, from gender and development (GAD). Furthermore, employing and problematizing the concept of empowerment and gender in this thesis proved to be useful in understanding and clarifying the abovementioned questions and objectives, related to the question of how SFD works. More specifically, reading SFD through these theoretical lenses allowed youth experiences to be linked with aspects of empowerment as well as to understand the culturally specific outcomes of these programmes. I argue that diverse approaches to empowerment are valuable not merely for interpreting local sporting lives but also for tracing how traditional masculine and feminine values change over time in contemporary society, how youth construct knowledge about themselves, and how this knowledge subsequently leads to transformative practices.

It has been widely argued that within the neoliberal/Western/imperialist discourse of sport and development, Global North practitioners and donors are portrayed as benevolent vis-à-vis Global South 'recipients', regarded as passive others and 'in need of salvation' (Darnell, 2012; Nicholls et al., 2011; Tiessen, 2011). Of

particular concern to SDP scholars are development initiatives which adopt top-down approaches (rather than bottom-up) and prioritize the interests of stakeholders over the needs, experiences, and voices of local populations. Local voices are, however, a necessary component in understanding and broadening the current landscape of SDP research. Continuing what only a few scholars have begun (see Collison and Marchesseault, 2018), the *local side of development* plays a pivotal role in understanding and defining how SFD was accepted, interpreted, or resisted in Latin America, particularly in Brazil. To avoid instrumentally explaining SFD, I find it important to record and situate the common and daily experiences of people and youth involved in SFD programmes and analyse the community/family context in which those programmes operate.

By focusing on local voices, this research continues with recently surging qualitative, ethnographic studies within the field of SDP which aim to understand social worlds from the point of view of project participants, leading to in-depth knowledge about their lived realities. There are studies which have sought and emphasized the need to address the experiences of local communities and participants (Collison and Marchesseault, 2018; Kay and Spaaij, 2012; Lucas and Jeanes, 2019; Spaaij, 2013; Thorpe, 2016b). However, there still continues to be a gap in knowledge about the role of SFD and sport in challenging unequal gender relations in the region of Latin America and Brazil. Following Schulenkorf et al. (2016), studies have largely focused on particular geographic regions (e.g., Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe), and the contribution of Central and South America to research in this area of SFD is scarce.

To understand how SFD was accepted, interpreted, and resisted and whether it was 'empowering', I participated in numerous football practices, gender/sexuality workshops, girls-only football sessions, organizational meetings, and sports festivals. I recorded numerous pages of detailed field notes, which are analysed in this thesis, along with the participants' stories. As a White, foreign woman, temporarily in the position of 'international volunteer'[4], I did not escape situations which reminded me of my own privileged reality and asymmetrical power relations. Questions such as why I voluntarily came to live and conduct research in a place locals termed 'a violent country' followed this research. Being a female ethnographer, and many times the only woman in football sessions which were supposed to be mixed-gender, I was

[4]International volunteer here is placed in quotation marks to distance myself from a standard development worker narrative which portrays development work as a 'life-changing' experience for development workers. This narrative continues to shape the international development field (see Heron, 2007). It was part of my reflexivity to approach my role as 'volunteer' critically given the neocolonial legacy pervasive in volunteer services and development work which portrays international workers as superior. For further discussion, see chapters 3 and 4.

forced to reflect upon how my position shaped the research process and analysis. This thesis includes several reflections, some of which were made in the post-field stage.

Beyond engagement with issues of reflexivity, power, and privilege, several months of ethnographic fieldwork also required the adoption of a particular writing and authorship style. Charmaz and Mitchell (1996) assert that ethnographers are 'committed to the vocation of using all we can of our imperfect human capacities to experience and communicate something of others' lives' (Charmaz and Mitchell, 1996: 286). Asking and listening helped me to partly *experience* and understand the lives and stories of others, but writing and telling those stories is part of *communicating* these lives. Therefore, the introduction to some chapters of this thesis are fully reserved to those whose experiences I am committed to disclosing—the youth and their families.

It is a challenging task to capture and display the great variety of lived experiences among SFD participants. I argue their voices can be fully understood only when situated within the broader political, social, economic, and cultural context of Brazil, which is an expansive context of persistent social exclusion and inequality. Brazil has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. However, poverty and social exclusion, which are often intergenerational, have persisted or even intensified in the last few decades. In 2018, the country had 13.5 million people living in conditions of extreme poverty, with a monthly income below USD 1.9 per day (Agência IBGE Notícias, 2019b). Despite some significant improvements, gender inequality in Brazil also remains high, and moral panic against educational programmes which address gender differences and sexuality has recently increased. The attack on Judith Butler at São Paulo/Guarulhos International Airport (see Balieiro, 2018) during her visit to Brazil[5], which occurred while conducting this research, might be helpful in partially capturing the climate around gender politics in Brazil, particularly the so-called gender ideology.

As a starting point for theorizing about sport for development, specifically the gendered aspects of these initiatives, I look at sport as well as gender as socially constructed and context-specific while also assuming 'its social meanings and impacts are

[5]In October 2017, the second month of my fieldwork, it was announced on social media that Judith Butler would participate in the International Colloquium on the Ends of Democracy the following month in São Paulo. Across the city, various anti- as well as pro-Butler demonstrations occured in regard to her visit. Before Butler's arrival, right-wing groups opposed her visit to Brazil, understanding it as a threat to 'the natural order of gender, sexuality and the family'. Protestors also appeared in São Paulo's international airport, where she was verbally and physically abused by one of them when boarding her flight. Balieiro (2018) explains the responses to the philosopher's visit as the consolidation of a moral panic in Brazil which reflects the resistance to a politics of recognition of gender differences and sexuality and to the increasing visibility of issues of sexual diversity and rights in Brazil.

shaped by the interplay between social structural and cultural processes' (Giulianotti and Armstrong, 2013: 16-17). For example, football as an essential component of people's lives in Brazil still excludes and depreciates women. In similar ways, hosting two mega-events, the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, was, on the one hand, received with optimism and seen as reaching the long-promised potential of Brazil. On the other hand, the decisions to host these sporting events resulted in street protests as the government spent a large portion of the state budget on stadium construction despite the persistency of flaws in its public services, such as education, health care, and transportation (see Graeff, 2019; Nemer, 2016). To expose sport for development to critical sociological analysis, it is essential to acknowledge that the meanings of sports change over time and with diverse contexts. As Daniel indicated in the introduction, it would not be wise to romanticize SFD programmes; yet, a closer look is required if we are about to understand their outcomes as well as their potential to contribute to social justice.

To fully understand the experiences of the SFD participants and how the SFD programmes were accepted and resisted, the following section considers and introduces the readers to the research context of the Latin American region and, more precisely, the historical, social, and political situation of Brazil. A detailed historical account of Brazil lies beyond the scope of this research. Still, this chapter provides a general overview of the complex Brazilian history so as to contextualize the lives of the young people who participated in both SFD programmes and their families, whose daily lives are marked by precariousness. To situate their experiences as embedded within specific circumstances, I also look closely at critical issues of gender and social inequalities, sexuality, and LGBT rights in Brazil. A further section on the history of women in Brazilian sport is also presented at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Context of the study

Latin America and its history are marked by invasion, colonialism, dictatorships, and independence, including Brazil. Regarding the colonial period, the Brazilian experience with colonialism differs from the experience of its neighbours. Between 1500 and 1822, Brazil was the only country colonized by Portugal. Unlike the powerful native empires of the Andes and Mexico, Brazil was a large lowland area inhabited by Indigenous peoples who were not organized (Ribeiro, 2011). In the first years of colonization, the main economic activity was the extraction of a red wood called *paubrasilia echinata* (or brazilwood, as it is commonly referred to in English), which was an essential element in Portuguese export and expansion and was what gave the

former Portuguese colony its name (Naritomi et al., 2012).

In addition to the high inequalities which Latin American countries have been facing, countries such as Brazil are also characterized by sharp inequalities and population distribution within the countries' regions. Lovell (2000) investigates the relationship between unequal regional development and racial and gender wage inequality in Brazil, and indicates that 'population and regional imbalances are the legacy of the boom and bust cycles of three colonial export commodities: sugar, gold and coffee' (Lovell, 2000: 278). In other words, Brazil has been marked by high levels of both intra- and inter-regional income inequality (see also Haddad, 2018; Tai and Bagolin, 2019) which, despite the four decades of rapid economic expansion and substantial social and demographic change, has not been erased.

The sugar cane and gold cycles were the main stages of economic development during Brazilian colonial history. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as a result of growth in the sugar trade, the importation of African slaves to the northeast region of Brazil began[6]. With the gold boom in the eighteenth century, sugar production declined, and the productive heart of the country—economic and population centre—moved from the northeast regions to central and southern Brazil. This transformation left the previously prosperous northeast plantation economy in decay. Wealth was generated and concentrated in southern Brazil due to the expansion of coffee farming and coffee exports. Those processes allowed for the beginning of industrialization in Brazil, with the region of São Paulo, precisely where this study was conducted, becoming the most advanced region of the country.

However, as Lovell (2000) explains, 'It was the southern expansion of coffee exports during late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that led to the incipient industrialization of São Paulo, built first on slave and later subsidized European immigrant labor' (Lovell, 2000: 278).

The early nineteenth century was a period of budding political independence and the start of the postcolonial period. With the abolition of slavery in 1888[7]—the last country in the hemisphere to abolish slavery[8]—and the proclamation of the republic in 1889, coffee planters in the southern regions received White immigrants as a workforce[9]. The arrival of European immigrants to Brazil, and therefore the substitution of slave labour for that of immigrants (mostly Italian), had begun, however,

[6]For the early history of Brazil, see Schwartz (2009).

[7]For more details about the process of abolishing slavery, see Chalhoub (2011).

[8]The estimated number of Black slaves from Africa brought to Brazil from the second half of the sixteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth is estimated to be around 3.5–3.6 million (Dos Santos, 2002).

[9]The goal was to increase the European population as part of the Brazilian state's political doctrine of whitening, known as branqueamento (Lovell, 2000).

more than three decades prior to the abolishment of slavery (Klein and Luna, 2009; Theodoro, 2008); due to the end of the transatlantic slave trade in 1850, 218,000 immigrants had already entered Brazil between 1872 and 1881 (Theodoro, 2008).

The most populated municipality in the country, São Paulo, has been well known for its large number of internal and international migrants since the nineteenth century. Hence, foreign immigration to São Paulo and then to other parts of Brazil had significant consequences for the freed enslaved populations and their descendants. While the industrialized southern areas, with its White population, remained the economic and financial centre of the country, Afro-Brazilians were displaced from the most dynamic regional sectors of the economy, pushed aside in competition for jobs and other opportunities (Lovell, 2000).

After World War II, millions of impoverished peasants from rural Brazil moved to the rapidly industrializing cities in the southeast of the country in search of increased life opportunities (Rocco et al., 2019). Between 1950 and 1980, the proportion of individuals of African descent employed in cities increased. Still, they continued to be concentrated mainly in the lowest-paid jobs, such as agriculture, construction, and personal services (Simões and Matos, 2008).

Over half of the Afro-Brazilian population still lived in the impoverished, largely agrarian northeast region which remained far behind in terms of income level and educational achievementt (Lovell, 1993). This situation provided the grounds for persisting regional and racial economic disparities. Afro-descendants, Indigenous peoples, and women usually have the lowest-paid occupations, facing barriers in access to sustainable income-generating opportunities (Ferreira et al., 2008). While the White population is concentrated in the industrialized southeast, the most significant part of the Afro-Brazilian population resides in the rural northeast of the country. Although there were general improvements in education levels and achievements in poverty reduction, certain groups, mainly poor Brazilians of African descent and those residing in the rural northeast are systematically excluded from social and economic opportunities (Marió and Woolcock, 2008).

In order to increase employment and to decrease these social and regional disparities, among others things, from 2004 to 2014 Brazilian cities received federal funds through federal development programmes, namely, the Growth Acceleration Program (Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento) and Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida (My house, my life programme) (Rocco et al., 2019). The latter was launched in 2009 during the Lula administration and was maintained by President Dilma Rousseff.

According to Rocco et al. (2019), Brazil's urban population grew between 1960 and 2000, from 31 million to 137 million, which meant more than a hundred million

new urban dwellers had to find houses and jobs. However, this rural-urban migration joined with and reduced planning capacities due to broken governance, leading to the creation of precarious forms of inhabitation and informal housing, including favelas and other informal and precarious allotments (De Sampaio, 1994; Rocco et al., 2019).

Favelas are considered marginalized areas characterized by the absence of state social and physical investments, lacking proper infrastructure and public services, the result of which is a low quality of life for their residents. These places are also known for severe problems with militarized state violence, which favela residents face. Crossfire from drug-gang violence or police raids ending in injury is common and makes residents fear for their lives. In the São Paulo region as well as in other parts of Brazil (e.g., see Dagnino, 2005; Roy, 2005), young people and teens living in favelas are the most vulnerable, both in terms of death rates as well as in terms of being drawn into drug trafficking themselves (Caldeira, 2001).

The Brazilian constitution sets the minimum legal age to participate in the labour market at sixteen years old. Child labour, however, persists (Emerson, Souza, et al., 2002). Whether at traffic lights, street markets, or in rural areas, among others, almost three million children and adolescents in Brazil are denied their right to childhood and education (Agência IBGE Notícias, 2017a). Moreover, this is also the period during which youth are vulnerable to the drug trade, becoming involved due to its status and money (Perlman, 2010). As I will discuss further in this thesis, these are important factors which influence the lives of the project participants from the communities under study.

1.1.1 Gender, sexuality, and LGBT

Although women in Brazil have experienced increased participation in the labour market and, at present, have higher schooling levels than males (Tai and Bagolin, 2019), such accomplishments have not resulted in reductions in gender inequality. Women's conditions in the labour market and within their households have remained inequitable (Madalozzo, 2010). Of a total of ninety-three million employed persons considered economically active, women constitute 43.8 per cent (40.8 million), whereas men constitute 56.2 per cent (52.1 million). Simões and Matos (2008) show that the division of labour continues to fall along traditional gender lines. Hence, women in Brazil bear the double burden and spend more hours taking care of family members. They have the most work responsibilities at home and with childcare, and women continue to receive lower wages than their male counterparts per hour worked—on average, 20.5 per cent less (Agência IBGE Notícias, 2019a). Moreover, in the labour market, women are concentrated in less valued occupations in the service

sector (Simões and Matos, 2008).

Gender issues and inequalities cannot be fully understood without considering race. Scholars suggest that as a determinant of income, gender follows race, a source of difference not merely between men and women but also generating inequalities between women. Barriers such as prejudice and discrimination based on gender and racial characteristics were created by the colonial character of Latin American societies and Brazil in particular. This affects women who are not considered White, meaning Indigenous, Black, and mixed-race.

In general, the non-White population earns about half, or even less than half, of what the White population receives. While White women are in a privileged position in relation to Black men, Afro-Brazilian women, placed on the lowest rung of the income and employment system, continue to earn significantly less than men (Lovell, 2000; Nascimento, 2007; Simões and Matos, 2008). Nascimento (2007) suggests that White men earn over three times more than Afro-Brazilian women. Afro-Brazilian women, in turn, earn less than half of what White women do.

In Brazil, the persistence of racial prejudice and discrimination are considered part of a larger social context of severe inequalities (Lovell, 2000; Nascimento, 2007; Simões and Matos, 2008; Tai and Bagolin, 2019). Lovell (2000) argues, 'No other country in the Americas has constructed such a persistent ideology of racial equality as Brazil. Often contrasted to the United States, Brazilian post-slavery race relations were said to be harmonious, tolerant and devoid of prejudice or discrimination' (Lovell, 2000: 277).

Recalling the Brazilian colonial past, Nascimento (2007) contends that racist domination is a result of the historical imposition of Western hegemony over non-Western peoples, followed by the ideology of White supremacy. She speaks about a 'sorcery of color', which the author explains as a process that 'transforms domination into democracy and launches national identity on a permanent search for the simulation of whiteness' (Nascimento, 2007: 42). It is this continuous search which affects the identity constructs of all dominated peoples.

Despite the equality policies regarding respect for women and their rights in society, violence against women in Brazil is regarded as 'widespread and underreported' (Simões and Matos, 2008: 104). Despite being a signatory to several conventions[10], Brazilian laws were considered inefficient in responding to the complexity of domestic violence against women (see Guimarães and Pedroza, 2015). The pressure of the feminist movement resulted in the application of a law called Lei Maria da

[10]Brazil is a signatory of the 1994 Convention of Belém do Pará, and the 1979 Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Maito et al., 2019).

Penha (Maria de Penha's law), a Brazilian law implemented in August 2006 which criminalizes domestic violence against women[11]. Scholars, however, identify limited social repercussions for violence against women as most processes of this nature, in general, end without any major penalties for the aggressors (Campos de, 2004; Freitas, 2013). As Mattos and Xavier (2016) remind, Lei Maria da Penha is primarily applied to poor citizens as situations of domestic violence among wealthier citizens do not usually reach police stations (Mattos and Xavier, 2016).

Amongst the acts of violence are also those committed toward LGBT individuals. In 1970s Brazil, in the midst of the political liberalization and opposition to the military dictatorship, various social movements, including the gay and lesbian movement emerged and gradually became visible in the public sphere (Green, 2000; Marsiaj, 2010). Currently, LGBT rights appears to be an emerging cultural and political issue in Brazilian society. In terms of legal recognition of same-sex relationships and as a result of its long development (see Moreira, 2012), the Supreme Federal Court of Brazil established in 2011 same-sex civil unions for the first time, thus granting equal status and rights to homosexual couples in the country. Two years later, in 2013, the National Justice Council legalized same-sex marriage and permitted the conversion of any existing civil unions into marriages (Ogland and Verona, 2014).

Regardless of those legal advancements considering the LGBT community, critical issues arose in combating homophobia as well as in the implementation of public policies which promote the citizenship of the LGBT population (Mello et al., 2012). Brazil is reported to have the highest LGBT murder rate in the world. According to the NGO Grupo Gay da Bahia (Gay group of Bahia), 445 LGBTs died in Brazil in 2017, which, as de Souza et al. (2018) explain, is either from murder or suicide due to LGBT-phobia. Public tolerance of homosexuality in Brazil coexists with the continued pathologizing of non-normative sexual, gender, and intimate practices. Brazilian society, and socially conservative segments particularly, 'opposed the decision on the ground that same-sex unions pervert the family as a basic societal institution' (de Souza et al., 2018: 1004).

Some of the actors representing a growing faction in the public debate over LGBT issues and sexual and reproductive rights are religious groups (Mello et al., 2012). The increase in Evangelical Protestant, particularly Pentecostalism[12], and Catholic groups has become influential in promoting a conservative social agenda in the po-

[11]The essential ethnographic work on violent relationships and feminist ethnography in Brazil is done by Brazilian scholar Gregori (1993).

[12]Pentecostalism arrived in Brazil in the early 1900s with overseas missionaries. With its origins in the United States, Pentecostalism proliferated across the country and gained popularity among impoverished urban dwellers (see Freston, 2004).

litical arena by organizing, for example, anti-gay marches throughout the country or seeking to restrict sex-education curricula with LGBT themes in public schools (Correa, 2010; Heilborn et al., 2007; Ogland and Verona, 2014).

Christian churches (Catholic and Evangelical) have opposed the introduction of sex education in schools as well as the implementation of public policies which advocate for contraception. As I will illustrate further in this thesis, discussing issues of sexuality in school and family settings is still considered taboo; hence, sexual and domestic violence as well as teen pregnancy are critical issues which reinforce poverty and marginality (Heilborn et al., 2007).

Most of the children and youth who participated in the research attend community public schools near their residence. In schools, various kinds of violence, such as physical aggression among students and student violence against teachers, including violence towards LGBT students, remain serious problems (Marriel et al., 2006). As I will illustrate in chapter 7, the school environment remains a space where heteronormativity is reproduced. This is partly reinforced by the LGBT-phobic attitudes of professionals as well as the limited preparation they are provided to adopt sexual rights as a topic in educational processes committed to sexual equity (see Junqueira, 2009).

1.1.2 Women's sporting lives

For Brazilian women and girls, sport in general and football in particular continues to represent a 'territory to be conquered'. In Brazil, women's football is framed by 'perhaps the most prohibitive landscape anywhere in the Americas' (Elsey and Nadel, 2019: 61). From the 1940s until the 1980s, women's football was prohibited by law together with other sports, including rugby and wrestling. The ban nurtured the belief that football, and the values and skills required for the game, is exclusively for men. Football was conceived as 'harmful to the development of the female body and behavior' (Goellner, 2005: 148), regarded as against 'feminine nature' (Elsey and Nadel, 2019; Knijnik, 2015; Wood, 2018).

Elsey and Nadel (2019), in addition to other authors (e.g., Goellner, 2005; Votre and Mourão, 2003), indicate that state intervention in the life of citizens reinforced the beliefs that the role of Brazilian women rests rather in focusing on 'mothering skills than on sporting prowess' (Elsey and Nadel, 2019: 11). While broader challenges to participation in other sports for women existed, the domain of football was more restrictive, specifically in terms of gender prescriptions, hostility from sporting institutions, and a lack of resources.

Around the 1930s, the processes of urbanization and industrialization were also

tied to the state's increasing intervention in physical education. This included making physical exercise mandatory in secondary school. While physical education was designed for both girls and boys, women's increased participation was not, however, a feminist achievement. Military forms of discipline and strict gender segregation shaped the nation's programmes in physical education, and, as Elsey and Nadel (2019) suggest, 'women were taught that they were biologically inferior to men, more delicate and weak' (Elsey and Nadel, 2019: 111). This legacy brought sharp inequalities which still surround women's participation in football today. However, there also existed attempts to challenge dominant gender discourses and practices when alternative masculinities started to emerge as a form of resistance to 'the hegemonic rigid and dictatorial form of manliness' (Knijnik and de Melo, 2015: 604).

Attitudes towards women's position in society began to transform within the political developments of the 1960s in Latin America, and these advances also rendered more visibility for women's football (Wood, 2018). However, the dictatorships which emerged across the Latin American region, including Brazil, also affected women's football. With the return to democracy in the 1980s, women's national teams, national leagues, and international tournaments started to appear, and progress in women's football also occurred in Brazil during this same period (Goellner, 2005; Votre and Mourão, 2003).

In this way, there are no doubts that women's football in Brazil is part of a sports system largely marked by discontinuities, as well as by political and social issues. Moraes (2014), a physical educator and historian, illustrates how the history of female football in Brazil has been marked by different forms of violence. First, there was symbolic violence, manifested through silencing, forgetting, and prohibiting the sport between 1941 and 1979. The second form has been the economic violence suffered by athletes due to the lack of incentives, investments, and sponsors. And, finally, the third form has been moral violence, which requires good results from women who practice the sport (in competitions such as the World Cup or the Olympic Games, for example), even though there are structural difficulties (see Pisani, 2014).

Women still face similar stereotypes which limit women's engagement in sport in other parts of the world. More precisely, female athletes remain underrepresented in sports media, sports clubs and associations, physical education at schools, and public leisure policies (Goellner, 2005; Votre and Mourão, 2003). Moreover, given the conditions for women's football players, highly skilled sportswomen migrate from Brazil to seek employment with professional teams abroad (see Rial, 2014).

Due to the historical residue of legal and sociocultural obstacles to the practice of football as well as the inequalities in sport, the stereotypes of the feminine

role remain widely held and valued. Despite Brazil's importance in global football, Brazilian women and girls face prejudice and discrimination (Knijnik, 2015). Specifically, discursive representations in which beauty and femininity are perceived as something to be preserved are still prevalent and generate limitations on women's football participation (Goellner, 2005: 144). Football thus remains a bastion of hegemonic masculinity, where female footballers face gender prejudice. Yet, it is also within the domain of football where women can resist the hegemonic gender order.

1.2 Research questions

The general aim of this dissertation is to critically examine how sport and development programmes can foster broader social change and promote gender equality and women's empowerment. In this regard, I have drawn upon eleven months of ethnographic research undertaken between 2017 and 2018 in two non-governmental organizations in Sao Paulo, Brazil to address the following questions:

1. How do young people engage in the development projects?
2. In what way do women feel empowered by projects which refuse gender subordination and affirm feminist agendas?
3. How do men perceive their roles as reproducers of hegemonic masculinity?

1.3 Overview of the thesis

This thesis is divided into eight parts. In chapter 2, I turn to the literature on gender and development. I explain the concept of empowerment as used in this thesis and discuss in more detail selected critical approaches to the study of empowerment. In the second part of the chapter, I examine the relationship between sport and gender development goals and summarize key studies in the broader field of SGD (sport, gender, and development). The discussion then shifts to providing an overview of literature specifically dealing with empowerment through sport, which, in an economic and sociocultural sense, enables me to better situate this research and my arguments within the broader debates of the SFD field as well as the broader international development field. Recognizing the complexity within the categories of empowerment and development, postcolonial insights are also discussed as an important contribution so as to destabilize the dominant, ethnocentric discourses of the Global North worldview and stress the role of culture in the construction of 'empowerment'.

Chapter 3 reveals the methodology and methods. It begins by examining the critical importance of qualitative research and, specifically, ethnographic research in the SDP field. This chapter also addresses the research design, followed by an explanation and description of the choice of Brazil as a location and concerns related to the negotiation of access and commitments before entering the field. This chapter also illustrates in more detail the projects under study, and their approaches toward addressing gender specific development goals.

Chapter 4 provides space for detailed reflexivity as an inherent part of ethnographic inquiry. Throughout the particular sections, I reflect upon the dilemmas and ethics of the research, issues of power and privilege, language, trust, and the potential biases and weaknesses. I argue that my position in the field was a *hybrid*, and also, given the complexity inherent to the insider and outsider status of the researcher, that it led me to discuss and problematize the complexity of the category related to the Global North researcher identity.

Chapter 5 examines the process of women's participation, choices, and gender roles, and how these can be useful in overcoming the previous limitations of the Western perception of empowerment. I build upon the stories of young people and their families and explore questions, such as how women participate, why they do not, and how they negotiate their access to sport in general and project participation in particular. Following my analysis, two key observations need to be made: First, female sport participation should neither be overlooked nor conceived of as a mere 'end' which SFD initiatives achieve, but as a process that constitutes women's empowerment. And second, given the complex *processes of contestation*—of norms, access, and burdens—which also happen independently of the SFD initiatives, I examine and define the diversified role SFD projects hold in fostering broader social change.

Chapter 6 demonstrates that the delivery of gender specific projects is a complex, problematic, and contested process. This chapter provides space to interrogate the questions of empowerment, male privilege, and gender roles. By investigating the diverse ways in which youth respond or 'react' to feminism and gender-equality efforts, I challenge some of the prevailing assumptions, for instance, that empowering women leads only to male hostility to women's advancement. Both women and men position themselves in relation to feminist claims and changing gender relations, and empowerment efforts might also result in a more positive micro-transformation in the attitudes of young boys and men. Moreover, men can also experience situations of vulnerability and marginalization. I therefore address the complex relationship between empowerment and culturally inscribed norms and propose that the programmes un-

der study create a *new gender situation(s)* that provides youth with an alternative framework which can result in 'empowerment' as well as (dis)empowerment as youth negotiate their gender roles inside and outside the programme.

Chapter 7[13] explores how lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)[14] individuals experience SFD programmes and examines the issues of sexuality, gender, and heteronormativity in the SDP field. The queer lens here allowed for the revelation that, whilst the SFD initiative provided a relatively supportive environment regarding the free expression of queer desires, it creates rather 'safe(r)' spaces. Furthermore, raising the question of sexual diversity resulted in unexpected consequences outside of the SDP space associated with misinterpretations, suspicions, and a rejection of the initiatives.

Finally, in Chapter 8, I summarize the main findings as well as advantages of using ethnography to study this topic and conclude this thesis by considering the implications for future research.

[13]This chapter is a revised version of the published article: Válková, E. (2020). 'You're going to teach my son to be viado': From 'girling' to queering sport for development? *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690219894885

[14]Throughout this thesis, I use the LGBT abbreviation to describe nonheterosexual and gender variant people. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to revisit in more detail the implications of this terminology; however, I recognize this term is not exhaustive.

2 | Understanding Gender, Empowerment, and Development

2.1 Women and gender in development

Over the last four decades, 'gender' and 'empowerment' have entered development discourse and practices and became key buzzwords and categories specifically in the international gender and development agenda (e.g., Cornwall and Brock, 2005). Development organizations worldwide, including those operating under the SFD banner, have been drawn to the promise of confronting gender norms, building leadership skills, enhancing women's health and self-esteem, and empowering them. The empowerment of women has become widely acknowledged as a 'crucial goal in international development' and as an important way to reach gender equality (Kabeer, 1994). Competing understandings surrounding both gender as well as empowerment, consequently sustained the debates about the ways these specific categories within the international development discourse have been *mainstreamed* into development as well as how to best achieve somewhat ambitious development goals. Moreover, women's empowerment and its relation to development, interpreted either in an economic or a social sense, continues to be the object of much academic debate.

Development itself is conceptually burdened with contradictory and contested meanings, often described through categories such as 'transformation', 'improvement', and 'advancement' (see Heron, 2007; Pieterse, 2000; Sachs, 2010). Critical discussions of development include those who aspire to do 'development' better, and, more precisely, those who question and/or reject the concept and idea of development altogether. These two opposite angles are reflected by Edelman and Haugerud (2005), who observe that much of the current debate

> 'explores whether all or most societies follow the same trajectory toward greater accumulation and well-being or, alternatively, whether wealth in some places or among certain social groups is causally related to poverty

> in other places or among other groups' (Edelman and Haugerud, 2005: 2).

In other words, following Sachs (2010), the 'shiny side of development' is always next to its 'dark side', as, for example, in the case of economic growth, which has produced 'impoverishment next to enrichment'. Sachs further reasons that development is a vaguely defined term, arguing that 'development can mean just about everything, from putting up skyscrapers to putting in latrines, from drilling for oil to drilling for water, from setting up software industries to setting up tree nurseries'. Such as broad vision of what constitutes development can be easily filled with conflicting perspectives; for example, one can identify development in terms of economic growth and reinforce the hegemony of the economic worldview, and another can call for 'de-emphasizing growth in favour of greater autonomy of communities' and therefore determine development more as rights and resources for the marginalized populations (Sachs, 2010: ix-x).

One of the influential conceptualizations of development was provided by Sen (1999). He articulates 'development as freedom' and proposes that development should be evaluated in terms of 'the expansion of the "capabilities" of persons to lead the kind of lives they value and have reason to value' (Sen, 1999: 18). This is a distinct vision of development as compared to those centred on solely economic growth and modernization. His conceptualization of development centralizes the role of human agency and sees individuals as 'active agents of change', instead of passive recipients of development efforts (Sen, 1999)—this point has been critically addressed and challenged within mainstream development by postcolonial scholars, including postcolonial feminists (Bhambra, 2007; Mohanty, 1984).

Postcolonial studies are amongst the most significant schools of thought which contribute to the ongoing critique and rethinking of 'development' (see Bhabha, 1994; Chakrabarty, 2008; Kapoor, 2008; Said, 1995; Spivak, 1995). Postcolonial critique refers to 'the totality of practices, in all their rich diversity, which characterise the societies of the post-colonial world from the moment of colonisation to the present day' (Ashcroft et al., 2006: xv). This perspective seeks to understand the impact of colonialism on contemporary relationships, practices, and ways of thinking. While the era of decolonization brought political independence and formally ended the period of European colonization, it is misleading to use the term 'postcolonial' to indicate the end of the colonial project. As Ashcroft et al. (2006) further highlight, colonialism 'continues in a neo-colonial mode' (Ashcroft et al., 2006: xv); that is, colonial powers still exert indirect control through cultural and economic means and increase the gap between rich and developing countries (Durokifa and Ijeoma, 2018).

In this sense, regarding development and the contemporary effects of colonialism, colonial continuities (Gregory, 2004; Heron, 2007)—'the constellations of power, knowledge, and geography that continue to colonize lives all over the world' (Gregory, 2004: xv)—are crucial to consider when analysing development through sport (see Darnell and Hayhurst, 2012).

In this way, the concept of colonialism should not be disconnected from contemporary inequalities and the current global and transnational systems of power and authority, especially in the theory and practice of development. As Parpart et al. (2002) explain, 'The development enterprise was introduced in the 1940s as a very top-down affair. It was seen as a technical problem that could be solved by transferring Northern knowledge to Southern clients' (Parpart et al., 2002: 8). That said, the Northern development establishment possess the power to define the development discourse as a technical 'problem' which can be resolved by Northern, expert intervention while excluding local, Indigenous understanding and knowledge. Postcolonial theory strives to destabilize these Northern ways of thinking and produce spaces in which those subjugated by both colonialism and its contemporary manifestations can speak out against dominant discourses (Gandhi, 1998), discourses of Western/Northern domination which have been in play since colonial times. The postcolonial perspective therefore accentuates alternative positions and subjugated knowledge, including of those of the Third World, minorities, and the subaltern, while turning back to the colonizer to better unveil the tactics and representational practices of the dominant (Kapoor, 2008).

If development includes, according to Sen (1999), the removal of major sources of unfreedom such as poverty, poor economic opportunities, and systematic social deprivation, it is necessary to consider that the world and social relationships are not structured uniformly but also with relational divisions of class, race, gender, and sexuality, among others (Pease, 2010). To raise questions concerning freedoms and unfreedoms, we must therefore include questions about the unequal treatment of members of different groups and women in particular.

Development was initially a gender-blind process and was criticized by feminists around the world for its male-centred conceptualization (see Kabeer, 1994). Scholars from diverse and differently located positions have begun to examine how and why young women have emerged as the central subjects of development discourses and efforts (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2004; Connelly et al., 2000,0; Wilson, 2011).

The gender-based critique of development policies and programmes began to consolidate in the 1970s[15] and gained force during the UN Decade for Women between

[15]This initial shift was marked by Boserup (1970), a Danish development analyst, and the pub-

1975 and 1985. During this period, attention to women's needs became a central topic, not only within international women's conferences but development agencies themselves also began to pay more attention to women's needs within their development programmes. The primary driver among mainstream development institutions and corporations to include women in development was the idea that investing in their health and education would increase the economic prosperity of their families and countries[16] (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2004; Cornwall, 2018; Switzer et al., 2016).

This increased attention to the role of women, and particularly liberal feminism, in development consequently led to the creation of "women in development" (WID), a perspective which has prevailed within thinking on women and their relationship to development since the 1970s. This approach was commonly labelled the equity approach, and it assumed that women should receive the same rights and privileges as men (Eyben, 2015; Jain, 2005). One of the main goals of this approach was to improve access to resources for individual women, that is, to integrate them into economic development by centring on income generation projects for women (Momsen, 2010; Moser, 1993; Parpart et al., 2002; Rowlands, 1998; Sen and Grown, 1987).

In this way, whilst the development endeavour has recognized the needs of women and directed development policies at them, this has happened largely within the status quo. Key critiques were directed at this approach in relation to, first, its overemphasis on efficiency and anti-poverty efforts; second, its narrow and Western led conceptualization of gender, treating women as a homogenous category and thus imposing a Western viewpoint of development; and, consequently, third, its failures to address the complex realities of women living in the Global South (Parpart, 2015).

As Moser (1993) wrote, WID treats 'women in isolation, promoting measures such as access to credit and employment as the means by which women can be better integrated into the development process' (Moser, 1993: 3). In other words, through the WID approach, women were viewed as separate human beings from man, merely integrated into development and the established economic and political structures which reinforce the existing power system. Moreover, failing to take into account diversity among women, the approach neglected the structural factors which perpetuate various forms of domination experienced by Global South women based on social determinants, such as class, race, and ethnicity (Rowlands, 1998; Sardenberg, 2008).

It is also relevant to note that women and men are positioned differently within their local communities, and their opportunities are also constrained by broader

lication of her book *Women's Role in Economic Development*.

[16]This movement targeting young women and imagining them as 'new' agents and catalysts of development was also described as the 'girling of development' (Switzer et al., 2016).

social forces, including imperialism, social inequalities, racism, and religion. The uncritical claims of global sisterhood, typically generated by the Global North, assume commonalities in the experiences of Global South women and gender oppression. To address the root causes of female disempowerment, notably their unequal position in society relative to men, it is also important to acknowledge the cultural, political, and economic heterogeneity of the countries of the South. Gender relations are not experienced in the same manner by all non-Western women, rather their oppression and subordination change with a woman's race, class, and cultural setting (see Barriteau, 2000).

Western liberal feminist thought, Mohanty (1984) critically argued, portrays women from the Global South as the 'homogenous Other', helpless victims of patriarchy. These paternalistic attitudes not only perpetuated the hegemonic idea of the superiority of the West but also falsely universalized women's oppression by framing them as constrained equally by patriarchal gender relations (Mohanty, 1984).

It was in 1980s that a new analysis of women and development emerged within the "gender and development" (GAD) approach. As a response to the critique of WID as embedded within the Western perspective, gender is seen in the GAD approach gender is seen as

> not only by a multiplicity of interacting time- and place-contingent influences (culture, mode of production, legal and political institutions, for example), but is further mediated by men's and women's insertion into other socially generated categories such as class, age and "race"' (Chant, 2000: 8).

In this way, the diversity of women's experiences and the differential location in the social order responsible for women's oppression within societies were acknowledged. Unlike the WID approach, it was GAD which shifted the focus from merely intergatingintegrating women into development to adressingaddressing issues of women's subordination through by transforming gender relations (Sardenberg, 2008). Scholars argued that we should study and analyse the relation between men and women rather than study women as separate beings (see, e.g., Cornwall, 2000; Cupples, 2013). The shift from women to gender made it crucial to examine how attitudes and practices associated with women, femininities, men, and masculinities are socially constructed as well as, and to adressaddress the need to challenge existing gender roles and relations (Moser, 1993).

Focusing on gender relations implied that men were brought into the development discussion. However, it was alleged that the GAD principles of including and speaking

of both genders had been rarely put into practice. Within the broader international development field, men are largely seen as impediments to women's empowerment rather than part of the solution to gender inequality (Cleaver, 2002; Coles et al., 2015). Emerging scholarship has begun to identify men as 'the missing "other half" in development policy and practice', recognizing that men play an important part in the struggles to achieve and sustain gender equality (see Chant, 2000; Cleaver, 2002; Cornwall, 2000; Cornwall and White, 2000).

But the critique of approaching gender as isolated and focusing only on women went even further than that. Cornwall and White (2000) emphasized that we must reconsider how we approach gender and that gender issues shouldn't be seen 'as a unilateral women's issue, but in terms of relations of power and powerlessness in which men as well as women may experience vulnerability, disempowerment and disadvantages' (Cornwall and White, 2000: 24) . That said, approaches which focuses only on women might not only portray women as the only ones who are defeated but neglect the fact that women as well as men can experience disempowerment. Yet, including gender into development efforts, encompassing SFD programmes, mostly implies women. I discuss this point further in this chapter.

While both approaches, WID and GAD, are understood as rather overlapping in practice, their distinct philosophical underpinnings are noticeable. It was under the GAD approach that women's active role in development was acknowledged by focusing on their role as a agents of change in transforming social relations rather than as strictly economic targets and 'development beneficiaries' (Coles et al., 2015; Momsen, 2010; Parpart et al., 2002; Rowan-Campbell, 1999). It was within this alternative approach that women's subordination was seen 'as the result of both gender relations and broader political factors, such as colonial and neo-colonial oppression' (Rowan-Campbell, 1999: 85-86). Development started to be conceptualized more as 'a multifaceted process of increasing not only standards of living but also control over and definition of those standards' (Rowan-Campbell, 1999: 86). In this way, besides its economic components, development has also gained social, political, and cultural dimensions.

In 1984, feminist researchers, activists, and political leaders from the Global South formed the network Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) and based it in Bangalore. It introduced broad principles for a new approach to the role of women in development which was labelled the "empowerment approach". Rooted in social transformation, and particularly on small-scale, grassroots initiatives (Moser, 1993), this was a turning point in the history of the term 'empowerment'. Feminists in the Global South who were involved in feminist ac-

tivism and grassroots women's collective action thus can be credited with the formal appearance of this concept in the field of international development (Batliwala, 1994; Sardenberg, 2008).

It has been proposed that the empowerment approach focuses on the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength. In this way, it acknowledges the importance for women to increase their power and influence the direction of change (Moser, 1993: 74). The significant feature in the discourse of empowerment, and thus the empowerment approach, is that it acknowledges the power and agency of women in the Global South, which also emerged from the rejection of Western, top-down approaches to development. Women become active agents of change rather than mere 'recipients' of development interventions.

'Development' as well as 'gender' have become subjects of dispute. Thus, moving forward, I will look for contradictions between what is desirable and what is *happening on the ground*. Ferguson (1990) offers a useful approach. He argues for observing the broader process of development, construction, and circulation of development discourses; engaging with diverse meanings that different actors, agents, subjects give to development; and attending to various intended and unintended consequences that it produces in a given setting. This approach might also be relevant to study and analyse development efforts coupled with women's empowerment. Ferguson (1990) asks, what does development create 'on the ground'? In his words, he says, 'What happens differently due to the "development" problematic that would not or could not happen without it?' (Ferguson, 1990: xiv).

Every intervention 'creates' something on the ground, and while aware of the contemporary expressions of colonialism, I suggest that the term 'empowerment' is also important if we are about to think of women's experiences and understand them. Empowerment is also a contested term, as I discuss in the next section.

2.2 Theorizing empowerment

This thesis, through the presented stories, develops insights into the process of women's and girls' empowerment in terms of sport inclusion and participation, which will be analysed at the societal, familial, and individual levels. The diverse body of literature has begun to reflect the multifaceted nature of empowerment and discuss diversity in the meanings, purposes, and terminology ascribed and used to examine women's and girls' empowerment. Here, I will analyse the incorporation of the concept of empowerment into mainstream development discourse so as to later on examine how the term has been adapted specifically to the sport-for-development

field.

It seems to be generally accepted in the literature that empowerment is a far-reaching concept which enters all aspects of life. It refers to a wide range of activities, from individual self-assertion to collective resistance, protest, and mobilization which challenge basic power relations (see Sharma, 1992). While empowerment has many layers, it is usually distinguished along three main lines: economic empowerment and its relations to poverty reduction, social empowerment in reference to changes in gender norms and relations, and political empowerment and mobilization. Empowerment might also be understood as both an outcome and a process, referring to the processes of change toward equality or greater freedom of choice and action (Batliwala, 1994; Kabeer, 1994; Parpart et al., 2002; Rowlands, 1995).

To analyse women's empowerment, Sardenberg (2010) reminds that empowerment did not develop from a theory within academia and become subsequently appropriated by activist and practitioners, empowerment came from the opposite direction, from *practice to theory*[17]. Feminist and women's movements, which emerged at the grassroots level independent of WID efforts and gained strength in the South, addressed a number of issues, with the goal to empower women. The author emphasizes that these groups did not spell their goals precisely through use of the term of empowerment (Sardenberg, 2010: 21), it was more about consciousness raising.

From there, empowerment was appropriated by diverse actors—firstly, by scholars in various academic fields, such as feminist, gender scholars. These scholars and activists used the term empowerment to seek alternative models of development which focused on people-centred approaches and grassroots, 'participatory activities', as opposed to the Western top-down economic growth strategies to development (Friedmann, 1992). To avoid instrumental analysis and advance the critical understanding of women's empowerment, they developed theories which interrelate empowerment with the concept of power (Kabeer, 1994; Parpart et al., 2002; Rowlands, 1995). They conceived of empowerment as 'a process that permits women and the poor to gain awareness, individually or collectively, of the dynamics of dominance that marginalize them, and to build up capacities to radically transform inequitable economic, social, and political structures' (Calvès, 2009: 13).

To develop the concept in this sense, academics in the South, and to an extent in the North, get inspiration and draw from the theoretical insights of Freire (1973) and his critical pedagogy. While he did not use the term 'empowerment' in his work, he was concerned with developing educational ideals and practices which would serve

[17] See Gaventa (2002) for an in-depth overview of the origins, meanings, and usages of empowerment.

to improve the lives of marginalized people. For Freire, education presented a mechanism for *conscientization*, within which individuals and groups become critically aware of the limitations and contradictions that define and constrain their lives and, consequently, inspired to transform this social reality. The goal of critical pedagogy thus includes *critical consciousness*, which is also the central aspect of empowerment (Stromquist, 2002). Consciousness raising is referred to as a process which allows women to reframe problems as collective rather than individual, as deriving from political or institutional structures rather than their personal failings.

Sen and Grown (1987) were particularly important in proposing an alternative vision of change for women's empowerment based on collective action. They emphasized structural transformation as a device toward women's empowerment as well as an action promoting changes in the institutions of patriarchal domination. According to them, empowerment must be conceived and developed in a very contextualized 'intersectional manner', that is, in terms of gender inequalities but also other determinants among women (including race, class, ethnicity), as well as in terms of the unequal position of North and South in the global scenario (Sardenberg, 2008; Sen and Grown, 1987).

Here, I suggest that while it is important to analyse the process of empowerment grounded in local voices, given the connection of development and contemporary effect of colonialism, it is essential to think of empowerment as facilitated through Northern actors and thus fused with the Northern perspective brought to the Global South, for instance, by international volunteers/workers. The visions of empowerment may be introduced by other, third parties to local communities, not only by donors and other actors operating within mainstream development but also through particular visions of Northern individuals with patronizing attitudes.

On the other hand, empowerment was also appropriated and clearly mainstreamed into international development by a wide range of actors which started to both 'use and abuse the concept and practice of empowerment' without a more sustained definition (Parpart et al., 2002: 4). Here it is important to note the paradoxes inherent to this term (Cornwall, 2018). While the concept of empowerment was originally conceived by scholars and activists as a bottom-up process characterized by its 'transformatory' nature, it has, since the 1990s, been adopted by mainstream development agencies, governments, NGOs, and banks[18].

Rowlands (1998) pointed out that since then 'much use of the term has laid emphasis on economic and political empowerment, and on a conception of empower-

[18]In the context of international development, empowerment begun to receive significant attention during the structural adjustment programmes. The idea was to empower poor people and focus more on individual responsibility (Rowlands, 1998).

ment well-rooted in the "dominant culture" of Western capitalism' (Rowlands, 1998: 11). What was originally conceived as tranformatory became strengthened by its focus on individualism and personal achievement as cultural and economic goals. As Sardenberg (2008) summarized, empowerment 'lent itself to appropriation—or indeed misappropriation . . . by the development establishment' (Sardenberg, 2008: 20). Hence, 'empowerment', similar to 'development' or 'gender', has become a matter of dispute—a widespread and mostly unquestioned process strived for by distinct and conflicting institutions[19].

Empowerment is thus conceptualized by different actors (the women's movement, Western donors, NGOs) and in different contexts. Not only may there be different usage of the term but there is also a rejection of the term empowerment by women's groups themselves. Here Sardenberg (2008) emphasizes that in Latin America the term is received with mistrust by feminist scholars, grassroots initiatives, and other movements as mainstream actors have appropriated the term 'to legitimize policies and practices that, from a feminist perspective, are far from being really empowering to women' (Sardenberg, 2008: 4). Moreover, scholars have begun to question how such a barely defined term can address gender issues in a mostly male-dominated world.

Empowerment has thus arrived at the point when it finds itself at a critical crossroads of donor preferences, programme design, and experiences rooted in women's lives. It is also important to note that despite the unintended social benefits for women which organizations can have, they do not always have a specific and deliberate empowerment mandate. In the same way that some actors use the rhetoric of empowerment and define their goals within the confines of empowerment, others might be characterized by their lack of familiarity with the concept and still be dealing with the original transformatory notion of empowerment by centring on the redefinition of a women's place, consciousness, and collective action.

While some scholars might suggest that participatory empowerment approaches only serve as a moral justification for what is the same top-down development establishment, I suggest that we study and analyse how different actors and organizations have used it, for what purposes, and with what outcomes (Craig and Mayo, 1995; Rowlands, 1997). It is essential to examine how these initiatives, aimed at facilitating participation and empowerment, are translated in practice on the ground, and how they affect those involved in these projects, specifically adolescent girls and boys and local educators. The mainstream development theories, in conjunction with the feminist conceptualization of empowerment, have much to offer the sociological study of

[19]Such as the World Bank, Oxfam, and many, more radical non-governmental organizations (Parpart et al., 2002; Romano, 2002; Rowan-Campbell, 1999).

sport for development, particularly in exploring issues of gender and empowerment grounded in women's experiences. Vigilance is needed here because empowerment, when done top-down and applied for all from above, contributes to the status quo. I discuss this point in the following section.

2.2.1 At the service of the status quo

Mainstream development actors infused empowerment with liberal individualism and an 'alleviation of poverty' discourse (Calvès, 2009), regarding empowerment as equivalent to the efforts to enhance women's productivity and efficiency within established structures and practices.

Empowerment moves from its tranformatory meanings to 'self-empowerment' and 'improvement'. It is based on strategies which perpetuate neoliberal market-based approaches to development and measure women's empowerment through economic development; in other words, 'empowered women' are the ones who are economically autonomous.

An important point was captured, for example, by Cornwall (2018). She argued that the ways in which contemporary mainstream corporate and donor discourses understand women's empowerment speaks to the processes through which women become prepared and equipped with the tools to enter and navigate a marketplace of opportunities and choices (Cornwall, 2018).

Actors, such as the World Bank, for example, appear to be less preoccupied with addressing the root of the problems and the consequent transformation of social relations. In their vision, it is 'economic power and access to productive resources [that] would weaken traditional gender and social roles and empower poor women to demand further change' (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2004: 11).

This is one of the attributes to be criticized. The focus of these projects thus remains on the individual economic empowerment of women pursued through micro-credit and micro-enterprise development. In this way, these actors have imposed an instrumental approach toward empowerment which is more interested in improving economic performance of the poor while maintaining the established status quo (Moser, 1993). Batliwala and Dhanraj (2004) critically appraised the role of these market-oriented strategies aimed at shifting economic power into the hands of women. By doing so, the social entrepreneurial models and microcredit programmes place the burden both on self-employed women and those working in the informal sector, making them responsible for their own welfare. As they argued, poor women are converted into instruments of neoliberal and fundamentalist agendas which exacerbate their marginality and poverty (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2004; Rowlands,

1998).

The critique is therefore addressed towards empowerment which has become equivalent to individual capacity, realization, and status as well as the rise of an individualized notion of self-empowerment through the market. Appropriated in this manner by development actors, gender equality and women's empowerment, as framed by feminist academics concerned with persistent inequalities and social justice, have suffered substantial changes. In comparison, strategies focused on investing in women's entrepreneurship and leadership became a new development mantra regarding poor women as the best economic and political investmentt (Cornwall, 2018; Parpart et al., 2002). Romano (2002) further criticizes this notion of empowerment for its fragmentation; atomization of situations of domination, created by the advancement of neoliberalism; and the over-valourization of individuality.

Another critique which mainstream development scholars presented is that, for international development institutions, empowerment has become a predetermined outcome to be reached. Development goals, such as better health or increased income, are usually cited and reported as evidence of empowerment (Mosedale, 2005). This is reductive, superficial, and potentially dangerous in so far as it insufficiently addresses the complicated web of elements which perpetuate the marginalization of women and positions them as mere economic targets. A woman's level of empowerment will vary according to other criteria, such as her class, ethnicity, relative wealth, age, and family position. Any analysis of women's empowerment thus needs to be reconstructed in a very contextualized intersectional manner.

Besides the diversity of women's experiences, the 'wealth' indicators of access to education or food in the household neglect important elements, that is, the *processes and means* applied to achieve these outcomes, which are the means that constitute empowerment (Calvès, 2009). As Parpart et al. (2002) observed, empowerment is 'fluid, often unpredictable, and requires attention to the specificities of struggles over time and place' (Parpart et al., 2002: 4). In this sense, the journey of women in Brazil until they are able to engage in sport consists of negotiating a way out of the unequal relationships which restrain them from playing football. This might be overlooked as an achievement if their experiences are interpreted only through established quantitative indicators that tell us little about their experiences and struggles. The question is not merely whether they are empowered, but how they counter their marginalization and exclusion.

When interpreted within predetermined categories—economic or Western led—and not grounded in women's experiences and understanding of transformation, struggles and 'achievements' are overlooked by simplistic conceptualizations of empowerment

which can be measured and quantified and, therefore, provide 'credible' evidence of individual or group 'empowerment'. Moreover, when development is 'imposed' on local communities, it can also impose the needs and interest of women. In this sense, measurement and predetermined indicators serve rather to maintain the status quo and top-down policies. As Romano (2002) observed, empowerment serves, under a new name, as a legitimation instrument 'to guarantee the continuity of the dominant practices' (Romano, 2002: 10).

To theorize women's empowerment through SFD, an alternative approach is necessary to employ, one which will help to interpret women's experiences and move beyond presenting it as an end in itself. Empowerment can offer an analytical framework to explore how women challenge the status quo through their participation within sport for development when taking into account issues of power and agency. A gender analysis of SFD thus must draw from current critical approaches which theorize empowerment. The development of empowerment is an ongoing process rather than a final output or goal, and, as such, it deserves further exploration beyond the boundaries of narrow top-down understandings. In the next section, I move to discussion of how empowerment relates to power and agency.

2.2.2 Empowerment, agency, and power

Speaking about empowering women means speaking about a group disempowered relative to men. According to Batliwala (1994), empowerment, then, can be defined as a 'process of challenging existing power relations, and of gaining greater control over the sources of power' (Batliwala, 1994: 130). Given the power relations, for Kabeer (2005), empowerment encompasses not only 'exercising choice', but as she argues, 'also doing this in ways that challenge power relations' (Kabeer, 2005: 14). Batliwala (2007) further contends that the change in power relation can occur through action on three different fronts:

> By challenging the ideologies that justify social inequality (such as gender or caste), by changing prevailing patterns of access to and control over economic, natural and intellectual resources, and by transforming the institutions and structures that reinforce and sustain existing power structures (the family, state, market, education, media, etc.) (Batliwala, 2007: 560).

The author's account goes further to reflect on how this approach to power came to disappear as development agencies assimilated empowerment as a development objective. Together with Batliwala, other feminist authors emphasize that understand-

ing women's empowerment requires a more nuanced analysis of power. Following Foucault, power is not possessed by individuals and groups, and, therefore, it allows movement beyond the traditional assumptions of power as the ability to exert power over others (institutions, resources, and people). By rejecting the notion that power is something held by individuals or groups, Foucault argues that power permeates society, is fluid, relational, and exists only in the everyday relationships of people, both individually and in institutions. Such power can lead to repressive practices which are expressed in disciplined bodies, actions, and discourses (Foucault, 1980; Taylor, 2014).

Foucault's understanding of power is useful here in order to move away from more dominant notions of power. Most models of power are 'neutral' and do not reveal how power is distributed in society, as scholars have demonstrated already in the WID approach. The rationale of this perspective was that women 'should somehow be "brought into development" and become "empowered" to participate within the economic and political structures of society' (Rowlands, 1998: 12). By doing so, Rowlands (1998) continues, women were given the chance to occupy positions of 'power' (see Sardenberg, 2010), whereas no considerations about the power dynamics of gender, class, or race were made.

To theorize empowerment beyond the narrow focus on the economic dimension of empowerment within sport for development, it is useful to think of empowerment in the way proposed by Sardenberg (2008). She reflects on different ways of defining and conceptualizing women's empowerment from a Latin American feminist perspective. She is inspired by the work of Ferguson (2004) and her notion of collective empowerment as a strategy in the struggle against patriarchy. Sardenberg distinguishes between 'liberal' and 'liberating' approaches to empowerment.

The first, liberal empowerment, is instrumental, with its origins in liberal feminist thinking which serves as a means to achieve other development goals. The author argues that it fosters instead empowerment 'without power', which clearly provides no thread for the existing power relations nor does it disrupt the existing structures of domination which are responsible for the exclusion, poverty, and disempowerment of women (Romano, 2002). Instead 'focus is on technical and instrumental aspects that can supposedly be "taught" in special training courses' (Sardenberg, 2008: 19). It is in the latter, liberating empowerment, that power relation enters as an essential element. Empowerment in this approach is an end in itself, by which women gain autonomy and self-determination, acting collectively to 'question, destabilise and, eventually, transform the gender order of patriarchal domination' (Sardenberg, 2008: 19). In contrast to liberal empowerment, this approach 'is consistent with a focus on

women's organising, on collective action, though not disregarding the importance of the empowerment of women at a personal level' (Sardenberg, 2008: 19).

This distinction is important. Hence, an overemphasis on grassroots, participatory methods and their empowerment potential for disadvantaged populations, especially women, presents limitations as they underplay and neglect the influence of global and national forces on people's empowerment. Parpart et al. (2002) observed that empowerment takes place in institutional, material, and discursive contexts. Whether gaining skills, developing consciousness, or making decisions, empowerment takes place within the structural constraints of institutions and discursive practices. Furthermore, León (1997) observes that the individualist view, embedded in a sense of self-control, is disconnected from broader political, social, and historical contexts and so neglects the links between power structures and the everyday practices of individuals and groups. Hence, we must not carelessly accept participatory empowerment as a panacea.

Other authors, such as Parpart et al. (2002), Batliwala and Dhanraj (2004), or León (1997), have suggested a similar notion of empowerment, that is, empowerment must be considered as including both individual conscientization as well as the ability to work collectively. Where together the work of individuals can consequently lead to politicized power with others and potentialities for the power to bring about change. Their notion is informed by Rowlands (1998), who conducted fieldwork with a women's group in Honduras in order to determine what empowerment meant to them. She distinguishes between four dimensions of power in any process of empowerment: (1) power over (controlling power/domination of marginalized groups); (2) power to (generate new possibilities without domination); (3) power with (collective power, power created through a group process); and, finally, (4) power from within (ability to think and see alternative ways of existing) (Rowlands, 1998: 13). In this sense, it is not only important who holds the power but that power can also be utilized to achieve things (power to) as a collective political power mobilized by actors on a grassroots level (power with) while also referring to elements such as self-confidence and the capacity to undo the effects of internalized oppression (power within) (Calvès, 2009; Rowlands, 1998).

However, the dominant understanding of power as 'power over' is based on the principle that it can be bestowed by one person upon another; therefore, it carries with it significant problems to the process of empowerment. More precisely, if empowerment can be 'bestowed, it can just as easily be withdrawn: in other words, it does not involve a structural change in power relations' (Rowlands, 1998: 12). Rather, those in a position of power might fear an inversion of the relationship, such as in

situations where men fear losing control and power and the empowerment efforts of women are assumed as threatening by them (Parpart, 2015; Rowlands, 1998). This point is relevant for my analysis of SFD. Moving beyond the narrow conceptualization of empowerment's economic dimensions and employing empowerment/power as an analytical frame can reveal important insights. This means that power is power only if it is one's own; no one has allocated it to women. For example, if a woman joins a development organization, they are still within mixed-gendered groups under the control of men. In this sense, importantly, women are not empowered by 'taking the powers from' them, rather, they become empowered by standing up for themselves (Coles et al., 2015).

In this sense, development agencies cannot empower women; they can only facilitate women empowering themselves by creating conditions supportive of empowerment. As Mosedale (2005) observed, 'Empowerment cannot be bestowed by a third party. Rather, and this is compatible with to the top-down critique of empowerment, those who would become empowered must claim it' (Mosedale, 2005: 244). Empowerment, therefore, is not merely the act of exerting power over other people and resources.

For Kabeer (2005), another way of thinking about power is in terms of the ability to make choices. According to her, disempowerment is a result of being denied choice, and, consequently, empowerment is the process 'by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability' (Kabeer, 2005: 13). She further explores empowerment through three preconditions which prove useful when thinking about empowerment on an individual level. More precisely, empowerment depends on the fulfilment of three dimensions of choice, the first of which is described by the author as 'agency', which has both 'positive' and 'negative' effects. The positive sense speaks to the 'power to', which is, according to Kabeer, 'people's ability to make and act on their own life choices, even in the face of others' opposition'. Negative sense, referring to 'power over', is explained by Kabeer as 'the capacity of some actors to override the agency of others through, for example, the exercise of authority or the use of violence and other forms of coercion' (Kabeer, 2005: 14). The second dimension of choice, 'resources', is 'the medium through which agency is exercised'. And, finally, 'achievements', is the dimension which Kabeer defines as 'in terms of both the agency exercised and its consequences' (Kabeer, 2005: 15).

Kabeer in her conceptualization of women's empowerment draws on Sen's understanding of agency. Sen (1999) defines 'agent' 'as someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as

well' (Sen, 1999: 19). However, not all choices are meaningful for power and are only significant if there was an opportunity or alternative to have chosen *otherwise*. This approach is thus limited to understanding the restrictions on empowerment of women at the deep root of inequality, when their choices are restricted and no alternatives are available.

Women are now expected to realize their potential, become self-directed, and fit within the social order (Wilson, 2011). In this way, it is not empowerment when women are making choices that have become their 'needs', like education or health, nor when they become entrepreneurs just because they do not have other choices. They are only becoming part of the neoliberal machinery, expected to stay in line and to assimilate themselves into the social order and status quo.

To analyse women's empowerment, it requires identifying power less in terms of domination over others, such as the assumption that women gaining power implies a loss of power for men, but in terms of the capacity of women to 'recognize the ideology that legitimizes male domination and understand how it perpetuates their oppression' (Batliwala, 1994: 131). Batliwala (1994) proposes that the process of women's empowerment implies the process of challenging patriarchal relations, which demands that women first recognize the existing social order is unjust or unnatural. The author further asserts that this process of shifting values and attitudes and the whole process of change does not generally 'begin spontaneously from the condition of subjugation', it must be 'externally induced' (Batliwala, 1994: 131). As she claims, 'Women must be convinced of their innate right to equality, dignity and justice' (Batliwala, 1994: 132). Therefore, women's organizations play a fundamental role in bringing women together for their mutual empowerment.

Although concepts of development and empowerment are created within a different context in which the term is used, or is sometimes not used at all, SFD organizations may offer space for varying forms of 'empowerment'. In sport that would mean women are able challenge the patriarchal ideology which constrains their participation. Although, based on liberal feminist ideology, they were 'given access', they might use the programme to counter their stigmatization and exclusion as well as transform existing power relationships and negotiate power for themselves. However, as I will demonstrate in the following section, empowerment coupled with power cannot be disengaged from discussion considering the role of men given that women are not isolated in the process of empowerment.

2.2.3 Empowerment and gender relations

This thesis is grounded in the reality of participants, including both women's and men's lives. Focusing on the empowerment of women as a group requires an analysis of gender relations, that is, the ways in which power relations between men and women are constructed and maintained (e.g., Cleaver, 2002). Several studies have revealed that projects designed to empower women often challenged power relations between women and men, inadvertently nurturing male hostility and raising tensions, which translate into violence at home and in communities (see Leach and Sitaram, 2002; Parpart, 2015). Parpart (2015) argued, 'Male hostility to women's advancement troubled advocates of gender equality and women's empowerment, raising questions about men and masculinity. Leaving men out of efforts to improve women's lives and achieve gender equality became increasingly difficult to defend' (Parpart, 2015: 16).

To engage fully within the issues of empowerment and understand the potential of SFD initiatives to foster gender equality, it is necessary to understand gender and the conceptualization of masculinity and femininity.

Research on gender is currently one of the significant fields of sociology, extensively theorized and problematized by a range of scholars within feminist, gender, and queer studies (Butler, 1990; Connell, 1987; Halberstam, 1998; Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007; West and Zimmerman, 1987). Gender identities have been traditionally understood as fixed and opposed, leading to assumptions that masculinity and femininity are 'natural' expressions of sexed bodies (Butler, 1990; Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Mac An Ghaill, 1996). In addition, considered as natural but also hierarchical, these categories have induced marginalization in patriarchal, heteronormative societies.

More recently, complex debates about individual subjectivities and the nature of masculine and feminine identities have brought different theoretical foundations in relation to the binaries of sex and gender (Butler, 1990; Connell, 1987; Halberstam, 1998). Contemporary feminist theories, influenced by the work of Butler (1990) and Connell (1987), have challenged the traditional ideas of fixed, unitary identifications and have recognized instead the role of human agency in 'performing' gender as distinct from sexed bodies (Butler, 1990), as well as historical and cultural shifts in the models of gender and the entanglement of gendered identities and other performances (Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003). This epistemological shift has thus brought greater recognition of the 'fluid possibilities of such categories once they are no longer linked causally or expressively to the presumed fixity of sex' (Butler, 1990: 136). Rather, contemporary masculinities and femininities are understood better as 'more contradictory, fragmented, shifting and ambivalent then the dominant public

definitions of these categories suggest' (Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007: 254).

In this thesis, gender is understood as relational (Connell, 2002) given that 'patterns of masculinity are socially defined in contradistinction from some model of femininity' (Messerschmidt et al., 2005: 848). Moreover, masculinities and femininities are exposed to change as they come into existence in specific settings and under particular situations, the point which overcomes the tendency to envision men and women as a homogenous group and masculinity and femininity as fixed (Butler, 1990). As Butler argues '"female" no longer appears to be a stable notion, its meaning is as troubled and unfixed as "woman," and because both terms gain their troubled significations only as relational terms' (Butler, 1990: xxxi).

According to Connell (1995), gender can be described as a way in which 'social practice is ordered' (Connell, 1995: 71). The author uses the term 'reproductive arena'—including 'bodily structures and processes of human reproduction'—which organizes practice at all levels of social organization from identities to wide-ranging institutions (Connell, 1995: 71).

Regarding gender analysis, Risman (2018) further contends that the analysis of gender should not centre solely on individual identity performance nor be treated as a wholly institutional phenomenon. While individuals actively construct gendered selves, their efforts to do so are formed by interactional-level processes (such as family socialization and peer policing) and macro-level gender ideologies and institutions. In this sense, gender inequalities can be found at every level of human experience, including interpersonal relationships (Connell, 2005). Hence, discussions and action towards a gender-equal society require looking at the institutions, as well as in everyday life and personal behaviour that ought to be changed.

Significant advances and challenges regarding the re-examination of men and boys have also become an object of academic reflection and analysis (see Aguayo and Nascimento, 2016; Connell, 2000,0; Ratele, 2014). The role of men and boys concerning gender equality started to emerge as an issue of scholarly interest during the 1990s. Since then, there has been a far-reaching overview of theory and research on masculinities (e.g., Kimmel et al., 2004) as well as a growing tendency to critically review assumptions and concepts about masculinities in postcolonial contexts, including Latin America (e.g., Connell, 2016; Gutmann, 2003; Jesus, 2011; Vigoya, 2001).

In a broader sense, Connell (1995) focuses on how men and women conduct their gendered lives through particular processes and relationships. Masculinity can be defined in this way as 'simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these

practices on bodily experience, personality and culture' (Connell, 1995: 71). Schippers (2007) further builds on Connell's conceptualization of masculinity and argues that masculinity might be understood in terms of three components.

First, individuals can move into a particular social location through practice regardless of their gender. Second, Connell's definition speaks to specific practices and characteristics which are perceived to be masculine. And finally, when individuals, both men and women, embody 'masculine' practices (that are enacted collectively by groups and societies), it brings about cultural and social effects. There are also individual effects at play that may be relevant, for instance, in understanding how women experience their engagement in sport. As Schippers (2007) argues, 'Occupying the masculine position and performing it affects the way individuals experience their bodies, their sense of self, and how they project that self to others' (Schippers, 2007: 86).

What is also fundamental for the context of sport for development and the theory of empowerment is a multiplicity of masculinities and femininities (e.g., Connell, 2005). As Connell argues, 'There is no single masculinity, but rather multiple masculinities, both locally and on a world scale' (Connell, 2012: 6). In this sense, it is not possible to speak of a single model of masculinity in Latin America (Vigoya, 2001), and particularly in Brazilian society, but rather conflicts between ideal and practice. Penglase (2010), for example, examines how drug dealers in Brazil use a gendered ideology of masculine authority to legitimate their use of force and violence and to establish their relationships with residents of the favelas. His work also illuminates the impact that drug violence generates on men who live in favelas but do not participate in the drug trade. Vigoya (2001) observes the effects of neoliberalism on masculinity formation in Latin America and describes structural adjustment as creating difficulty for working-class men in sustaining a provider model of masculinity.

Regarding women's empowerment, there is little attention to the question of implications which the increasingly fragile labour market bring for underemployed men, which might result in the reconfiguration of gender relations within and beyond the household (Cornwall, 2018).

When conceptualizing gender relations, and particularly in sport, the specific form of masculinity that shapes thinking about men, gender relations, and social hierarchy is hegemonic masculinity. Introduced by Connell (1987) and reformulated by Messerschmidt et al. (2005), the initial conceptual formulation centred on how hegemonic masculinity operates not merely through the subordination of femininity but also through the subordination and marginalization of other masculinities.

As Connell (1995) defines, hegemonic masculinity is 'the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women' (Connell, 1995: 77).

This concept has received significant attention and critique in the context of sport (e.g., Anderson and McGuire, 2010; Besnier et al., 2018; Markula-Denison and Pringle, 2007). For example, Besnier et al. (2018) agree that 'masculinities are organized in clearly identifiable hierarchies' but also contend that 'forms of masculinity that appear to be dominant in certain ways are in fact precarious in other ways' (Besnier et al., 2018: 840-841). In other words, according to the authors, no masculinity should be understood as hegemonic.

The relational feature when conceptualizing gender is relevant here as this particular form of masculinity evolved in unequal relation to femininity, termed 'emphasized femininity' (Connell, 1987: 183). It operates in complementary and accommodating subordinate relationships with hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities. While Connell did not elaborate further on this concept, the author highlighted the existence of multiple femininities. Regarding compliance as one of the central features of emphasized femininity, some femininities are not fully resistant but are rather characterized by 'complex strategic combinations of compliance, resistance and cooperation' (Connell, 1987: 183-184). Building on the work of Connell and others, it allows for the exploration of how men and women position themselves in relation to men's roles as reproducers of hegemonic masculinity and women's subordination. As Messerschmidt et al. (2005) further argue, each man must position himself in relation to hegemonic masculinity and that only a minority may enact it (Messerschmidt et al., 2005).

The intersectional lens is also relevant when *bringing men* in to gender analysis. While attention to men's problems and masculinity might be understood as undermining the potential for gender equality (see White, 2000), given that men control most of the wealth and institutional authority, not all men benefit equally from women's subordination and patriarchy. As Pease (2010) reminds, 'Many people experience both oppression and privilege. Not all men, for example, benefit equally from patriarchy and not all white people benefit equally from racism' (Pease, 2010: 20). This implies that understanding men's as well as women's experiences through a privileged–oppressed dichotomy neglects complexities and contradictions. Class, race, national, regional, and generational differences 'cross-cut the category "men," spreading the gains and costs of gender relations very unevenly among men' (Connell, 2005: 1809). In this sense, the patriarchal ideal becomes, for many men, difficult

to achieve.

The above discussion is relevant in theorizing the behaviour of men, particularly in relation to their 'reactions' towards women-centred empowerment projects which might be further seen as threatening for men. As Sweetman (2013) observed, 'For the majority of men, there is a level of anxiety around living up to ideals of masculinity' (Sweetman, 2013: 4). Given the effects of neoliberalism on masculinity formation in Latin America, young men may use sport to exercise greater embodied control in order to reaffirm supremacy during an era of uncertainty.

Also, Connell argued that the rationale behind men's resistance towards ending patriarchy 'include the patriarchal dividend . . . and threats to identity that occur with change' (Connell, 2005: 1811). However, Chant (2000) observed that 'the late twentieth century has witnessed growing talk of "men in crisis" . . . with young lower-income males singled out as especially vulnerable to insecurity and marginalisation" (Chant, 2000: 8). For example, in terms of education or obtaining employment, male youth started to fall behind women (Chant, 2000). Therefore, this is becoming perhaps too narrow to only centre on women and empowerment since men, as I discussed within the GAD approach above, can also experience disempowerment.

In the following section, I will discuss the relationship between sport, gender, and development goals, as this is similarly complex and replete with tensions. Given that sport received attention to address women issues, sport scholars also examine the role of sport in empowering women and girls, shedding new light on the process and conceptualization of empowerment through sport-for-development initiatives.

2.3 Gender, sport, and development

Sport has been positioned as 'a new engine' for development which has the potential to support the development of social capital (Burnett, 2006; Spaaij, 2012; Walseth, 2008), facilitate social inclusion (Bailey, 2005; Vermeulen and Verweel, 2009), and cultivate local and community agency (Willis, 2000). The belief in sport as a valuable tool which fosters 'positive' social change and experience has been sustained and promoted by diverse agencies, such as NGOs, (inter)governmental agencies, sport governing bodies and institutions, and transnational corporations (see Giulianotti, 2012). The perceived benefits of sport, shared across these transnational SDP networks, were summarized in the UN Declaration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the following way:

> Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development

> and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives (United Nations, 2015).

From this perspective, positivistic notions of sport in the process of the 'realization of development' or its contribution 'to the empowerment of women' prove to be superficial and dangerous because they mostly neglect how race, class, and gender oppress women in different parts of the world. Young women became targets of development initiatives, such as the Girl Effect initiative led mostly by corporate donors in the West and international organizations, hoping that it is young women and girls who hold the answer to development problems (e.g., Hayhurst, 2013).

From this functionalist perspective, sport seems to possess universal applicability in addressing and achieving social, cultural, educational, health-related, and/or economic development outcomes across different parts of the world. Yet, following Giulianotti (2004), there exist 'significant problems in any argument that considers sport a priori to be a force for human goodness' (Giulianotti, 2004: 356). Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) further suggest that many programmes employing sport as an 'educational tool for otherwise disempowered, marginalized young people' reproduce established social relations rather than contribute to fundamental change and transformation (Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011: 284). In this sense, empowerment as well as sport may both serve as an expression and reproduction of inequalities (see Kabeer, 1999).

In response, the emerging body of literature within feminist scholarship has highlighted a complex picture of sport in the service of gender-specific development goals and provided a basis for retheorizing and critiquing the SDP sector (Brady et al., 2007; Brady and Khan, 2002; Hayhurst et al., 2014; Jeanes and Magee, 2014; Oxford, 2019; Saavedra, 2009; Spaaij, 2013; Zipp, 2017). Scholars critically appraised universalist claims regarding the potential of sport to effect social processes, such as gender equity, as well as social and economic empowerment (Brady et al., 2007; Brady and Khan, 2002; Hayhurst et al., 2014; Jeanes and Magee, 2014; Oxford, 2019; Saavedra, 2009; Spaaij, 2013).

Women centred initiatives, also labeled as sport, gender, and development (SGD) programmes (Hayhurst, 2014), are informed both by the principles of the GAD approach, which work to question the existing gender order and social and gender inequalities, as well as mobilizing sport for the purposes of nurturing broader economic, social, cultural, and political change, thus seeking to incorporate the sport for development and peace objectives.

SFD programmes operate in the broader environment in which women's access to, levels of participation in, and desirable benefits from sport are affected by a particular sociocultural context (Hayhurst et al., 2014; Oxford, 2019; Saavedra, 2009; Zipp, 2017). The critical work of postcolonial feminist scholars demonstrates that development, and particularly SFD initiatives, are not experienced homogenously and emphasize the ways in which capitalism, racism, patriarchy, and heteronormativity reinforce and create inequality within groups of women (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2012).

Jeanes and Magee (2014) and Oxford (2019) argue that the nature of contemporary gender relations and norms is a legacy of colonization which established gender expectations during the colonial era. Following Bhambra (2014), colonization 'disrupted the social patterns, gender relations and cosmological understandings of the communities and societies it invaded' (Bhambra, 2014: 118). Within the context of Latin America, this argument was further explored by Oxford (2019), who analysed the experience of women in Columbia's SDP initiative. In her ethnographic study, she illuminated how gendered cultural hegemony is sustained through SDP programmes, and how prevailing hegemonic gendered social structures are a 'repercussion of the gendered dynamic of colonization' (Oxford, 2019: 13). Oxford draws from Lugones (2007), a decolonial scholar approaching gender, and the gender binary, as a colonial imposition (Lugones, 2007). According to Oxford (2019), the existence of these colonial residues perpetuates as well as reinforces female marginalization in sport and constrains the social inclusion of young Colombian women in the programme due to 'the stereotypes and stigmas connecting sport to heterosexual masculinity and women's homosexuality' (Oxford, 2019: 14).

In this sense, scholars interrogated the notion of a 'global sport sisterhood' and the Eurocentric conceptual frameworks within the gender analysis of development and SDP which homogenize the experiences of women (McDonald, 2018: 198). Women in non-Western contexts are either seen as able to be 'empowered' either in an economic or social sense, which in the Western Eurocentric sense means to 'enable' women to 'release their potential' resulting in 'development' (Hayhurst, 2014), or as 'passive victims' waiting to be saved by 'the generosity of the white, Western donor' (Wilson, 2011: 321). I will discuss this in more detail further in this chapter.

This is not to say that sport programmes do not provide new experiences and potentialities for young women and girls around the world. Feminist scholarship which analyses women-centred SDP initiatives covers a broad range of topics, demonstrating various ways in which sport served to contribute to gender and development goals, such as enhancing girls' and women's health, facilitating their empowerment,

challenging and transforming gender norms, and providing them with leadership opportunities (Hayhurst et al., 2014; Kay, 2009; Saavedra, 2009). Leadership opportunities may especially enable women to launch collective action, which can bring about change.

But, rather than uncritical acceptance of romantic visions of sport's emancipatory potential, it is through adoption of a critical view that we can reveal the limitations of SDP work and avoid an overemphasis on the optimistic quality of sport. Otherwise 'The absence of critical theoretical frameworks . . . may be taken as "proof" of the effectiveness of sport-for-development, but in ways that obscure the relations of power that underpin development inequality, particularly on an international scale' (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2012: 115).

In this way, employing critical approaches to empowerment which are entangled with power proves to be useful in understanding any impacts and outcomes in their context (Mosedale, 2005) while addressing the deeply rooted hegemonic gender relations within the Global South and, moreover, avoiding seeing outcomes as a 'evidence' of the wider phenomenon (Jeanes and Magee, 2014; Saavedra, 2009). Understanding and analysis of empowerment facilitated through SFD requires a critical and nuanced understanding of cultural norms and culturally defined social processes. However, as the following section discusses, SFD is often strongly aligned with neoliberal approaches and pedagogies of empowerment for participants.

2.3.1 Empowerment through sport?

Choice-enhancing and neoliberal empowerment

One of the most significant features of women's participation in development programmes entails the promotion of women's empowerment, especially, but not solely in the Global South (Chawansky, 2011; Forde and Frisby, 2015; Hayhurst, 2014; Samie et al., 2015). Scholars and practitioners have begun to study, analyse, and problematize how empowerment has been used by various actors within SFD as well as investigate the way in which sport serves as a vehicle for promoting gender equity and female empowerment, focusing also on elements such as role models (e.g., Meier, 2015; Meier and Saavedra, 2009) or family in the process of empowerment (Chawansky and Schlenker, 2015).

As I demonstrated above, the meanings of empowerment have changed over time as mainstream development actors adopted this term in a top-down, mostly economic growth manner. Within the SFD field, one line of analysis as regards empowerment is in terms of economic forms of empowerment. For example, Hayhurst (2014) has

revealed the neoliberal constructions of empowerment vis-à-vis gender-focused SDP programmes. She locates her findings within the broader gender and development discussions in which empowerment is criticized for being adopted by 'smart economics' focused on economic growth, whereas responsibility remains on women and their abilities to increase their effectiveness. Her findings documented that while young women gained some degree of autonomy through a social entrepreneurship martial arts programme, this should be taken rather critically in order to recognize that these strategies somewhat encourage young women and girls to become 'equipped to survive in the current global neoliberal climates' and to make independent 'positive' choices, neglecting broader structural and gender inequalities.

Sport programmes which encompass a market-driven neoliberal approach to development promote a form of 'neoliberal self-governance' (Forde and Frisby, 2015). As the above study of Hayhurst's suggested, one of the critiques of gender-focused SFD initiatives is that they put an exclusive focus on women and girls, who are required to change in order to become more 'resilient' and 'capable' (Chawansky, 2011; Hayhurst, 2011; Samie et al., 2015). Authors advocating GAD also criticized the mainstream economic empowerment narratives in which a woman is represented as a 'self-actualising individual who, through the market, acquires new-found "capabilities" and "choices"' (Cornwall, 2018). This critique was embraced by SFD scholars, who demonstrate that SFD programmes employ these strategies and require women to take individual responsibility for their well-being and also discipline them to become autonomous and to make their own choices regardless of the broader sociocultural factors (Forde and Frisby, 2015; Hayhurst, 2014).

Hence, one of the buzzwords coupled with empowerment efforts is 'choice-enhancing'. Neoliberal empowerment discourse and practice have been celebrated for 'enabling women to make choices' which are thought to have a spillover effect but, as, for example, Kabeer (1999) discusses, certain choices are not significant, and, furthermore, certain choices are normatively expected of women (Cornwall and Brock, 2005).

Furthermore, efforts to expand the choices of young women and economically empower them through microcredit programmes does not 'liberate' them from systems which confine them to other's choices. The critique is that this approach reinforces the power relations which GAD and feminists have been addressing. More precisely, the form of empowerment as 'choice-expansion' is neither relational nor transformative. This point is reflected by Drydyk (2013) in the following way:

> The new idea of empowerment as choice-expansion is neither relational nor transformative; it has no connotations referring to gender relations or other power relations; nor does it imply any transformation of social

> relations. Thus, to advocate empowerment in this new sense is no longer to advocate transformation of gender relations (Drydyk, 2013: 250).

Hence, the efforts to empower women in the sense of providing them with choice-enhancing resources so they become able to make choices does little to transform existing structures and gender relations. Moreover, as appointed by Drydyk, such an approach fails to understand gender as relational and positions women and girls as those whose gender identities need to be altered. This argument was further evident and interrogated by SFD feminist scholars (see Chawansky, 2011; Forde and Frisby, 2015; Hayhurst et al., 2014). For instance, Hayhurst et al. (2014) observed that the Ugandan programme had a tendency 'to ignore gender as a relational category by framing girls as having gendered identities that need to be augmented or changed (ie through sport).' 'Thus', she went on, 'the onus seems to be on the girls to change their behaviours, actions and attitudes in order to achieve gender equality, while ignoring the need to enlist men and boys to accomplish this same feat' (Hayhurst, 2011: 534).

It is evident that while the programme was committed to teaching girls confidence and leadership skills, women and girls were understood as those who must overcome gender norms in order to be 'empowered'. Such an approach and overemphasis placed on women's transformation rarely address the dominant gender hierarchies which lead to the oppression of girls and women in the first place (Chawansky, 2011; Hayhurst, 2011). What I hope to show within this study is that young women do not necessarily perceive themselves as those who 'need to change' and do not always perceive their subordinated position as an individual problem but a collective one, which then offers more opportunities for change.

Another example regarding overemphasis on women, which also examines the notion of empowerment, is the study of Forde and Frisby (2015). The authors present a critical feminist discourse analysis of the Live Safe, Play Safe manual and emphasize that the manual constructed girls in contradictory ways within 'empowerment and deficiency discourses'. Following the authors, the manual positions young women as 'having the potential to be empowered'; however, they put themselves at risk 'if they are not able to manage their bodies and behave morally in their new subject positions' (Forde and Frisby, 2015: 892). This framing aligned not only with a neoliberal construction of girlhood but by requiring women to 'manage their bodies'; it is also strongly embedded within the normative ideals of behaviour and choice. Moreover, encouraging young women to be active in HIV prevention and take individual responsibility for their well-being as a precondition for creating 'successful' life projects implies them to be the ones who conform to gender and sexual norms. While the

authors criticize the way in which young women were portrayed within the manual, SFD is a vivid terrain, and other initiatives may employ a more critical and reflexive approach toward empowerment which encompasses a more complex approach toward gender and sexuality.

There is also another problematic aspect that Forde and Frisby (2015) but also others have emphasized. Put briefly, within the current neoliberal gender-specific development goals, it is young women who become responsible for the complex process of gender equality, their own empowerment, and, consequently, for broader social change (Hayhurst, 2014). They are encouraged to 'avoid' or 'manage' risks; they are being taught how to act, live, and make decisions. This might cause a false impression that women's empowerment has been achieved, whereas this narrow women-centred individualistic vision limits potentialities to address boys' social privilege and the masculine oriented SDP structure (Chawansky, 2011; Forde and Frisby, 2015; Hayhurst et al., 2014; Oxford and Spaaij, 2019). As demonstrated above, encouraging only women to take responsibility for their lives makes boys invisible. This aligns with the GAD principles, which theoretically focuses on gender relations, but, in practice, the term 'gender', incorporated within this perspective, implies exclusively women.

This trend presents, however, several implications for SFD research and practice. First, the exclusive emphasis on women reinforces the idea of men as perpetrators of violence and prevents critical analysis of the ways in which men position themselves regarding an idealized version of masculinity (Connell, 2005). In a similar way, as an analysis of the position of women should be based on the realities of their lives rather than on a generalized assumption that they are oppressed (Mosedale, 2005: 245), gender analysis also needs to disentangle men from the assumptions that they are those who practice the oppression of women. As I will address below, and this is the second point, excluding men from the debates strengthens heteronormative framings within development and SFD (see Carney and Chawansky, 2016) by conveying the message that women are only targets of violence while neglecting sexual and gender-based violence against men in different settings (see Hayhurst et al., 2014). As summarized by Seal and Sherry (2018), including boys and men in sports activities may serve to gain a better understanding of how SDP programmes influence structures beyond the immediate, interpersonal level (Seal and Sherry, 2018). As a reaction to the current state of art in this area, I argue that a more complex understanding of empowerment beyond the girl-only focus is needed.

Before I discuss sexuality and heteronormativity in more detail, I will critically examine other meanings and conceptualizations of empowerment which have been

incorporated from mainstream development into the SFD field.

Sport and empowerment: Beyond the economic dimension

Together with empowerment as economic, SFD scholars also focus on empowerment in a more of social sense as well as the role of sport and leisure in this process. Advocates for girls' and women's sports argue that sports empower girls and women by improving self-esteem and promoting self-confidence. This consequently translates into developing leadership and confidence in their own abilities and, therefore, challenge gender stereotypes and power imbalances in society.

Yet, feminist scholarship on SFD has problematized the role of sport itself in the process of women's empowerment and put the concept under scrutiny. One of the scholars who adopted a critical stance toward empowerment through sport was Saavedra (2009). According to her, 'seeking to empower females through sport is somewhat paradoxical given that the world of sport can be a bastion for male privilege and power' (Saavedra, 2009: 124). This is a familiar refrain for critical scholars of sport. As Pfister (2010) recalls, 'The gender of sport in the past was clearly and conspicuously masculine', and women were allowed only to participate in sports considered as 'suitable' and 'not harmful for them' (Pfister, 2010: 234).

Hence, deeper thinking about women centred programmes requires a return to competing paradigms within development: WID and GAD. In her study, Chawansky (2011) observes that dominant approaches to SFD programmes aim to either 'empower' females in girls-only settings or seek to allow sporting access for girls in mixed-gender settings (Chawansky, 2011). Women's access to sports and their increasing sports participation is understood as a result of the liberal democratic ideology of the latter half of the twentieth century, centred as it was on issues of equal opportunities, socialization practices, and legal/institutional reform (Caudwell, 2011; Dworkin and Messner, 2002; Hargreaves, 2002, 1990; Scraton et al., 1999). Therefore, many programmes are entangled with a limitation on Western feminist approaches to empowerment as articulated within the WID strategy in that they provide access to girls and women.

Although liberal feminism brought more opportunities for women to participate, it is evident that relying on the role of sport in promoting gender equality through empowerment is problematic, or, using the words of Saavedra (2009), 'paradoxical' given that sport is still a gendered space. Access itself and equal opportunities does not guarantee women will be able to engage in sport in a meaningful way. The institution of sport is constructed by and for men's interests (Larneby, 2016; Messner, 2002), where women are systematically devalued and oppressed (e.g., Goellner

et al., 2016) and are required to adapt to, and fit in with, prevalent sport ideologies, structures, and practices (Pfister, 2010).

This point, especially in terms of devaluation and oppression, was echoed by SFD feminist scholars. They have demonstrated that there are restrictions and constraints originating from the diverse realities of girls' lives across different geographical, religious, and cultural contexts (e.g. Hayhurst, Giles, and Radforth, 2015; Hayhurst et al., 2014; Oxford, 2019; Samie et al., 2015; Seal and Sherry, 2018; Zipp, 2017). Yet, barriers in empowering women and girls through SFD has resulted also from the historical connection of sport and norms of masculinity, where the presence of women is seen as a transgression of masculinist norms. For instance, Shehu (2010) argues, in numerous sub-Saharan countries, the presence of women in sport is viewed as a threat to the gender order in which women subsequently 'become targets of toxic myths, stigmas, and harassment in sport spaces to perpetuate the domination of these spaces by heterosexual, masculine males' (Shehu, 2010: x).

Hayhurst et al. (2014) further explore how gender relations were influenced when exploring how empowerment was facilitated by a martial arts programme facilitated by an NGO in a rural Ugandan context in which domestic and gender-based violence were widespread issues. The authors suggest that the young women's participation in the programme challenged gender norms and improved young women's confidence. Yet their findings on the programme also revealed negative consequences for the lives of female participants'. Women's involvement in combative sport offered by the initiative was deemed as culturally inapt for women. Although women employed various strategies to resist this opposition to their participation, they suffered verbal abuse from community and family members, interpreting the programmes' efforts in terms of 'preparing the young women for war and "removing their reproductive organs"' (Hayhurst et al., 2014: 163).

In this way, programmes which aim to empower women through sport considerably contribute to the girls' subordination and perpetuate the patriarchal structure. Moreover, through SDP interventions, women become beneficiaries of 'lessons in empowerment' (McDonald, 2018), particularly self-governing strategies facilitated by Western donors and development stakeholders. This obscures the negative consequences of empowerment efforts. For example, empowering women through SFD initiatives can paradoxically lead women to become further marginalized and disempowered within their community as those who are about to lose power resist female empowerment (see Meier and Saavedra, 2009).

With the exception of some feminist scholars within the SDP field, there has still been a noticeable lack of studies focusing on boys' and men's experiences while

involved in gender programmes (see Hayhurst et al., 2014; Oxford, 2019; Seal and Sherry, 2018). Although not systematic, men were necessarily involved in some feminist analyses of girl-only SDP programmes, revealing how the exclusion of boys may lead to girls' subordination (Hayhurst et al., 2014). While these studies claim gender must be relational, they somewhat reproduce the notion of men as impediments to female empowerment, the point addressed also within the GAD approach (Chant, 2000). More precisely, they documented men's realities only in terms of the negative aspects of their interactions with women. Empowerment should not be employed as a taken for granted concept and process encompassing only women's realities. As scholars from mainstream development alleged, men are necessary in the struggles and sustainability of gender equality, and therefore, deeper insights and understanding of the male perception of power and female empowerment beyond the negative aspects will add another and new dimension to theorizing empowerment within the SFD field which is currently lacking.

Some of the SFD literature attempts to couple empowerment with power, drawing more systematically from broader feminist development literature beyond the economic form of empowerment. For example, Jeanes and Magee (2014) employ the concept of empowerment to explore the experiences of women in Zambia, specifically exploring the programme and its role in countering exclusion and marginalization. They draw from Rowlands (1997) and her dimensions of power and suggest varying experiences of personal empowerment as a result of girls' participation in the programme, amongst them are gaining physical strength, well-being, confidence, and security, factors which contributed to feelings of ability to exert greater control over their own lives. However, due to broader culture expectations, the authors identified an inability among young women to disrupt what Rowlands (1997) determines as 'power over' (Jeanes and Magee, 2014: 146) as women's football participation was compromised by household tasks.

Samie et al. (2015) explore the experiences of empowerment, agency, and the voice of women in the Global South who participated in a global sports mentoring project and look at how women interpret empowerment within their experiences before and after participation in the project. The authors explore 'the multiple ways in which women fought for, negotiated and asserted power within their lives', and how their understandings of female empowerment were broadened, challenged, and impacted—either negatively or positively. They, for example, suggest, that women's efforts to become 'empowered agents of change' were 'underscored by neoliberalism and unequal gender relations in work/economic systems' (Samie et al., 2015: 934).

Amidst these debates, empowerment is always an individual and personal ex-

perience. Liberal feminism does not allow us to distinguish between uses of agency and thus of thinking in terms of the transformatory significance of women's agency. Employing the concept of empowerment entangled with power will offer an opportunity to explore and understand not merely whether women are able to challenge traditional gender norms, and as a result enter sport and masculine football, but move beyond the SFD context as well and reveal the diverse and contradictory processes of negotiation that led to these results. And those are impossible to capture through predetermined categories which Western actors utilize to measure women's empowerment. Here, cultural understandings and discourses are necessary to be centralized when theorizing empowerment through senses other than that of economic growth. The questions which arose are not solely whether they participate but how they participate and what role do SFD initiatives play in that process.

In addition to a critical interrogation of access and equal opportunities of women and girls to sport when studying and analysing issues of women's empowerment, aspects of the liberal approach to gender are also problematic when we realize how other social signifiers, such as class, race, whiteness, sexuality, and heteronormativity, are responsible for the different positioning of women and men and, therefore, their disempowerment. Gender and sporting experiences must thus be understood, as Caudwell (2011) reminds, in relation to difference and non-shared gendered identities. As Mosedale (2005) previously recalled, a woman's level of empowerment will vary according to criteria such as her class, ethnicity, age, and family position.

This point also connects with the feminist critique regarding the historical linkage of football and masculinity. Why this is relevant to consider in understanding access for women to sport is that these notions also affect how young women participate. Female footballers in particular are susceptible targets of lesbian labelling. Their involvement in sport is controlled and restricted through their need to present a 'hetero-sexy' image (Griffin et al., 1998; Lenskyj, 1990), or as Caudwell (2003) describes, women are exposed to a 'regulation of the order woman-feminine-heterosexual' (Caudwell, 2003).

With its centrality to the body and physical performance, sport has been seen as a site for the construction and confirmation of gender ideologies (Theberge, 1993: 312). As such, the inclusion of women in sport does not automatically lead to the disintegration of gender dichotomies. However, sport and feminist scholars have also pointed to the dual potential of sport to transform gender relations. Sport, and particularly football, is a context in which specific 'masculine' attributes are valued and reproduced but in which dominant norms can also be challenged and resisted.

That said, sport serves both as a site for cultural transgression as well as hege-

monic images of the inevitability of gender differences. In other words, conformity and resistance to the dominant norms and values are not mutually exclusive but coexist together (see Aitchison, 2007; Knijnik, 2015; Pfister, 2010). The understanding of female engagement in football and other sports in dialectical struggle between empowerment/resistance and domination/exclusion ignore the ways that women but also men experience these sports, predominantly football, as sites of renegotiations of social relations and traditional notions of masculinity and femininity. Studies thus suggest ambivalences in the construction of gender rather than disintegration of gender dichotomies.

Regarding Brazil, the situation around access and sport participation, as well as broader cultural expectations, might be similarly tense, as I discussed in the introductory chapter, with continuities and discontinuities having marked female football in Brazil. While these continuities are clearly visible on an elite level, they are reflected as well in the situations which occur on the grassroots level of SFD programmes. Allowing sporting access to young women, in which, in the context of patriarchy, they were historically banned from participating, means that young women must negotiate and *overcome* many barriers until they get to the project. Yet, women not only negotiate entrance to these programmes, which are supposedly 'inclusive' for women, but these negotiations are ongoing, not the final result. In other words, their participation within the project might be marked by continuities and discontinuities in following sense: They start to participate but broader social and gender orders might not let them stay within the programme or can intensify gender inequalities when, for example, families put new burdens on women, such as more domestic work, to ensure that gender norms remain constant (Jeanes and Magee, 2014).

This means that the cultural context is relevant in challenging some prevailing assumptions around empowerment which might reflect a Eurocentric, Western notion. For these reasons, in what follows, I will critically examine neocolonial tendencies within SFD, that is, the tensions between Northern/Western donor priorities and visions of 'empowerment' and its local interpretations.

2.3.2 What counts as empowerment? Thinking beyond

Using sport as a tool for empowerment is highly problematic given the normative culture of sport in which dominant gender hierarchies may be perpetuated. However, it is also problematic to determine what counts as empowerment. Following Nicholls et al. (2011), Northern academic institutions, donor agencies, and policymakers are in a privileged position to shape what is considered as relevant and valid evidence of

the effectiveness of SFD programmes (see also Kay, 2012). In a similar way, Coakley (2011) is concerned that in parts of the world with low standards of living, sport is utilized by SDP programmes as a 'hook on which to hang socializing experiences that promote forms of personal development valued by the sponsoring organization and its staff' (Coakley, 2011: 314).

This is illustrated, for example, in the work of Spaaij et al. (2016). They draw from Freirean pedagogy to explore the nature of transformative action and the way in which it is fostered within SDP programmes. As the authors suggest, the external funding agencies did not view success in the same terms as the local initiative. While the outcomes, such as obtaining parental approval to participate in the programme, were understood by young women and local stakeholders as a meaningful achievement, they were not recognized in the same way by external funding agencies that wanted to see young women 'empowered' and witness significant change in attitudes towards gender equality within the local community Spaaij et al. (2016). These findings are of great importance also for my analysis of sport for development in Brazil.

Within the SDP sector, young people's voices are neglected in policy development, but there is also a danger of Western hegemonic institutions imposing a certain (Western, White) vision of behaviour and social change and, therefore, also of development and empowerment (Darnell et al., 2019). The donor–recipient relationship within the SDP movement is widely criticized for being a 'one-directional flow of both tangible and less tangible resources' coming from the Global North, such as 'knowledge transfer, ideologies, and western practices and values' (Mwaanga and Banda, 2014: 174). As Mwaanga and Banda (2014) continue, colonial tendencies which perpetuate the assumptions that the power to define 'reality' as well as to what is 'evidence' is situated only within Western discourses (Hayhurst, 2009; Mwaanga and Banda, 2014).

While not focusing on gender issues, Mwaanga and Banda (2014) explore through a postcolonial perspective local sub-Saharan cultural discourses and their lack of inclusion during the design and implementation of the SDP programme. As they alleged, Global North worldviews, based on processes upon which individual interests are placed above the interests of others, were inconsistent with communal African life, where aspects such as social connectedness, individual participation in community, and mutual support were essential elements in the collective empowerment of SDP participants. For example, one of the aspects they highlighted was the role of personal participation in community, suggesting that 'voluntary participation in community programmes can be an indicator of empowerment' (Mwaanga and Banda, 2014: 176).

More specifically, the authors use the term 'sport empowerment' in their study, which was recognized as a beneficial achievement for marginalized groups participating in SDP interventions. Through the postcolonial critique, their findings demonstrate, first, that cultural aspects are a necessary basis upon which to achieve collective empowerment in and through sport and SFD, and, second, that they destabilize the Eurocentric assumption by demonstrating the participants' active role in the process of empowerment—more precisely, participants as both 'knowledgeable and agentic', who 'proactively engage with the conditions and consequences of their personal circumstances, carving out their own forms of empowerment within (and against) the confines of the wider culture' (Mwaanga and Banda, 2014: 187). These are important insights as they differentiate from other approaches toward empowerment based on a neoliberal pedagogy which overlooks the role of community life and the role of participants in the empowerment process.

Another critique toward top-down policies and development strategies is that policies and practices promoted by Western-dominated institutions provoke mismatches between donors' expectations and their development ambitions and community members who are affected by development projects. In addition to the studies above, Jeanes and Magee (2014) and Guest (2009) also provided examples of how development ambitions do not always align with the expectations of participants themselves.

More specifically, Jeanes and Magee (2014) illustrate the complexity and tension of the role of sport in promoting gender equity and female empowerment in Zambia. Young women had the expectation of becoming professional players and developing their athletic skills. And while they wished to challenge gender stereotypes, they believed it was hard to achieve through participation in the programme. There appears to be a disparity between what the young women desired from the project, what they recognized as 'achievable', and what funding agencies wanted them to become.

Disruption of the existing social order is required for major changes to occur. In this regard, while women appreciated the opportunity to play football, the impact regarding women's empowerment beyond the immediate participation setting is hard to achieve. In light of the increasing demands for 'hard evidence' of achievements, SFD experiences which matter for locals but are not measurable or desired by donors might be reclassified as a 'failure' for not meeting the development goals.

Another study which illustrates why local understanding and context should be central in formulating SDP interventions is study of Hayhurst (2016) from Uganda. She employed a postcolonial feminist perspective and disclosed that empowerment was not understood homogeneously; however, its meaning and interpretations varied

in relation to the context and social position of the interviewee. For example, the term 'empowerment' was rather absent from the daily vocabulary of staff members in Uganda, filling the term with their own meanings and understandings. By contrast, other actors—mainly staff from the international organizations—appropriated the term ambiguously, which also emphasized to an extent the role of young women and their agency in the process of empowerment. This emphasis was still embedded within the Western cultural frameworks of empowerment in the sense of being something to be bestowed on to others, or more precisely, 'to be given to a girl who is marginalised and in need of "development"' (Hayhurst, 2016: 12). These contrasting and multifaceted understandings across the SDP aid network demonstrate the need to reconsider and critically reflect on how phenomena, such as empowerment through sport, might be appropriated differently in diverse contexts in which the term is used but is also not part of the traditional lexicon.

It is important to recognize such a limitation in SFD, to look at how local meanings reshape the sport for development endeavour, and to analyse the diversity of experiences on an individual as well as community level. Outcomes and experiences generated by SFD programmes might go far beyond equity and gender empowerment. Darnell and Hayhurst (2011) argued as follows:

> Prioritizing shared 'local' understandings of development issues remains paramount within a decolonizing methodology . . . for example if the targets of sports based development programs . . . are principally concerned with getting jobs, it may be unreasonable for decolonizing activism 'based on sport' to make the most important contribution (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011: 192).

Amidst these discussions regarding empowerment, which stand at the crossroads of donor priorities versus participant expectations, were we to fragment empowerment itself and name the types of empowerment, such as economic or social, it still might be far from the notion of empowerment as imagined and desired by local communities. As a number of studies above have documented, imposing Western ideas on Global South populations, and women in particular, and neglecting the role of culture in the process of empowerment as well as the active role of participants who use cultural tools at their disposal, eventually may lead to incongruities and misunderstandings. Following the words of Spaaij et al. (2016), it 'may lead to a negative appearance or false representation' as a result of imposing 'narrow goals and performance indicators' on community-based organizations (Spaaij et al., 2016: 581). For these reasons, Samie et al. (2015), amongst others, advocated that attempts at

development as well as empowerment 'should be "by the people", as opposed to being designed for them' (Samie et al., 2015: 933). This encompasses understanding the role of SFD initiatives as facilitating empowerment rather than actually 'empowering' others.

Studies in this section provided important insights which are necessary to consider in order to move beyond instrumental Western based approaches toward empowerment and to destabilize Global North ways of thinking which understand empowerment as something that can be bestowed rather than facilitated by SFD initiatives and which also overlook the broader context. SFD scholars have documented that there is an economic dimension to empowerment as well as a cultural one which emphasizes aspects such as participation, community life, and social interaction. Yet, given its importance and the centrality of the category of empowerment within the broader development discourse and practice, the use of empowerment as a theoretical lens within SFD scholarship is still limited, particularly in terms of 'knowledge of the social processes and mechanisms underpinning intended empowerment outcome(s)' which, following Mwaanga and Banda (2014), 'remain elusive perhaps due to the limited theoretical studies in this area' (Mwaanga and Banda, 2014: 177). This lack of understanding concerning the processes and mechanisms which constitute empowerment was also identified by scholars within broader development.

I also argue that if sport is understood as a space to challenge gender hierarchies, as well as discourses associated with masculinity and femininity, attention needs to be expanded from a focus on women as reproducing or resisting masculine norms to a more nuanced understanding of empowerment, gendered behaviour, and the complexities of men's experiences. A more complex understanding will allow for the inclusion of men and a more complex approach to gender. It is in the next section that I discuss heteronormativity and queer issues.

2.3.3 Heteronormativity and queer in sport

Historically, sport has been a repressive place for queer individuals (Landi, 2018) in addition to being a site where hegemonic masculinity has been identified as a privileged position of heterosexuality (Messner and Sabo, 1994). Research on sport and sexuality is a growing field which examines homophobia and heterosexism (Blinde and Taub, 1992; Griffin et al., 1998; Krane, 1998), queer resistance to sexual/gender domination (Broad, 2001), women's sport and sexuality (Caudwell, 2007; Lenskyj, 1990), and the effect of queer visibility on sport (Eng, 2007). Pronger (2000) and Griffin et al. (1998) remind us that sport remains generally hostile to the visible presence of sexual minorities who have often avoided participation in sport given the dom-

inance of heterosexism and homophobia engrained in sport. Several authors draw from queer theory to critically investigate queer topics, such as discourses regarding heterosexual femininity (Lock, 2007), gay men's sporting masculinities (Wellard, 2007), and queer men's desire in physical education (Landi, 2019).

While, within the broader context of sport sociology, using queer theory is deemed a 'radical development in sports studies . . . which undermines the hegemony of heteronormativity' (Caudwell, 2007: ix), there is a lack of research addressing queer experiences within the context of sport for development programmes. Yet, some authors have already engaged in discussions of heteronormativity, queer, and SDP (Carney and Chawansky, 2016; Chawansky, 2015; Forde and Frisby, 2015; Oxford, 2019).

For example, Chawansky (2015) utilized autoethnographic vignettes to offer a feminist interpretation of the body in sport for development through which she raises issues of sexism, heterosexism, and queer sexuality within the SDP field. In another study, Oxford and Spaaij (2019) suggest that, while SDP in Colombia 'appears to open up a space for women to embody gender in resistant ways', their findings reveal that the initiative is infused with heteronormative practices which exclude different identities (Oxford and Spaaij, 2019: 16). In other words, it is due to 'heteronormative social standards' that young women face restrictions on playing sport in Colombia.

Still, the issues of queer and sexuality are amongst those that are not sufficiently addressed within SFD. Carney and Chawansky (2016) refer to 'the confusing absence and presence' of sexuality within SFD projects and research, which means that the queer desire, relationships, and subjectivities are absent or are rarely the only focus of an investigation within SDP literature (Carney and Chawansky, 2016: 288). Forde and Frisby (2015) also observed silence on queer experiences in the manual regarding women and sexual education. Using a feminist discourse analysis on an SDP organization manual employed in its programme, Forde and Frisby (2015) identify the lack of discussions related to sexuality as well as highlight the 'universal and simplified conceptions of gendered identities and sexual relations' (Forde and Frisby, 2015: 888).

Representations of gender in development manuals went against feminist efforts which seek to address a more complex approach when dealing with gender. The authors emphasize rather dominant approaches to development which work within the simplified notion of the heterosexual family unit. In this way, while the GAD approach was supposed to react toward critiques of imposed Western values and the homogenization of women, the silence on sexuality reinforces the same power relations which the GAD approach has been seeking to destabilize (Mohanty, 1984). As Carney and Chawansky (2016), drawing from Menon (2005), suggests, silence on

sexuality projects a distorted view of culture and society in the Global South, that is, 'the marginalization of sexuality by feminists is indicative of a broader ignorance of the hierarchy of oppressions affecting women' (Carney and Chawansky, 2016: 291).

This thesis, partially informed by queer theory, also analyses the experiences of participants who take part in a project which focus on queer issues. It is not primarily intended to examine the multiple ways in which the participants in the study perform their sexualities. Rather, the queer lens is useful in understanding how queer participants experience SFD programmes which address gender as well as sexuality issues as part of their missions. Using the queer lens alongside the feminist geographers may extend the current understanding regarding heteronormativity, safe space, and sport for development outcomes. As I will discuss, initiatives addressing sexuality issues might not exclude different identities, but the delivery of the programme is fused with new challenges.

2.3.4 Queer, sexuality, and space

Emerging from lesbian and gay identity politics (see Beemyn, 1996; Seidman, 1994; Warner et al., 1993) and influenced by post-structural thought and the critique of a stable, unified humanist identity, queer theory has obtained multiple meanings, 'from a merely useful shorthand way to speak of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered studies to a theoretical sensibility that pivots on transgression or permanent rebellion' (Seidman, 1994: 173). As Alexander (2008) puts it:

> [Queer] is used not only as a gendered identity location but as resistance to orthodoxy— expounding, elaborating, and promoting alternative ways of being, knowing, and narrating experience—through scholarship, through embodied being, through social and political interventions in regimes of the normal (Alexander, 2008: 108).

While some previous approaches to queer theory explored the formation and reproduction of heterosexualities (see Adams, 1997; Katz, 2007), as Warner et al. (1993) write, queer defines 'itself against the normal rather than heterosexual' (Warner et al., 1993: xxvi). In other words, queer theorists are concerned with deconstructing heteronormativity rather than heterosexuality. Berlant and Warner (1998) describe heteronormativity as encompassing 'the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent—that is, organized as a sexuality—but also privileged' (Berlant and Warner, 1998: 548). Furthermore, heteronormativity is related to the normalization of social life as not only

heterosexual but also married, monogamous, White, and upper-middle class (Brandzel, 2005).

It is important to recall here that heteronormativity is not equivalent to heterosexuality. Heterosexuality and homosexuality represent categories of knowledge, 'a language that frames what we know as bodies, desires, sexualities, identities' (Seidman, 1994: 174). This language is normative, enacting moral boundaries and political hierarchies.

The queer perspective calls into question the stability of identities based on binary categories and allows us to envision these identities as fluid, changeable, and open to renegotiation (McDonald, 2013: 131). Butler (1990) and her theory of gender performativity has been crucial to the development of queer theory as it complicates notions of fixed categories and emphasizes its unstable and fluid nature. According to Butler, there is not an original or pre-existing model from which gender and sexual identities are derived, rather, they are the results of the repeated performance of cultural signs and conventions (Butler, 1993; Valocchi, 2005). More precisely, subjects internalize the norms generated by the discourse of sexuality and gender disseminated by social institutions and thus become recognizable gendered subjects; they are also, however, 'retroactively produced by these norms in their repetition, precisely as their effect' (Butler, 1993: 22). Thus, queer theorists reject the binary distinction between homo and heterosexual and view the homosexual subject as performative.

The analysis of the experiences of those whose 'bodies and sexual desires do not fit the dominant standards of gender and sexuality' (Beemyn, 1996: 5) cannot be isolated from the reference to cultural and ideological discourses that give it meaning. Sexuality is inserted within the social, political, and economic structures, and issues related to both sexual health and sexual rights are never evenly distributed across territories, countries, and population groups. They are instead 'systematically shaped by multiple forms of structural violence', including social inequalities, poverty, and economic exploitation, racism and ethnically based exclusion, gender, and sexual oppression. Thus, their detrimental impact is experienced by groups and populations which are already marginalized and/or oppressed within society (Corrêa et al., 2008).

Scholarship on geography, and specifically, feminist geographers (e.g. Bell, 1995; Bell et al., 2001; Hartal, 2018; Valentine, 2000; Valentine and Duncan, 1996) recognize the centrality of sexuality in the production of space. They have demonstrated how sexuality and space are interconnected, that is, how sexuality is constructed amidst daily interactions in particular places, and how those interactions sexualize space (Bell, 1995; Bell et al., 2001; Held, 2015).

Research in space and sexuality has established that space is actively produced as

heterosexual and heteronormative. As Binnie (1997) explains, space is not 'naturally authentically "straight" but rather actively produced and (hetero)sexualized' (Binnie, 1997: 223). A similar view is taken by Held (2015), who suggests that while everyday spaces in both the public and private sphere are 'constituted as heterosexual through repetitive heterosexual performances' (Held, 2015: 35), spaces are not produced in a singular or uniform way, they are intertwined with multiple contradictions and tensions. Boulila (2016) theorizes comfort as 'spatial technology' which enables subjects to occupy and create spaces (Boulila, 2016: 134). Moreover, safe spaces may serve as important for those who are at risk of prejudice, discrimination, and a diverse range of violence, yet might still generate exclusions within particular groups given intersecting differences, such as class, sexuality, gender, and race (Held, 2015; Kawale, 2004).

In this regard, Collective (2014) points to the 'paradoxical nature' inherent to safe spaces—as a site of resistance still simultaneously and paradoxically creating internal barriers, foregrounding differences, binaries, and leading to alienating experiences (Collective, 2014; Hartal, 2018). For theorizing the 'safe space' category and sport, it is also useful to look at Lefebvre (1991) and his understanding of space as 'fluid, constructed, and constantly altered' (Ravel and Rail, 2007: 405) and, specifically, his conceptualization of social space understood both as the medium and outcome of social relations (Van Ingen, 2003).

2.4 Conclusion

In light of changing trends on the global scale which couple development efforts with women's empowerment, in this thesis, my aim is to extend these debates and explore how development initiatives that use sport as a tool for personal development and collective benefit contribute to the processes in which women recognize systemic forces that oppress them and act to change existing power relationships (Batliwala, 1994).

I start from the point that development programmes are not inherently positive and beneficial. This is important, 'as empowerment is a process and the result of that process' (Batliwala, 1994: 13). It needs to be understood as embedded in relations of power and as a multilevel 'theoretical construct that occurs both at individual and collective level' (León, 1997; Mwaanga and Banda, 2014; Sardenberg, 2008; Sen and Grown, 1987).

Amidst the discussion presented above, it is clear that categories of development, gender, and empowerment have become a subject of dispute. There has been wide

acknowledgement of the controversial notion of the idea of 'development' understood and treated as a 'dominant discourse of western modernity' (Mwaanga and Banda, 2014: 174) as well as gender as not merely only one category through which we analyse Global South women's experience (Mohanty, 1984).

In this chapter I have analysed the ways in which the concept of empowerment has been incorporated into mainstream development, demonstrating that the conceptual vagueness of empowerment has allowed it to be 'used and abused' by vastly different actors usually employing different development strategies (Parpart et al., 2002). More precisely, some have assimilated the term in the narrow sense, promoting self-help strategies and measuring women's empowerment through economic development, whereas others have advocated for strategies of empowerment linked to social justice in order to disrupt existing structures of domination responsible for exclusion, poverty, and the disempowerment of women.

In addition to these competing notions of empowerment, there have been debates about how to theorize, define, achieve, and evaluate development and empowerment. On the one hand, empowerment comes from Global South women who might not use the term but have met around common goals to address female oppression, press for change, and collectively bring about that change—and in their individual lives as well. On the other hand, recalling Cornwall and Brock (2005), the concept has been assimilated through individual and Western rooted understandings that are neoliberal, instrumental, and top-down.

The debates over empowerment and mainstream development theories has impacted the field of SFD research. Recent empirical studies across a number of different contexts have expressed notable concern about instrumentalized, neoliberal, individualistic, economic, and social entrepreneurial tendencies. They also documented a tendency of SFD's gender-focused initiatives to impose a Western notion of empowerment on Global South women who appear as anything other than within the three overlapping, simplistic, and contradictory constructions: First, they are seen as passive and waiting to be saved by Western donors; second, they are seen as 'holding the potential to be empowered', which requires them to comply with norms and fit into a social order without addressing male privilege; and third, more in an economic sense, women are self-reliant agents who are expected to release their potential and bring an answer to broader development issues, mainly poverty reduction.

Furthermore, while I agree with Saavedra (2009) that using sport to empower women sounds paradoxical given that sport as an institution is entangled in the production of masculinity, in examining the role and position of women in sport activities, I pay attention to women's and men's perception of existing gender differences

and explore how young participants explain inequalities and differences between men and women. How do these women define empowerment? How do these projects affect them?

Moreover, women of the Global South have been diversely positioned within SFD research and mainstream development, tending to ignore gender as a relational category that excludes addressing men's privilege and their role within the process of empowerment. Gendered empowerment is however, a relational issue and to investigate empowerment (through sport) theoretically requires acknowledgement that gender as well as women's empowerment cannot be approached as an isolated phenomenon but should also include men. Any change in the social position of women has clear implications for men (Chant, 2000; Connell, 1995). Moreover, if sport is understood as a space to challenge gender hierarchies, as well as discourses associated with masculinity and femininity, attention needs to be expanded from a focus on women as reproducing or resisting masculine norms to a more nuanced understanding of empowerment, gendered behaviour, and the complexities of men's experiences.

Yet, with the exception of some feminist scholars within the SFD field, there has still been a noticeable lack of studies focusing on boys' and men's experience while involved in gender programmes (e.g., Seal and Sherry, 2018). When men were involved in some feminist analysis of girl-only SFD programmes, it was rather unsystematically. In this sense, these conceptualizations of empowerment appear as taken-for-granted and as a process which encompasses only women. While it is important to address the realities of male privilege and emphasize the acts of domination in which some men engage inside and outside of sport programmes, this is perhaps too narrow and fails to encompass the category of men with more complexity. The current studies have documented only the negative aspects of males' interactions with women, as those who contribute to girls' subordination and hinder their broader empowerment (see Hayhurst et al., 2014). But how do men experience SFD programmes, and gender-specific programmes in particular?

I suggest that research on empowerment and development needs to pay much closer attention to the practices of men and historical interplay between masculinities and femininities. Including men and masculinity in the SDP feminist analysis of the empowerment process may allow researchers to reconceptualize some of the current understanding of gender relations and enrich the theoretical underpinnings of empowerment—a widely accepted goal within the development field, however, still underexplored by SFD scholars. The literature which has emerged to date has neglected to address issues of empowerment in more depth. Moreover, the analysis of how these kinds of programmes impact gender relations and broader relationships

among young women, their families, and communities are also rather rare.

Including men can enrich the concept of empowerment as it fails to encompass men and their vulnerabilities at the expense of focusing predominantly on women only. In this sense, exploring issues of empowerment but grounded in gender relations and power, that is, linked also to men and masculinity, present a new direction and fill the gap in the current literature in two ways: First, it will disengage men from the notion of being oppressors. This will open more space to understand their experiences and, therefore, bring new knowledge and insights about the term empowerment itself, and second, more attention to issues of masculinity will move beyond the heteronormative framework within which SFD still finds itself, enabling problems to be seen in a more complex way.

As the feminist development scholars working within the GAD approach alleged, sexuality is amongst the topics that has been rather ignored within development studies (e.g., Jolly, 2000; Menon, 2005), and there is also limited research on queer and sexuality within the SFD literature. Gender and sexuality, however, play an essential role in maintaining power relations, and the absence of issues around sexuality risks neglecting the hierarchy of oppressions which affect women in the Global South and Brazil in particular.

While it has been alleged that men are rarely put in the conversation about development and gender issues, this thesis is based on research with mixed-gendered settings and men were present within the activities. I suggest here that is still rather rare to have mixed-gendered projects which provide curricula on empowerment and are gender specific. In this sense, my field proves to be unique for observing new processes, complexities, and consequences for women's empowerment. It allowed for the analysis not only of how young women feel empowered by the project as well as what the role of sport is, but I also envision gender as a more complex category and analyse men's reaction and the ways in which they positioned themselves toward the project. Grounded in empirical research and the experiences of locals, this thesis adds another new dimension to the theorizing of empowerment within the SFD field. As scholars from mainstream development have alleged, men are necessary for struggles over and sustainability of gender equality, but they can also find themselves in a situation of vulnerability and marginalization.

Thus, I hope to demonstrate in the chapters which follow that there might also be various unintended consequences to 'empowering' women for men and their position. The concept of empowerment therefore deserves theorization about its meanings and what effects 'empowering' women as well as patriarchy, heteronormativity, and global inequalities have on the relations between men and women.

Here, the postcolonial critique is relevant as it advocates for local voices which were neglected at the expense of imposing a Western vision of behaviour and empowerment on local communities in the Global South by foreign organizations (Hayhurst, 2016). That said, it is important to investigate what cultural discourses Global South SFD practitioners utilize to identify and define their own reality, destabilize Eurocentric notions of empowerment which are conceptually inappropriate, and centralize the role of culture in constructions of empowerment.

The theorizing and analysis of empowerment are far from over as some reject the idea and say it is only a justification for top-down policies (e.g., Romano, 2002) but under a new name, while others are committed to retheorizing it in new ways (e.g., Sardenberg, 2008). However, there is clearly a need for more in-depth debate over empowerment. It is crucial to have an ongoing debate within mainstream development as well as within the SFD field, especially because it is a concept that is so widely disseminated, used, and 'abused'. It can therefore be filled with contradictory meanings and disengaged from the lived reality of the target groups.

Bearing in mind these critiques and effort to contextualize, subsequent chapters will reveal how young women and men understand empowerment and the programme benefits. Like other concepts, such as development and gender, empowerment has also been facing a great dispute over its meaning. In discussions and the theorizing of empowerment in this thesis, I see one of the steps which will establish a debate around the meaning of this term and, specifically, its local interpretations.

3 | Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Doing an SFD ethnography

This thesis is based on the long-term, in-depth ethnographic research of two different SFD organizations in Brazil, Bola Dourada and Felicidade, both of which use sport to achieve broader societal objectives in communities characterized by a high level of unemployment, violence, and criminality. To protect the identities of research participants and the organizations involved in this research, only pseudonyms have been used throughout this thesis. For this reason, the ages and roles of the research participants (e.g. project participant, parent, educator) have been omitted. This information appears only in cases where the person cannot be revealed or more specific information is needed to illustrate the broader situation and resulting interaction.

As a qualitative research methodology, ethnography uses traditional participant observation together with other research methods to gain rich, holistic understandings about specific aspects of people's lives, their views and actions, as well as the nature of the setting they inhabit. In other words, ethnography as a research approach involves the researcher 'living with and living like those who are studied' (Van Maanen, 1988: 2).

Contrary to principles of the positivist paradigm which seeks rationality or objectivity, qualitative researchers and ethnographers employ an interpretive approach to the world (Charmaz, 2006). This means that the researcher not only studies individuals in their natural environment but also attempts to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people assign to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Through first-hand engagement with their social worlds, the ethnographer attempts to learn 'how these people view the situations they face, how they regard one another, and also how they see themselves' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 2).

In this sense, a first-hand empirical investigation presents an effective tool to deepen our understanding of sport's role in development, but it also provides a framework for comprehending diverse and distinct ways in which young people participate in, uncover, and attain meanings about sport and their individual lives.

Qualitative research is a situated activity which 'locates the observer in the world' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). This means the ethnographer is not a passive observer removed from the 'data'; rather, she/he becomes the research instrument and thus an integrated part of the research process (Bengtsson, 2014; Gold, 1997; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Wasserfall, 1993). The ethnographic data is then the result of a research process involving both the researcher and the research participants.

To date, very few studies have drawn from first-hand, long-term engagement with SFD programming research (e.g., Lucas and Jeanes, 2019) and gender research in particular (e.g., Oxford, 2019). SFD scholars have alleged that the stress had been placed on the effectiveness of programmes, whereas fewer considerations are given to detailed discussions of the experiences of the project participants (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2013; Forde, 2015). In more concrete terms, the current academic understandings regarding sport for development, Collison and Marchesseault (2018) argue, are rich in policy analysis and are rather a 'product of formal interviewing, short-term observations, program evaluations and quantitative data analysis' (Collison and Marchesseault, 2018: 227). Moreover, up-to-date studies have only recently started to broaden the frame and our understanding of how SFD initiatives are adopted by actors in the Global South (Darnell et al., 2019).

Often referred to as 'more challenging and "messier"' (Darnell et al., 2016: 573), scholars from the SFD field have nonetheless begun to advocate for a commitment to the qualitative study of sport for development, specifically so as to engage the perspectives of diverse stakeholders and participants and thus understand sport and its development implications (Darnell et al., 2016). Feminist and other scholars have therefore employed, for example, auto-ethnographic approaches (e.g., Chawansky, 2015; Forde, 2015), a postcolonial feminist approach to multi-sited global ethnography (e.g., Hayhurst, 2016), and participatory social interaction research (e.g., Collison and Marchesseault, 2018; Spaaij et al., 2017).

Those studies have made a significant contribution to the sport-for-development field; they have raised new methodological questions and identified areas which require further explorations within the field. For example, in their auto-ethnographic study, Carney and Chawansky (2016) call attention to the lack of understanding of how sexual minorities experience SFD programmes and elevate neglected issues of

sexism, heterosexism, and queer sexuality within the field[20]. Quantitative research and the positivist paradigm are criticized in this respect as they neglect subjective experiences, strive for universality and generalizability in SFD research, and position the researcher as a detached evaluator (Collison and Marchesseault, 2018). Carney and Chawansky (2016) further contend that privileging a positivist, quantitative orientation presents risks of valuing some stories over others; the stories of sexual minorities have specifically been excluded as they 'may not fit into prescribed research or evaluation aims or intended outcomes' of SFD interventions (Carney and Chawansky, 2016: 294).

Quantitative studies are conducted rather as part of instrumental approaches as they provide statistical and, therefore, 'credible' evidence to a number of transnational bodies, donors, and authorities. However, and following Darnell et al. (2016), project participants 'are not subjects to be tested with a focus on collecting predetermined outcomes or outputs' (Darnell et al., 2016: 572). It is essential to reject this tick-box mentality associated with particular measurement processes which throw us into the trap of using evaluation to sustain mainstream assumptions regarding 'the positive outcomes' of development initiatives (Levermore and Beacom, 2009).

Moreover, privileging positivist forms of knowledge fails to engage with issues surrounding the decolonization of methodology and knowledge. As, for example, Kay (2009) argues, qualitative methodologies are 'needed to help address a neglected issue within sport in development research—the need to subvert enduring "colonial" power relationships' (Kay, 2009: 1188). In this sense, the qualitative approach does not merely permit the exploration nor capture the complexity of the participant experience. With the recent shift toward reflexive, decolonial, and participant-centred research and by striving for collaboration and knowledge co-creation in all stages of the research, it also allows the colonial residue in the SFD field to be exposed and undermined (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2011; Darnell et al., 2016; Spaaij et al., 2017).

Amidst this discussion, the qualitative approach to studying sport for development both foregrounds the importance of the context and enables everyday discourses to be uncovered, within which particular sport and development programmes are granted as the solution to societal problems (Collison and Marchesseault, 2018). More importantly, those 'non-traditional approaches', as they are referred to by Schulenkorf et al. (2016), move significantly beyond normative SFD interventions and deconstruct the rhetoric and narrative of SFD, for example, the widely spread and homogenizing discourses mentioned above which conceptualize youth as 'passive',

[20]I extend this discussion in more detail in chapter 7 of this thesis, in which I investigate how LGBT individuals experiences SFD programmes and what meanings they attach to the projects in their individual lives.

'disempowered', and in need of 'development'.

The sport for development field includes studies undertaken at distinct levels (local, national, transnational) and in various locations of both the Global South and Global North (Giulianotti et al., 2019). During this research, I turned to the ethnographic approach in order to capture the *local voices* of sport for development. The study, however, also integrates the local community meso level and the national and global social structures on the macro level. Ethnography proved to be pivotal in listening to a range of diverse voices and situating them within broader processes (development) and movements (feminism). By studying their local forms, I illustrate that development and feminism are not uniform but are shaped by local realities and the agency of particular groups. I was inspired by feminist epistemology and methodology which recognizes women's lived experiences as legitimate sources of knowledge. In the following section, I briefly explain the context in which *projetos sociais esportivos* (social sports projects) emerged in Brazil in order to understand how the projects under study are (or are not) related to the global SFD sector.

3.2 Projetos sociais esportivos: SFD in Brazil

In Brazil, numerous projects and initiatives intending to promote sports activities spread across the country starting in the 1990s (Guedes et al., 2006). Those projects—at the time, mostly named projetos sociais esportivos—were, however, not necessarily related to the budding SFD field. While top-down models were also implemented, Silva and Silva (2014) explain that these projects and actions have been consolidated rather in a bottom-up movement, often constituted from the activities of individuals, groups, and organizations which were mobilized around the common goals of occupying the free time of youth, taking them off the streets, and minimizing their vulnerability to violence and drug use (Neto et al., 2015; Vianna and Lovisolo, 2009).

In Brazil, the sports activity possibilities for children and young people from low-income families are restricted. There is a lack of recreational spaces near their residences and a paucity of free educational environments in which they could practice sports. The physical education classes provided by the public school system present the only opportunity to experience organized sports-oriented learning (Goellner et al., 2016). Hence, it is still challenging to meet the demand for sports participation in the context of public schools. Providing opportunities for meaningful engagement in the sports domain becomes challenging, especially in the case of young women and girls.

While the assumed benefits of sport for broader societal outcomes have permeated sport policy in Brazil since the beginning of the twentieth century, the SFD rhetoric of development through sport has only started to inform public policy and government action in recent years (e.g., Reis et al., 2016). This shift can be explained partially as a result of the increasing influence of the international SFD movement on a global scale together with the increasing recognition of sport as practical tool for supporting the achievement of the SDGs by various actors in Brazil. Moreover, to a great extent, mega sporting events hosted in the country located sport at the centre of many Brazilian government actions (e.g., Reis et al., 2016).

Moreover, when mapping social sports projects in the context of Brazil, it is important to emphasize that the majority of the projects have in recent years been undertaken or have had the participation of current and former professional athletes, specifically from football. Creating centres whereby former athletes develop social projects in their communities of origin and offer sports and cultural activities for children and youth from the lower classes can be understood or justified both from the standpoint of social responsibility and from reciprocity, a 'return' to society through work in a pedagogical process aimed at poor children and young people (Guedes et al., 2006; Vianna and Lovisolo, 2009). This trend can also be explained as an indicator of the assumed strength of belief in the potential of sport. In the following section, I explain the research sites and the process of entering both fields.

3.2.1 Research sites and access

The research was initially planned to take place in Brazil, particularly within gender-focused initiatives using sport to combat gender inequalities and empower young women and girls through sport. To obtain a glimpse of how many organizations operated under the SFD umbrella in Brazil, whether they were rather smaller locally-based NGOs or large-scale, global, transnational initiatives, I searched using the International Platform on Sport and Development (IPSD).

As a first result, I found an organization located in the state of São Paulo which corresponded with the profile I needed, and I started to negotiate access. However, after speaking with its female representative Renata, I was told that this initiative was no longer active, and it would be difficult to find participants which took part in their activities. This step, however unsuccessful, resulted in discovering Bola Dourada, Renata's recommendation.

Based in Campinho, a municipality belonging to the large metropolitan area of São Paulo, Bola Dourada provided a wide range of activities for about six hundred children and young people from Campinho, particularly sports, culture, and theatre.

The NGO used these activities, including sport, to help children and young people to develop 'life skills', such as cooperation and leadership; to promote community development, and to improve their own lives. Communicating via email and Skpye, I begun to negotiate access. I presented myself as a researcher, and together with Anthony (the director), we discussed mutual expectations, aims, and needs as well as the details of their projects and agenda.

I would spend six months in this field. My relatively long-term stay was agreed upon a specific relationship which was mutually beneficial and collaborative. The NGO-researcher partnership entailed reciprocity—access to informants in exchange for volunteer development work. At this initial stage of the research, I was aware that my commitment to the organization's expectations, to be an international sport volunteer, was a new role I had acquired as a researcher while arranging access to the first fieldwork setting.

In addition to male sport volunteers, I worked alongside a group of local sport coaches and young leaders. They lived in the community, and most of them were not professional coaches. Only a few members of the sports team were involved in the area of physical education and planned to engage in the sports field in the future. Together, we would prepare sports classes for children and young people at one of the community spaces on a daily basis. In addition, I participated in the organization of football tournaments and other annual NGO events.

Mainly due to empirical saturation, after five months of fieldwork in Bola Dourada, I started to negotiate access to Felicidade. Felicidade was based in the neighbourhood of Eldorado, located geographically on the opposite side of the metropolis to Bola Dourada. I chose Felicidade as it appeared to provide a valuable opportunity to explore new patterns and gain new insights regarding sport-based and gender-focused initiatives. It possessed aspects of being locally driven while their broader agenda was framed by global feminist knowledge and more work on gender issues was offered to their participants. These attributes made Felicidade different than Bola Dourada and a tempting field to research.

In gaining access to Felicidade, I also negotiated with its director, Fabio, via email. The first two emails I sent went without reply, and I waited three months before receiving an initial and positive reply. After I explained my research project objectives, we arranged a meeting in the director's office. After this introductory meeting, I obtained official permission to engage in the project activities and conduct my research. Due to my focus on gender, Fabio also introduced me to the female coordinator responsible for the gender project. With her, I agreed on specific issues, such as mutual expectations and how I could participate in NGO events. Fe-

licidade did not work with the international volunteer's programme, thus accessing and creating a closeness with the project participants was more time-consuming and demanding than in the previous field.

In both fields, I was given support in conducting the research. Daily contact with NGO workers or children in different spaces provided me the opportunity to make first-hand observations of the worlds under study; being entirely and continuously in the field was fundamental in building and cultivating confidence and trust. However, there were constraints regarding my ethnographic self, some of which I reveal in chapter 4.

While this research exists in one geographical context of Brazil, the in-depth focus on two different locations and actors ensured the heterogeneity of the data and allowed for the identification of similarities and contrasts between both programmes. In contrast to those studies involving fieldwork with a range of stakeholders in diverse countries (see Collison and Marchesseault, 2018), the intercultural analysis provided the terrain to investigate how and whether projects *happened differently* and to situate both within the broader global context of the SFD sector.

It was not the aim of the thesis to compare both projects; however, given their distinct natures and their missions, a partial comparison was inevitable, and some contrasts were significant to highlight. Table 3.1 schematizes the distinctions between these two organizations based on the following criteria: founders, mission, operating/methodology, funding, gender agenda, and their reach (children and youth per year). After having outlined these differences in the following section, I provide a more detailed background of both settings separately and also discuss how gender equity and empowerment issues were incorporated by both initiatives.

Table 3.1: *Distinctions between NGOs*

	Bola Dourada	**Felicidade**
Founders	European actors	Brazilian professional athletes
Mission	Social and Community development	Social and Community development
Operating/Methodology	*Sport plus*	*Sport plus*
Funding	Corporate/Global	Corporate/National
Gender agenda	Inclusion and Mixed setting	Feminist knowledge and Women's empowerment
Reach (per year)	600	1300

3.2.2 Spirit of the projects

Bola Dourada and Felicidade started their initial work outside of sport-based projects. Not all the cup trophies, diplomas, pictures, and certificates adorning the office walls of both initiatives were related to sports achievements; they also traced the history and recognition of their work and projects related to social work, education, and culture.

Today, Felicidade is involved in the national sport network founded in Brazil by a group of civil society organizations. This network is fostered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a corporate actor. While Bola Dourada is not included in this network, the initiative is intertwined with the sport-for-development movement and the associated social aims and objectives linked to these.

Moreover, both initiatives avoided a focus on sport performance but placed emphasis on the non-sport benefits which can possibly be achieved through its practice, such as public health, gender equality, and social cohesion (Kidd, 2008). Rather than being linked with football schools, also located in both communities, or other programmes which scouted talented athletes, Bola Dourada and Felicidade intended to dissociate their work from those initiatives and create their notoriety as 'serving the community'. This issue was especially relevant for the work of Felicidade. Given their personal sport's profiles and trajectories as professional athletes, the founders of Felicidade did not want to employ a sports project in the early years of their work to avoid it being associated with their professional careers and, thus, a paid sports school. They preferred to build their reputation around addressing one of the key social issues in Brazil, explicitly providing quality education (Fieldnotes, May 2018, Eldorado).

Both organizations aimed to provide regular sports activities for children and adolescents before and after-school when lessons are not held. As Table 3.1 demonstrates, the initiatives employed an approach to development work which could be described as *sport plus* and *plus sport*. Following Coalter (2009), who introduced this framework within the SFD field, sport plus highlights sport development objectives (increasing participation, developing sports knowledge, skills), while plus sport initiatives focus primarily on how sport can assist in achieving non-sport objectives, such as crime prevention and female empowerment. Educational activities/workshops are included within the sport activities so that youth acquire knowledge and resources for finding solutions to challenges encountered in their lives.

While this framework is useful here to illustrate how both programmes work, many SFD programmes, including those under study, attempt to balance their sport and non-sport components (Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011). They attempt to captivate

youth with the programmes while simultaneously addressing broader social justice issues. Both sports programmes aimed to facilitate the participation and 'empowerment' of young adolescents and (to a different extent) provided workshops and classes focused on a range of information regarding gender equality, violence against children, education, and sexual health literacy. Felicidade strived to develop the 'critical consciousness' of the participants and thus adopted praxis similar to Freire (1973) and his critical pedagogy (see also Spaaij and Jeanes, 2013). The key element in this process was a 'conscientization', whereby 'individuals become critically aware of the conditions and contradictions that shape their lives' (Spaaij et al., 2016: 578).

While the Felicidade organization built on these foundations, developing their own methodology so as to incorporate education in sport and then shared this methodology with other NGOs, Bola Dourada occasionally draws from approaches endorsed by international SFD-focused foundations located in the Global North in order to achieve non-sport outcomes, and thus adopted more of a sport plus approach.

Both organizations are registered as a non-profit. Corporate sponsors contributed much of Bola Dourada's and Felicidade's funds, which usually last from one to three years. After each year, and also during the year, donors required detailed reporting and evidence of the 'positive' impacts (mainly photos and quantitative data regarding the number of participants) the sport produced on the local communities and youth. For example, a sister NGO from Western Europe (name withheld) which distributed funds across NGOs around the world, including Bola Dourada, required the exact numbers of how many children participated in the given year, specifically, how many girls and boys. They also demanded photos from sports festivals and other events which had been promised in the projects by the NGO employees that donors had approved. Besides this, donors required detailed information about the health of youth and children. To address these demands and secure the funding for the years to come, coaches and employees measured children's height and weight at the beginning of the year and the end of the year.

There were special programmes offered by both NGOs devoted to training peer educators—women and men as young leaders or interns who facilitated grassroots activities. Interns were usually former participants in the programme who were selected to become youth leaders; their role was to disseminate information, knowledge, and practices within and outside the organization. Those who are chosen to partake in the intern's programme received a payment from the NGO and specific preparation, such as technical and life-project training (Fieldnotes, October–December 2018, Brazil).

Both initiatives are underpinned by similar assumptions about the potential of

sport to foster social capital leading to future professional success and civic engagement. Similar to the 'sport evangelists' discussed by Coakley (2011), and Giulianotti (2012), some Bola Dourada and Felicidade officials and employees adopted evangelical arguments regarding sport's potential to foster personal development and its collective benefit.

3.2.3 Entering the field: Bola Dourada

It was September 2017, and I had just arrived at the airport in São Paulo equipped with three audio recorders, a camera, and anxiety mixed with excitement. Significant tests to Brazilian democracy regarding the election of a far-right politician to the highest office of the country, which would also affect initiatives such as the SFD programmes, were still to flourish.

Upon arrival, I started to feel like a foreigner. Yet, similar to what Willson (2011) had pointed out, I could also be coming from the southern Brazilian states, characterized by the highest percentage of White citizens. Sometimes, when people asked if I was from there, it was usually my accent which revealed I was a foreigner. I spent a while looking hopelessly through the crowd, searching for a person I had never seen in my life called Camila. She worked in Bola Dourada, and we had exchanged several emails while I was preparing for my fieldwork back at home. In one of the emails, she suggested she pick me up at the airport.

Looking around, I compared two dark skin females standing and looking in different directions; they seemed as though they were also waiting for someone. One of these women caught my eye. This must be Camila, I thought, as I noticed she was holding a paper with my name on it. We hugged each other, and I introduced myself. 'Muito prazer', I added in Portuguese. Then we grabbed my luggage and went to find the car in the enormous parking lot of the second busiest airport in Latin America after Mexico City.

While waiting for Marina to pick up the vehicle, Camila did not hesitate and asked, 'So, what sports are you going to teach here?' Whilst my relatively long-term stay was agreed upon a particular NGO-researcher relationship—access to informants in exchange for volunteer development work—I did not expect, and it was not proposed, that I would 'teach' something specific. I was not prepared and qualified to provide a physical education class as was expected from and agreed upon with volunteers who came before me. Volunteers who came to Bola Dourada were mostly professional coaches coming through foreign volunteer programmes. They came with frequency, and Camila was in charge of receiving and taking care of them. Her question was part of her job—I was technically also one of them. I was an international

sports volunteer, and it molded my identity most of the time during the fieldwork. But, my considerations at that moment were whether Camila knew I was coming there primarily because of my research? I tried to find a way to explain my intentions and avoid the potential confounding of my role as an 'expert' or 'evaluator' as this might have had implications in terms of mutual expectations (see Collison and Marchesseault, 2018; Spaaij et al., 2017).

Moreover, the growing presence of and reliance on citizens of the Global North to deliver and manage SFD projects in the Global South is understood as reinforcing dichotomous stereotypes of benefactor–recipient, as well as existing power structures[21]. From the perspective of northern individuals involved in this development, a range of scholars emphasized the numerous tensions related to the sport volunteering in SFD (e.g., Darnell, 2011; Forde, 2015; Jeanes et al., 2013; Lucas and Jeanes, 2019).

In particular, they have illustrated how Global North volunteers reinforce the neocolonial endeavour as they impose their particular expertise on Global South communities, pointing to the weak engagement of volunteers in broader development politics, and they have called into question the limited sustainability of these projects (e.g., Lucas and Jeanes, 2019; Smith et al., 2014). Others suggest that the work of the Global North volunteers is shaped by a lack of understanding of and respect for local cultures and customs as well as expertise (Heron, 2007). Forde (2015) further explains that sports volunteering serves rather 'as means to an end, as educational tools for privileged volunteers' (Forde, 2015: 971) who benefit more from the development programmes than local populations. This is part of a broader narrative in which what counts is not merely assistance to the Other but also the recurrent 'helping imperative and the effect that "helping" the passive Other will have on our own life experiences' (Heron, 2007: 5). Deploying sport within the international development field is understood as expanding Western cultural neocolonialism in the name of education and development while excluding and disregarding local needs under the authority of the state, transnational sporting bodies, and international volunteers (Darnell, 2011).

Stuck in traffic on a four-lane highway, we started to chat, making our journey more enjoyable. I was struck and impressed with the reality that surrounded me—chaos, traffic, loud motorbikes filtering through stopped cars, and contrasts, the poorest and the wealthiest areas next to each other. We passed regions with high concrete commercial buildings, luxury apartments, and guarded condominiums

[21] As Smith et al. (2014) highlight, more than one and a half million volunteers travel abroad each year. The authors use the term 'volunteer tourism', which is at present 'the fastest growing segment of the alternative tourism market and often a key feature of sport-for-development organizational models' (Smith et al., 2014: 1-2)

shielded by high walls and cameras typical of the middle and upper classes. But the landscape soon changed. Home exteriors emblematic of impoverished urban peripheries started to appear. According to a report provided by Agência IBGE Notícias (2017b), in 2010, 11.4 million persons were living in favelas in Brazil.

I had researched Bola Dourada and its surroundings before leaving for my fieldwork, and this provided me with a rough idea of what to expect. After we arrived, I recalled the pictures I had found on the Internet, but the feeling of being there was not the same as seeing the images from the safety of my room back in Europe. The pink building in front of me was bigger than I expected. Letters and colours which used to be written on the white sign attached to the wall were disappearing with time. I had the impression that if one searched for the institution intentionally, it would have been easy to miss it. There was nothing in particular that called attention to possible passers-by. Why is the building so indistinct? What do locals, neighbours, and residents think that this building does? Do they know the organization and its projects? I was asking myself these questions while standing in front of the building on the early morning empty street, looking around.

We entered the main gate adorned with security bars and climbed eighty, steep stairs with my heavy luggage to the top. The whole building was composed of individual small apartments and adapted to become one unit, one building. On the very top was what they called the 'volunteer house'. The terrace reminded me of a depot for stuff nobody needed anymore—an old, dirty sofa; chairs; a table; and lots of sports items lying on the floor. It was hard to believe that somebody lived there. 'Here we are', said Camila. It was even harder to believe that this place happened to be my new home. From such a height, I could see a local football stadium and a significant part of the community—houses, churches, narrow streets. I was far away from everything I knew, and a quick look from the window reminded me that I was in a poverty-stricken area. This implied many changes were coming, including adaptation to a new way of life vastly different from my European one.

Inclusion and citizenship

Bola Dourada was founded by more than one European individual. The NGO received funding from a variety of external agencies, including the UK government as well as from global sporting agencies (names withheld). Employees from Bola Dourada lived in the community, usually within close vicinity of the organization's office building located on one of the neighbourhood's busiest streets, with lots of commerce during the day but deserted and unsafe at night. When approaching the question of safety, some employees described their streets as 'unsafe all the time—during

the day and night'. Other people living in the community noted that 'today, it is peaceful', but also recalled that 'ten years ago, you could see dead bodies lying on the streets'. They aimed to communicate that I should not be worried about my safety but should remain attentive.

Before entering the field, I was informed that one of the issues the NGO addressed was social development, inclusion, and gender equality. During the sports sessions, there was significant emphasis on the values of respect and equity, and all children aged 7–21 were allowed to participate.

As noted in Table 4.1, the project was not explicitly aimed at challenging gender stereotypes and addressing female empowerment but provided the sports in a mixed-gender setting with an emphasis on the *inclusion* of all regardless of gender, sexuality, age, or religion. Moreover, the coaches encouraged intolerance of gender-based discrimination and homophobia. The sessions were not formally part of the school curriculum but occurred before/after school classes, in community spaces and on school grounds, three times per day. Regularly, male-educator sports training for girls once a week was provided. Bola Dourada also organized sports and recreation events, including sports festivals or specific events exclusively for women and girls from the community, such as a girls' festival to celebrate National Women's Day.

The sports coaches reported that, once a year, they received specialized coaching provided by a global sport agency focused on using sport for social impact. The aim of the training was to utilize sport activities in combination with specific discussions about sexuality, gender equality, drug use, and well-being. There was, however, no consensus among NGO sports staff about a 'gender' curriculum. Interviewees, mainly coaches and male coordinators, upheld specific assumptions about gendered relationships, many of which were infused by Western-based gender norms and a neoliberal approach to creating 'responsible citizens'. Furthermore, Bola Dourada's approach regarding gender and sexual education and workshops was less systematic and depended more on the values, attitudes, and the sexuality of individual coaches.

On their websites as well as posters placed around the sports fields, the NGO encouraged boys as well as girls to register. Yet, the organization did not ensure the social inclusion of girls and women, and significantly fewer girls attended. There was no agreement about how to increase the number of girls in the project. The number of girls participating was occasionally constructed as a 'low' by local workers when writing the final reports.

There was a broad range of benefits which coordinators and coaches believed sport could potentially offer young people living in Campinho. Not only sport but also the commitments which came together with the participation were understood

as crucial to improving young people's personalities and learning new skills necessary for their future and their 'employability'. In this broader sense, sports programmes created a culture of discipline and regulation which aimed to produce young people who would possess employable skills. As stated by NGO coach Marcos:

> We try to teach youth that they must come on time to the session and should come regularly. It is a commitment they have. Imagine, if they come to work late, they will get fired, and nobody will give them a job if they are irresponsible. It is part of our work to create responsible citizens here. (Marcos, 33 years old, September 2017, Campinho)

Whether in connection to international development or in other forms, sport constitutes here a means of productive power and social control as it becomes the site for youth to become ideal, typical citizens, who are docile and productive (Foucault, 1977).

3.2.4 Entering the field: Felicidade

I still lived in Bola Dourada while negotiating access to Felicidade. I usually used public transportation while conducting my first interviews and considering the next steps. An exception was the first time I went for a scheduled meeting with the director Fábio. As I did not know the area, the decision to take a taxi instead of a bus once I arrived at the final metro station seemed reasonable. I was sure that the address I was heading to was the right one, as I had found it on the internet. We passed through an area that looked wealthier, with charming houses, stores, and many bus stops. After almost twenty minutes, the urban landscape started to remind me of the one I saw from my window back at the volunteer house, and I noticed that the driver began to look nervous. He asked me what I was supposed to do at that address and whether I knew the direction to get there. 'I have no idea. I'm going there for the first time', I replied and verified the trajectory of our vehicle on my mobile phone. The map said that we were getting closer.

We arrived at the address, but there was no distinct or somehow specific building, no people on the streets, and neither of us were convinced that I should get out of the car. After a few minutes, it was evident that we had become lost. Adding to our bad luck, not only were we lost but the internet signal was gone as well. Following the map turned out to be useless, and the driver continued driving aimlessly. Both aware that we would have to be lucky to find the place without the Internet, the driver took a deep breath, stopped his car, opened the window, and reached the only person strolling on the street. 'Do you know where Felicidade is? It should be

somewhere here', he asked the man, leaving the window half-open, half-closed. 'Ah, Felicidade? That organization that works with children and sport? Sure, I know. It is there, at the top', he replied and provided the driver with instructions on how to get there. It was not far, we just had to go up. In a few minutes, we arrived in front of the colourful building. There was a white wall with visible graffiti sprayed on proclaiming the building a school. There was a blue gate with a small cabin for security to check on who is entering the school. I could hear the noise of children screaming as soon as I got out of the taxi.

'Well, you are at the wrong address', said the porter when I introduced myself and said to whom I was looking. 'The offices used to be here, but they are somewhere else now. This is a school now. You have to go back', he added. A few years previously, the whole initiative had been housed here, but their central office had been relocated to a wealthier area as the building was transformed into a full-time school, a type of the school lacking in Brazil. As local people used to say, 'The higher you live, the more impoverished and dangerous the area is. The lower you live, the wealthier you are.' I was angry with myself that I had not asked for the address directly from Fabio and relied entirely upon what I found on the NGO's webpage. There was, however, one question that made me wonder.

As I discovered during the fieldwork, the man was partially right. He had revealed how the community perceived this transition. Felicidade had started their activities around twenty years ago when it had been an abandoned building. Today, people still called it Felicidade, and some of them also complained about the relocation of the projects. They felt they had lost the organization or lost contact with its workers and the people involved as all the activities were now farther away.

To some community members and families involved, Felicidade was not perceived as part of the community anymore, or at least not to the same extent as before the change. They found it complicated to participate in it because of the distance. The majority of participants' families lived next door; they could hear and watch the projects happening. Even those who were not engaged actively in the projects felt part of it and, to an extent, benefited from the NGO's presence in Eldorado. People used to meet employees daily in the street, talk to them, and strengthen mutual trust and relationships, or build new ones. The organization contributed to establishing networks with people from different groups and thus bridging capital (Spaaij, 2012).

'We breathe gender'

As illustrated in Table 3.1, in contrast to Bola Dourada (and similar to several other sport-based organizations in Brazil), Felicidade was founded by former Brazil-

ian elite athletes. Felicidade had received recognition receiving a range of international and national awards. The organization worked with about thirteen hundred children and young people providing arts, culture, sports, and leisure activities. Moreover, they actively involved families and offered adult and community festivals. As with Bola Dourada, they also organized recreation events, including those addressing exclusively women and girls from the community.

The majority of employees from Felicidade lived in other areas, that is, more distant and sometimes wealthier regions of São Paulo—some interviews took place in these locations, different to those of the project participants. Youth leaders and other paid positions were, however, created exclusively for Eldorado's residents and young people. They were actively involved in monitoring, internal evaluation, and project delivery. Felicidade's work was directed to contribute to broader community change in Eldorado exclusively. As the employees reported, 'Our focus is Eldorado.' When Jack, the president of the donor agency visiting Felicidade, asked whether they had the goal to expand to other areas of São Paulo, he added, 'I see. You, as an organization grow, grow, grow but stay in Eldorado. You won't abandon Eldorado. You'll stay local.'

Sport and cultural activities (e.g., football, judo, skate, capoeira) were employed in a mixed-gender environment. The broader Felicidade mission was to enhance education and social inclusion outcomes through the mobilization of sports. Still, the specific aim of the programme was to promote gender equality, sexual diversity, and health prevention. Employees described gender and sexuality topics as *institutional issues* (Field notes, March 2018, Eldorado) in the sense that gender equality and sexual diversity were embedded within all projects. This is to say that while Felicidade's mission was also social and community development, the projects were more gender sensitive. A more systematic approach based on feminist knowledge of NGO workers had been adopted, specifically addressing intersecting oppressions. Felicidade pushed for girls to be empowered and had an internal mechanism of monitoring the impacts of their actions on the broader community which they utilized to improve the ways in which the gender project was delivered.

There was specific attention paid on the part of educators to practices which could result in the exclusion of girls from the activities. Girls-only regular sports sessions were not implemented; however, girls in mixed football sessions sporadically negotiated girls-against-girls game with the educator instead of the usual practice of the mixed matches (Fieldnotes, April 2018, Eldorado). Sexuality and men's violence toward women were also the subjects of practical workshops and ensuing debates in the curriculum. Education on sexual relations included issues related to pregnancy

prevention, the importance of using condoms, disease prevention, as well as providing critical discussion related to LGBT identities and rights. Some of the workshops also started to cover issues about masculinity and fatherhood in more detail[22].

Workshops happened in mixed-gendered classes provided by local and trained NGO workers (one man and two women). Whether the workshop was directed to discuss gender-based violence or disease prevention, the topic discussed was linked directly to an individual sports activity. For example, in the workshop aimed to provide health education and discuss disease prevention, a sports activity was adapted to fit with keywords such as *protection, prevention, risk*. For example, in the skateboarding class, girls and boys used knee and elbow pads as well as helmets. Furthermore, the youth trained in pairs because the assistance of peers provided more security to specific skill development. After the class, the participants, sports coach, and trained workers discussed the necessity of *using protection*, utilizing numerous keywords for sport as well as health (Fieldnotes, March 2018, Eldorado).

Felicidade also organized a monthly parents meeting aimed at communicating the content of the workshops and changing parental views towards the position of female daughters within sport, the household, and the community more broadly.

3.3 Methods

3.3.1 Observations and field diary

This study is based on long-term participant observations from daily interactions with NGO workers, project recipients, and their families; participation in gender and sexuality sessions; and preparation and participation in sports sessions and festivals, from which extensive field notes were recorded. The qualitative research, as well as ethnography, has a strong orientation towards the everyday knowledge of those under investigation (Flick, von Kardoff, and Steinke, 2004). In this sense, ethnographic data in this research is derived from direct observation of what people did and said, how they behaved and reacted in particular spaces, situations, and contexts. As Burgess (2002) reminds, 'Making, reporting and evaluation of these observations is the task of ethnographers' (Burgess, 2002: 2).

Before entering the field, I made a schedule of how the fieldwork would proceed.

[22]It is important to note here that by the time of my research, educators and coordinators had started to identify a lack of discussion regarding masculinity at the expense of an exclusive focus on women's empowerment in their projects. They used the term 'toxic masculinity' and argued that it should be addressed alongside female empowerment and gender equality. As coordinator, Taís explained that it was still to be incorporated more regularly into their workshops. For more detail, see chapter 6.

I primarily aimed to spend much of my time in the sports sessions with female participants, but I also wanted to take part in mixed-gendered classes to experience the sharing of this space with boys. Being a volunteer in one field enabled me to move between 'frontstage and backstage spaces', but in Felicidade, where my role was designed more as observer-as-participant Burgess (2002), I also conducted observations similar to those in Bola Dourada.

I regularly participated in several sports sessions and had daily contact with project participants, coaches, coordinators, and other staff members. Following what I had arranged with the directors before entering the field and with staff members, I had relative freedom in terms of where, when, and how I wanted to volunteer/-make observations. For example, in Bola Dourada, once I had chosen the particular sessions, I was committed to it. My weekly observations in Bola Dourada thus usually happened at the Saturday girls-only football sessions (aged 7–23), and three mixed-gendered football (aged 11–21) and rugby sessions (aged 13–16) during the week. Throughout the five months, I occasionally shifted to other groups to access new research participants for interviews and so as to provide a more detailed account of the setting under study.

For example, despite the emphasis on the mixed-gendered sport context, in some sessions, no girls were participated, with only boys engaged. On other occasions, however, observations as well as the building rapport were disrupted as some sessions were definitively cancelled due to a lack of participants' interest or other reasons. One example of that is a unique encounter with Daniel and his friends that I described in the introductory section of this thesis. After their session was cancelled, it became difficult, if not impossible, to renew my contact with this group. I note this to demonstrate how daily participation and active involvement in development project activities were often the only possible route to ask and hear from Global South participants about how the programme is accepted and what meaning they obtain from sport in their lives (Darnell et al., 2019). The development organization was, for some time, the only possible bridge to those targeted by broader development efforts.

I observed the interaction between coaches and project participants. I concluded that being perceived by the youth as a coach or NGO staff was the best strategy in many situations. Being recognized as a staff member was essential to avoid participants' misinterpretations regarding my role, which could consequently prevent them from feeling free and safe. For example, when I entered this field, and after having attended the first few football sessions, female participants thought that I was *olheiro*, a person who scouted new football talent. According to what they reported,

olheiro usually visit the professional football schools where chosen individuals are invited for a test and then offered an opportunity to play in a professional football club. Young women admitted how disappointed they were when I said I was not an olheiro but a researcher.

In Felicidade, I conducted many observations in attended meetings, thematic workshops, and sports classes. These sites were comparable to those in which I made observations in Bola Dourada; however, to some extent, it was different, and my role in those situations was specific. I did not have any responsibilities regarding the delivery of the project, and I was not directly involved in the organization of events or particular sessions. I had access to sport sessions to observe. In addition to those with a gender/sexuality curricula, which happened every fifteen days, I conducted observations in sporting courses and events without any educational element. The nature of observations in this setting, however, could not be conceptualized as either *passive observation* or *full participation* (Charmaz, 2006: 21). The extent to which I moved between these two locations depended on specific agreements concerning temporary access with coordinators (access to particular workshops as discussed chapter 4), the level of involvement in daily participants' activities, and relationships developed with various members.

Observations in the field offered a unique opportunity to investigate and understand how, for example, SFD programmes employ sexuality and gender issues. Close contact with participants and their families allowed me to observe how this knowledge translates into the daily practices and experiences of its participants. Participant observation and recording of the interaction among families and the young men and women themselves was especially important, for example, in answering questions such as how their families perceive the girls' participation in sport and what practices and discourses surround female involvement in the programmes.

To obtain access to the meanings which participants utilize in social situations, I also conducted observations in non-sport locations, that is, in more informal settings and events, such as collective trips with project participants or informal family meetings. Furthermore, I gathered data from the official webpages and social network profiles of both NGOs, their policy documents, and their annual/monthly organization reports. The web presentation was useful in capturing, for example, how both initiatives presented their results and how gender and LGBT issues are presented on their official sites.

After the observations, though in some cases also during them as well, I recorded extensive fieldnotes. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe qualitative research as 'endlessly creative and interpretive' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 26). However, researchers

also need to create a writing routine to systematically record what they have observed throughout the social interactions, events, and interviews. In practice, a researcher does not withdraw from the field with a huge volume of empirical material and then write up what they have leaned. Qualitative interpretations are constructed. This means that researchers first create *field texts*, which consists of field notes and documents from the field.

In my case, I systematically documented and described conversations and informal chats which could not be recorded, such as regular daily interactions and coordination meetings, discussions between NGO workers and representatives of public schools (directors, professors), and an unexpected encounter with the donor. The field diary also consists of detailed descriptions of what I observed within the research settings, the communities, during the research participants' interactions with their families, and the dynamics inside the gender/sexuality workshops.

3.3.2 Interviews

Interviews were used in this research to complement participant observation. In particular, this technique in intended to 'help the researcher to gain access to situations that through time, place, or situation are "closed"' (Burgess, 2002: 87). This means that conducting interviews might serve to access the biography of an individual and other events which have occurred during the participant observation as well as enable the comparison of information obtained in recorded interviews with that which was observed.

Throughout the eleven months, I conducted semi-structured interviews with numerous participants involved in the programmes, including interviews with recipients and interns (18 females, 10 males) aged 11–23, interviews with project coordinators (9 females, 10 males) aged 18–45, interviews with international volunteers (2 females, 2 males) aged 28–35, with the parents of participants (6 mothers, 3 fathers) aged 40–60, and interviews with people in leadership positions (4 males) aged 40–55, such as directors of research organizations and a northern actor.

Each interview took between an hour and a half and two-and-a-half hours. With the Brazilian research participants, I conducted the interviews in Portuguese, whereas English was used with non-Brazilians. Some of the interviews were conducted more than once, and one interview was conducted via Skype. To ensure smoother communication and adapt to the local habits, I installed a widely used chat application on my mobile phone to reach research participants and to arrange our interviews.

Given the fact that the initiatives under study did not focus exclusively on sport but delivered a variety of non-sport projects, a primarily purposive sampling strategy

was used to conduct the initial interviews with young female and male participants involved in sport, whereas the snowball sampling strategy was employed in later stages. I also conducted interviews with coordinators, educators, and other employees and staff members responsible for sport projects. The perspectives of project leaders were also pivotal to this study. Furthermore, this study draws additionally upon interviews performed via the snowball sampling strategy with participants who self-identified as lesbian, gay, transsexual, or bisexual before the interviews.

The majority of occasions, interviews were conceptualized as friendly exchanges so as to understand the meanings young people ascribe to sport and their lives, their perception of gender roles, and the influence of the family environment. During these interviews, I employed a feminist-based strategy, which, unlike the positivist ethic of detachment and role distancing, feminist-based interviews require openness, emotional engagement, and the development of long-term relationships based on trust and emotional reciprocity (Burgess, 2002). It establishes and redefines the nature of the research interactions in which the interviewer and subject are partners.

Hesse-Biber (2007) suggests that it is through feminist-based interviews researchers are able to reach 'the diversity of women's realities that often lie hidden and unarticulated' (Hesse-Biber, 2007: 113). In my case, I concentrated on specific kinds of topics to explore the young women's knowledge about the world from their perspectives. The discussions were primarily focused on capturing women's narratives and biographical experiences as well as exploring how young women perceived their participation as contributing to increasing their status and empowerment—as described in their own words. As a feminist interviewer, I asked questions and uncovered issues which were of particular concern to women's lives, such as relationships at home, sexuality, and discrimination but also the challenges and benefits of their involvement in the project and sport in general.

While gender was an important aspect which shaped the relationship between those being researched and myself during the interview situations, gender does not automatically confer advantages or constraints to the research process. Gender is not a stable category but intersects with many others, such as race, age, ethnicity, religion, sexuality. To an extent, the access to young women was gendered, as they stated many times, 'If you were a man, I would not have come.' Those statements of discomfort and embarrassment affirmed that my access was partially gendered and that this aspect of my ethnographic self also shaped the sort of information I was accessing regarding women's lives.

While my daily presence in both fields offered an opportunity for participant observation and interactions, interviews occurred in numerous distinct spaces, from the

loud, overcrowded, and grubby community football pitches; bars; and the homes of participants, to more classy cafés and quiet, cosy director's offices. Given the variety of individuals (project participants, directors, mothers), each interview was centred around particular topics which I aimed to cover. For example, when conducting interviews with youth, I had three sets of questions I asked. I usually started with questions regarding sports experiences and the perceived benefits of the sports programme in the individuals' lives. Sport, and football in particular, were among the topics about which youth often enjoyed being asked, although this did not serve as an ice-breaking strategy in a hundred percent of the cases.

Sharing their experiences playing football helped to establish comfortable and friendlier ground. The following, broader topic approached gender roles and gendered experiences both inside and outside of sport. The third set of questions was dedicated to everyday experiences, including family environment, school, and church—where the first two themes intersected and intertwined—in order to draw a broader and more complex picture regarding the role and potential impact of the SFD programme on individual lives and broader structures which are at play, shaping these realities. Interviewees were provided space to raise their own issues and introduce questions they wished to address and share throughout the interviews or at the end when an open discussion took place.

Significant research material was also provided in interviews by coordinators in both organizations. I had prepared a set of questions regarding their work, implementation of the project, and questions directed to donors and community change. Their stories and experiences, based on their direct connection with project recipients and communication with funding and external institutions, such as community schools and Western donors, revealed how they negotiate their broader agenda and engage with questions linked to gender relations, empowerment, and community development. Some of the Felicidade employees lived in more distant and sometimes wealthier regions of São Paulo, and some interviews also occurred there. To obtain more diverse data regarding the questions studied, non-sport staff members and people not involved in the programmes directly were also interviewed as they could provide different angles on the phenomena under study.

Establishing first contact with the parents of participants was a challenging task in both fields. Usually, I relied on the project participants and their willingness to ask their parents first whether they would agree and be willing to participate in the research. Only then would the project participants provide me with their parents' contact or other details so that I could reach them directly. While this strategy usually ended in success, the complexity of some participants' relations with their

parents made it impossible to reach them as this would have placed the participants in uncomfortable positions. Some participants were in the midst of difficult family situations, which resulted in the avoidance of one of their parents. Additionally, the mothers of participants coming from female-headed households worked many hours, usually on the weekends as well, and thus, scheduling the interviews presented complications.

However, the long-term ethnographic form of the research provided me with opportunities to engage in activities and events where I could meet the children's parents, predominantly their mothers, directly and in more casual circumstances. The participants' parents usually invited me to their homes where interviews happened in the presence of other family members or, when possible, in a separate room. The isolation was not always achievable as the majority of the research participants lived in two-bedroom apartments with little privacy.

3.3.3 Research ethics

At the beginning of each fieldwork, I obtained written consent from the organizational directors to conduct the research. The consent forms were agreements written by myself in Portuguese. Moreover, we verbally agreed upon practical issues regarding the collection of data. In Felicidade, for example, I could conduct interviews with NGO employees only during their working hours to avoid occupying their free time as they needed to take care of their family (mostly in the case of single mothers). Besides these agreements with the NGO directors, each research participant signed a consent form to participate in the research. With minors (less than eighteen), their participation had to be approved, and informed consent had to be granted by their parents.

Gaining permission from the responsible adult was problematic, especially when interviewing orphans and vulnerable children. Minors are required, in principle, to be assisted by their parent/guardian in the informed consent process. These children were therefore not included in the research.

Despite my identity as a researcher being known to participants and children during the observation and workdays, before each interview, I explained my research topic to all participants in more detail as well as the approximate duration of the interview and its purpose. With the permission of the participants, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Participants were able to refuse a response to any given question and withdraw themselves from the interview at any time. Moreover, while individual interviews were preferred and the most common, before each interview I also indicated to all young participants that it was acceptable

to invite a friend or family member for the interview. Some of the interviews therefore occurred with the presence of a friend or relative.

3.4 Data analysis

In line with Brewer (2000), ethnography cannot be divided into a set of hermetic stages but should be comprehended as a process. What is considered a 'research process' is a series of particular actions which produce the end result of the study, that is, a naturalistic study of social meanings and ordinary activities. Unlike other types of research, ethnography is not a neat series of sequential stages but involves a series of actions which are flexibly coordinated. This also applies to data analysis. Data analysis in ethnography is not treated as a distinct stage of the research but originating in the pre-fieldwork stage and the formulation and clarification of the research problems (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

Every analysis precedes a period of organizing data, also involving the transcription of a large number of interviews obtained in the field. I did not utilize any software to organize and process the data. With the exception of the field notes written in my notebook, additional field notes, reflections, interview transcriptions, and all other sorts of data were stored in digital form on my personal computer.

During the initial stage of bringing order to and making sense of what was happening in the data, a close reading of the data is advised. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) reminds, the organization and analysis of ethnographic data is not a mechanical task; to become familiar with one's own data, recurrent and careful readings of the whole data set is required (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). In a quest to uncover as many insights as possible, the initial task of analysis rests on detailed reading through the collection of data and generating concepts which make sense of them.

I looked carefully at whether there could be any interesting patterns identified in the empirical material; whether some scenes, interactions, and events stood out as unexpected and surprising; whether there were contradictions and similarities among the views of research participants, individuals, groups, and organizations. Through a large amount of data of multiple kinds from multiple sources (fieldnotes from both fields, transcripts, interview notes, official and personal documents) collected in both fields, I searched for important topics and links across the whole corpus.

The analysis therefore did not begin from a well-defined theory. In order to explore how research participants see themselves, how they explain their actions, and to pursue potential analytic ideas about them, I followed a set of particular principles

and practices. During, as well as after the recorded interview transcription process, I commenced organizing the data 'by means of coding and indexing' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 162). Coding the data is the initial analytic phase and serves to create codes which emerge as we repeatedly study the data. In particular, the coding process consisted of breaking down the data into separate units and categories of meaning (Charmaz et al., 1995). During this standard coding procedure, I highlighted essential words and phrases, made many notes in the margin which emphasized relevant, surprising, and common features in each response.

In particular, the inductive coding strategy was used to analyse the data. With this inductive approach to qualitative data analysis, I was able to work 'from the ground up' (Charmaz, 2006: 51), which means from the lowest level of relatively descriptive and concrete codes to the more abstract categories. From categories, I reviewed and outlined what I identified with individual interpretive themes.

While the process of coding data does not follow a linear path, for clarity, I introduced particular analytical stages in sequential order, starting with the generation of open codes, the first analytical level of the coding procedure. This process helped the initial codes and concepts to stand out in participants' narratives. At the next level of analysis, I gathered similar codes into more conceptual categories. Categories developed from this process were more specific (women talking about boys, about sport, about discrimination) and were developed into categories of a more abstract and analytic nature (policing themselves to perform well, blaming themselves, imitating male behaviour, emphasizing LGBT friendship)

The process of generating open codes released numerous themes linked to topics of gender roles, empowerment, queer subjectivities, and homophobia. For example, this step contributed to developing categories which speak for young women's performance of 'heterosexuality' within heteronormative power structures that constrain their participation within the masculine arena of sport.

The critical part of the coding was to develop sensitivity to the research participants' unique language and speech patterns. Language is especially salient for LGBT populations in describing their gender and sexual identities. It was therefore essential to learn and develop sensitivity to the specific language patterns used by young people when describing their sporting experience and perception of gender roles. To this end, codes generated from the original spoken words of the participants, called in vivo codes (Charmaz, 2006), were utilized within the data analysis. For example, the terms *viado* and *Maria macho*, the derogatory terms for male and female homosexuals, were among the in vivo codes. Youth and their families used them in our interviews and conversations when speaking critically about sexuality

and homophobia.

To specify the properties and dimensions of a category (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) and reassemble and organize a large amount of data in a new, fresh way, open coding was followed by, and partially undertaken in tandem, with axial coding. The aim was to identify relationships between the open codes. In doing so, I was able to make connections between categories I had formulated. For example, I analysed how both women and men understood women's participation in football, and therefore, how female identities are reproduced. To do this, I first analysed boys' reactions to girls' involvement in sport and created codes from their descriptions of female sports involvement in Brazil (e.g., normal, strange, not common, different, beneficial). Within the axial coding, these codes were analysed in relation to their context (e.g., in a conversation about the project, a story describing a childhood experience), conditions (upon being asked), and consequences (exclusion of girls from the game, encouraging them).

To capture how youth find and give meaning to their participation in sport and how gender norms are shifted or reinforced, I paid attention to the role of their families, parents, friends, and the wider community. Being immersed within the field setting, raised questions and ethnographic dilemmas regarding power relations, privilege, language, and trust. In the next chapter, dedicated to ethnographic reflexivity, I unpack the particularities of my broader ethnographic challenge to 'build closeness and navigate distances' with research participants.

4 | Positionality, Power, and Privilege: Ethnographer Reflexivity

> Those people—foreign visitors, gringos—they say they come here to do research and get involved in the project, but actually, they never talk to us, and they never take a community bus as you do. They are distant. They would never spend time with us outside the organization as you do. They come in their private cars or buses with dark windows, and in the afternoon, they go away... Sometimes, I just forget that you are not Brazilian. (Roberta, 18 years old female participant, March 2018, Eldorado)

During a casual conversation while waiting for the bus in one of Sao Paulo's peripheries known as poverty-stricken and crime driven, my gatekeeper, Roberta, all of the sudden expressed several concerns, which, to an extent, capture the nature of my positionality in the field. She contrasted me with her perception of interactions with other 'foreign visitors' or 'gringos'. Those encounters have been defined by physical and emotional distance—evidenced in this context by an absence of trust in researchers who 'never talk' to them (her or other project participants), who come with 'private cars' expressing social status and power through 'dark windows', exacerbating an existing state of alienation.

Sharing her perspective with me in such a casual situation, Roberta made me aware of the different relationship between us, the building of which was by no means guaranteed. We had things in common—both young women, interested in sports, me speaking with Roberta in her native language. These, combined with the significant time spent together, were factors that played a vital role in the process of establishing our relationship, one which became a close friendship as the fieldwork proceeded. Still, as concerns class, race, and sexuality, more specific hierarchies emerged. When talking

about racism, poverty, homophobia, and how they affected Roberta's daily life, power asymmetry, my privilege, and a number of non-shared experiences complicated the scenario.

Amidst this example, I start from the point that the research process was characterized by fluidity, as categories such as gender, class, race, education, sexuality play out differently with different individuals and groups. While I position myself as a White, middle-class, educated women, these identities change at different moments. I was able to develop good friendships with people in the field from different backgrounds who made me feel and be an insider, while other times, I remained an outsider—here, age, generation, or Portuguese accent counted as well.

With the same ease with which people in the field such as Roberta saw me as someone 'different' from 'others' (international volunteers, researchers, foreigners) and, therefore, as 'Brazilian', they also thought of me as another 'gringa' who comes as an outsider to their culture and an outsider I was to remain. For example, it was Roberta's mother who, on several occasions, reminded me of my outsider position in the setting I was studying. Speaking in Portuguese always made me feel like more of an insider. I also knew that people felt more comfortable and were more open when they realized I spoke their language. But when I met Roberta's mother for the first time and introduced myself to her, she replied only with: 'Ah, é você, *aquela gringa*? Prazer!' (Is it you, that gringa? Nice to meet you!); in our many future encounters, I was only aquela gringa.

However, the researcher position in the field is far more complex than merely being either an insider or outsider. The initial anthropological and sociological debates about insider/outsider status focused on discussion of the advantages and disadvantages each status carried for the researcher, as it was strongly assumed that a researcher was either an insider or outsider (Merriam et al., 2001). There is, however, a significant volume of contemporary literature around issues of the insider–outsider debate in qualitative research (see De Andrade, 2000; Kauffman, 1994; Labaree, 2002; Tinker and Armstron, 2008), influenced among others by critical and feminist theory as well as postmodernism, which have begun to focus their efforts to looking beyond this methodological dichotomy in qualitative research, and it emphasizes the complexity innate in both locations. As Merriam et al. (2001) proposed, there is a 'complexity inherent in either status and . . . the boundaries between the two positions are not all that clearly delineated' (Merriam et al., 2001: 405).

Moreover, there are also dilemmas about assumed advantages and disadvantages of being an insider or outsider to a culture. While some of the perceived values of being an 'insider' is that it facilitates access to research participants and particular

groups, provides the researcher with the ability to ask relevant questions, and bring more accurate understanding of the culture under investigation (Berger, 2015), it is curiosity with the unfamiliar and the ability to ask provocative questions as well as being perceived as non-aligned (which is, however, negotiated, not given) that are ascribed as the advantages to being an outsider. But, as I will illustrate in this chapter, these meanings and characteristics are too simple to capture the real practice and reality which I encountered during my fieldwork while trying to 'fit in' or not within various different groups and individuals. More exactly, there are risks associated with an insider's position and the familiarity of the researcher with the participant's realities as well as challenges related to researching the unfamiliar[23].

Amidst these discussions, there is 'a good bit of slippage and fluidity' between the insider and outsider locations (Merriam et al., 2001: 405). Ethnographers are continually both insiders and outsiders in every research setting and are likely to manoeuvre between these locations as they oscillate between similarity and difference given the 'multifaceted nature of identity' (Tinker and Armstron, 2008: 53).

Roberta's and the example of others further in this chapter discuss and engage with issues of power, privilege, and positionality when conducting research on SFD across cultural boundaries. I have embedded this discussion in actual practice and personal encounters from the research by presenting four 'tales from the field' (Van Maanen, 1988), which can be characterized as manoeuvring between *closeness* and *distance*, between 'insider' and 'outsider' positions. These tales unpack specific ethnographic dilemmas, particularly concerning power relations, language, trust, and access to research participants.

In addition, I found it crucial to clarify that whilst I found myself in some kind of insider/outsider position, I could not disengage from my 'Global North' identity. My position in the field was rather a *hybrid*, based on the fluid intersectional identities of the researcher and the researched, producing multiple positionalities. Hence, given the complexity inherent to the insider and outsider status of the researcher, it leads me to also problematize the somewhat taken-for-granted Global North identity—that is, to examine the binary and homogenizing categories of a Global North or South researcher identity, and to examine the complexity inherent to the Northern identity. Within SDP literature, the heterogeneity of the North and some kind of multiple positionalities are reflected by the authors in the field. Their concerns

[23]For example, Berger (2015) indicates that being an immigrant facilitated her ability to build rapport with the group of immigrant women she studied to address specific topics more easily and to be aware that these topics should be adressed, and thus, it provided her with benefits unavailable to a researcher with a non-immigrant status. On the other hand, she also reported the dangers of researching the familiar, in particular, the risk of withholding information the researcher assumes to be obvious and therefore overlooking certain aspects of the participants' experience (Berger, 2015).

about the reconceptualization of power and colonial relationships encouraged them to adopt innovative methods, especially participatory research. They advocate for such approaches as local people are positioned as agents 'who possess skills, knowledge, and experiences to offer insights' (Darnell et al., 2016: 572) in SDP research. In this regard, scholars seek to 'recover the voices of the disadvantaged and oppressed' (Darnell and Hayhurst, 2012: 115) in order to challenge the colonial residue within research (Nicholls et al., 2011).

I agree with these authors and argue that there is no way how to not think and reflect the broader colonial past and power imbalances when studying sport in international development. As Badwall (2015) alleged, 'Historically, racialized bodies have been constituted as the Other—subjects to be regulated, controlled, and saved within the colonial project by white, bourgeois subjects' (Badwall, 2015: 1). Therefore, I feel it is my obligation to position myself within the Global North identity, given certain privileges and power asymmetry while also acknowledging the place from which I speak.

Yet, there is certainly a blank space which invites us to think and reflect beyond these categories and bring less obvious *complexities* to the surface in order to understand how neocolonial tendencies influence the contemporary research experience, outcomes, and those under study. By complexities, I mean multiple positionalities, not just those based on race, class, gender, or education but, for example, age, generation, and language as well. These, too, make a difference and have undoubtedly direct influence on the research experience in the field and research outcomes.

In the section which follows, I discuss reflexivity as vital to feminist research and methodology. Neither researcher nor those under study 'come to a scene untouched by the world' (Charmaz, 2006: 15). As she emphasizes in the following:

> Researchers and research participants make assumptions about what is real, possess stocks of knowledge, occupy social statuses, and pursue purposes that influence their respective views and actions in the presence of each other. Nevertheless, researchers, not participants, are obligated to be reflexive about what we bring to the scene, what we see, and how we see it' (Charmaz, 2006: 15).

Therefore, throughout this chapter I will reflect upon constraints and challenges derived from the ethnographic research.

4.1 Being a 'visitor': Constraints in the field

As mentioned in chapter 3, unlike the positivist model which encourages the researcher to strive for objectivity by erasing all personal influences and also assuming the researcher's outsider status as static, ethnographers interrogate their subjectivity to represent and legitimize their data and emphasize the role of reflexivity as a methodological tool. As Pillow (2003) puts it, 'Reflexivity is commonly used in qualitative research and has been posited and accepted as a method qualitative researchers can and should use to legitimize, validate, and question research practices and representations' (Pillow, 2003: 175).

Researchers are expected to acknowledge and 'understand the role of the self in the creation of knowledge' (Berger, 2015: 2), that is, to be conscious and reflect on how their position, interests, and feelings shape the research process in all stages (Nencel, 2014; Pillow, 2003; Thorpe and Pringle, 2017). Being reflexive means a 'turning of the researcher lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one's own situatedness within the research and the effect it may have on the setting and people being studied, questions being asked, data being collected' (Berger, 2015: 2). This also includes reflexivity about power relations and 'traps' while studying the unfamiliar. When studying areas and phenomena, researchers who lack primary or secondary experience may face challenges in the conceptualization of research questions and the interpretation of the participant experience (Smith, 1999).

There is a consensus among contemporary ethnographers that the reflexive approach serves as a measure for defining the validity and quality of our work (Nencel, 2014; Pillow, 2003; Thorpe and Pringle, 2017). Although reflexivity might provide guidance to improve research relationships and draw more attention to the privileged position of the researcher, being a reflexive ethnographer is ambivalent and complex. Reflecting on ourselves within our personal and cultural biographies can contribute to deconstructing many taken-for-granted assumptions and experiences. However, according to postmodern feminist critique, reflexivity serves as a 'tool of the privileged' (Nencel, 2014: 77). Thus, researchers, through reflexivity, may 'perpetuate colonial relationships while at the same time attempting to mask this power over the subject' (Pillow, 2003: 185).

Feminist scholars have proposed significant research practices which challenge existing power relations and support change, whether individual or social (Acker, Barry, and Esseveld, 1983; Mauthner and Doucet, 2003; Speer, 2002). These scholars are not only aware of power dynamics within research, but they negotiate it in their attempts to foster equitable and non-hierarchical relations by foregrounding women's

experiences, by advocating for research which is 'non-exploitative' and 'respondent-centered'—in other words, research which cultivates conditions for empowerment and reciprocity as well as deconstructs the author's authority on the research (England, 1994). A similar question is also interrogated in the study of (Spaaij et al., 2017) who discuss participatory methods as a way in which research participants can participate in knowledge production.

I agree with England (1994) that reflexivity leads to an awareness of asymmetrical or exploitative relationships but does not reduce them, and I claim that scholars still need to discuss their positions and explore how they practice reflexivity (Pillow, 2003). Power relations are inevitable and 'manifested in multiple forms' (Kim, 2012: 134). However, the researcher's position is not fixed but dynamic, in accordance with the negotiations and reconstructions of the research relationships (Kim, 2012: 134). This statement is particularly relevant in the case of the ethnographic approach, where ethnographers are supposed to develop close contact with members of the community or group under study.

Through negotiations, researchers establish different dynamics of research relationships based on trust and confidence, cultivated, for example, by knowledge of a local language and long-term fieldwork. However, reflecting upon my research experience, relationships also consisted of interactions whereupon cultivating conditions for reciprocity or deconstructing my authority were confusing or not possible. In the next section, I illustrate strategies developed as a reflection of my position and 'multiple forms of power relations' in getting closer to research participants and overcoming the status of outsider and foreigner.

As a female ethnographer, I was reflecting upon how my position shaped the research process and analysis, and I also reflected upon the impact I had on the accounts of others' lives (see Speer, 2002). In what follows, I unpack specific constraints which occurred in the field and their implications on the practice.

4.1.1 Hearts and genitalia

During the fieldwork in Felicidade, I attended several thematic workshops on issues like gender, sexuality, and emotional health. Those dialogues with project recipients always happened in connection with sports activities during the week. Before attending a specific workshop, I discussed my participation with the project coordinator. One of the sessions I participated in was devoted to issues of gender and body and consisted of children between the ages of ten and twelve. They were asked in separate groups to draw and model (with a mass made of flour and water) the male and female body with visible features specific to such a body on an empty

paper poster:

> I was seated next to the female coach and was located within close proximity to project participants. The girls slowly drew a heart and looked at each other, hesitatingly. They seemed shy and insecure. The female coach noticed that and tried to motivate them. She asked them several times what a woman's body has that we can see with our eyes. But they stayed quiet, looking to the ground. I also wanted to say something, but it would not have been appropriate. I was a foreign woman to them. After a while I stood up and went to have a look on the opposite side of the pitch where the group of boys were situated. The boys seemed to enjoy the session. They laughed and talked loudly. I saw they had modelled male genitalia and chest hair, among other things. At the end of the session the boys drew a heart too. (Fieldnotes, May 2018, Eldorado)

After the workshop, I discussed what had happened in the session with the project coordinator. We concluded that it was better that I did not participate in sessions specifically designed for the youngest children; there were organizational constraints as the NGO was committed to providing a safe space for the children involved in the projects. Thus, as the coordinator further explained, 'my presence as a foreign, unknown person could disrupt the project participants in such a way that they would not feel protected and comfortable engaging in the activity fully' (Fieldnotes, May 2018, Eldorado). This single research experience demonstrates a multiplicity of positionalities. First, I was convinced that my presence made the difference and that some children felt shy because of my presence as a foreign woman. I was convinced that my status as a visitor and Other, resulted in a situation in which the young girls did not feel comfortable in their space and felt insecure carrying on with their tasks.

However, and secondly, what seems more plausible as an explanation of the girl's hesitancy is the nature of the task itself. Asked to draw a woman's body, children may react in the same way and also be hesitant in other environments, such as at school or at home. And third, it was my position as an outsider to the culture I was studying and my unfamiliarity with it which caused me to overlook another important dimension. Speaking about the female body was specifically problematic due to broader patriarchal culture and socialization which constrained women and affected their self-perception of their bodies. I had acquired these insights about specificities on girlhood through stories shared with me by the young women from the project in previous stages of the fieldwork; they helped me change how I viewed

this particular situation. Several authors above pointed out that there are risks and challenges related to researching the unfamiliar. The latter was my case. I did not have direct experience with what it is to grow up in the community I was studying. Due to my outsider position, I was aware that what I could see from that position, and also how I saw it, was influenced by my background.

Based on this experience, I argue for *sober* reflexivity, but not an over-reflexivity about the researcher's capacity to directly influence what is being observed. Overemphasis on the researcher's role in altering the scenario and people in the field can be misleading, as I have tried to substantiate with the example above.

Moreover, and as I have already suggested in chapter 3, the idea that only women understand other women relies on essentialist assumptions about the inherent existence of feminine empathy or 'universal womanhood' (Enguix, 2014: 84). On the other hand, there also exist shared embodied practices as well as differences between those women (and individuals in general) who are claimed to share a particular identity (e.g., gays, lesbians). Thus, although my experiences differed from those of women I interviewed, these women I met in the field can experience their identity, with its privileges and oppressions, differently. I argue here that in order to find out what it meant for the young girls to be asked to draw a woman's body, I needed to understand the girls' (and boys') experience of living in the community and growing up there first, as well as reflect on the sociocultural context. Moreover, I also had to consider how specific aspects of identity, such as religion, sexuality, or race, affect these particular experiences[24].

4.1.2 Meeting Vilma

I met Vilma at a woodworking workshop organized by Felicidade. She came to participate in the workshops together with her two daughters. When we were alone, having tea in the room, I asked about her experience with Felicidade, and whether she would be interested in meeting me for an interview. She agreed and then started to share some of her insights about how she thought the ongoing workshop empowered local women. I asked Vilma later what her thoughts were when I proposed to record an interview. 'I was surprised', she said, 'because I always thought it's men who do research. I felt extraordinary.'

During one of the encounters with Vilma, I faced a situation which once more raised further questions about how others perceived my presence in the field, but also how my presence impacted their lives and experiences. Vilma described a conversation with her colleague, after she'd told her about me going to Vilma's house

[24]More details can be found, for example, in chapter 7, focused on queer subjectivities.

to record an interview, as follows:

> And she [her colleague] told me, 'Be serious! You are poor. You are from the favela. You don't have chairs. You don't have a table in your house. And her, she is an educated woman, a foreign woman. You really believe that an educated foreign woman will ever be interested in coming to your dirty house?' Vilma remained quiet for a while, and her eyes went red. With an anguished tone of voice, she strived to finish the story as she started to cry. (Fieldnotes, June 2018, Eldorado)

Here, education and foreign status are raised as an issue. It was a threat to those of comparatively lower levels of education. Being a foreigner, at university, and conducting research, I was seen as 'knowing subject', located within the status of prestige that only exacerbated asymmetrical power relations.

Similar to the workshop observation, Vilma's story requires critical scrutiny of research relations. As with other research participants, with Vilma, I was seeking a non-exploitative research relationship, and I aimed to leave space for her and the story she was sharing with me. As Pillow (2003) reminds, developing 'reciprocity with research subjects—hearing, listening, and equalizing the research relationship' leads to 'doing the research "with" instead of "on"' (Pillow, 2003: 179).

However, Forde (2015) argues that researchers are in a privileged position in the process of consuming another's pain, emotions, and expressions. This allows researchers to feel better about [them]selves, as 'caring and compassionate individuals' (Forde, 2015: 13). In this particular research situation, I could not ignore feeling uncomfortable with how I was involved in Vilma's story. Yet, at the same time, I did not have any control over relations beyond the research. This particular episode with Vilma's colleague reflected broader issues which Vilma was facing in her daily life, that is, of racism and sexism.

Two significant concerns were apparent to me. First, there are aspects which researchers in the field can influence through their agency, but it is necessary to acknowledge that there also exist structural factors which the researcher can hardly influence and control, and thus, there is always inevitable dilemmas related to efforts of negotiating power which emerge within the research.

Second, after the interview with Vilma, and from these concerns, emerged my realization that being reflexive about power and privilege made me powerless as I was not prepared for these moments. When I began to speak with and interview other racialized participants, I realized others were having similar experiences, including young men as well. Although I was in the position of a 'Northern' researcher,

which itself carries certain burdens (Chawansky, 2015), the broader historical, social structures and social forces continue to shape and restrain individual agency and contemporary relations.

4.2 'Never trust gringos': Sharing secrets and cultivating trust

NGOs as a research site are 'placed conveniently between the familiar SDP rhetoric and practice and the point of access to local populations' (Collison and Marchesseault, 2018: 230-231). In my case, it is worth acknowledging that part of my success in gaining access to project participants and their families should be attributed to the mediating role of the non-governmental organizations through which I entered both fields. I was in an advantageous position to access the groups of NGO workers, young people, children, and their parents. Yet, my relationship with them was mediated differently by both NGOs, and, as the initial quote of Roberta's suggests, my success in establishing trust was not guaranteed.

It was the role of the NGO in my accessed negotiations that, to an extent, strengthened my Northern and outsider identity, as some individuals in the field emphasized my 'privilege of leaving' one day back to a country which 'does not face so many severe problems as that of Brazil' (Fieldnotes, October, 2017, Campinho).

At the same time, my status as an outsider and the advantages and disadvantages which the position carries was not static but constantly under negotiation. On one hand, I was not perceived as an 'outsider, and thus non-aligned'. In Bola Dourada, I was assumed to be aligned with the head of organization in order to 'control' what is happening 'on the ground'. At the same time, my outsider status rendered me something of a curiosity, and some agreed to be interviewed so they could have a close encounter with a 'foreign, Portuguese-speaking young lady'. Lolo, for example, revealed in our interviews together that he 'told all his friends that he has a foreign friend who speaks Portuguese'. Others also shared this with their friends and, for instance, brought their friend to the interview.

Both research fields brought different demands as well as strategies concerning how to establish relationships with the people under study. Not all employees I was supposed to be in daily interactions with knew about my research intentions at the beginning, and this was to my advantage in that I could create and establish new identities. Following Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), independent of people's knowledge and attitude towards one's social research, they will usually be 'more concerned with what kind of person the researcher is than with the research it-

self' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 65).

Hence, I usually strived to step away from the shared 'gringo' category, from these 'gringo boots', and emphasize that I might be 'gringo but different'. This term, used for foreigners in Portuguese, was already burdened with multiple meanings, which I discovered only over time. Marcos, an NGO coordinator, stated after our interview that 'people here [in the NGO] told me, "Never trust gringos, they will disappoint you"' (Fieldnotes, November 2017, Campinho). Marcos was referring to trust and honesty because he already had a negative experience with another volunteer. Seeking the support he was not receiving from the NGO employees, Marcos shared with him some of the difficulties he was facing (disputes with the director of the organization, problems related to work). But he was disappointed after he discovered that the volunteer did not keep his word as he had promised. Roberta had a different, although rather bitter experience with foreigners, as is suggested in the initial quote of this chapter.

The most useful strategy to elicit trust was participating in different levels of engagement as well as making myself accessible to be observed, given orders, and questioned. Beyond coaching sport, I spent time chatting in the offices of the sports coaches and other NGO workers, joining in informal daily practices, and sharing humorous situations as well as moments of insecurity and fears, which later on led to construing shared memories and experiences. As the fieldwork progressed, I recognized some local workers started to reveal confidential information, feelings, and stories related to their work in the NGO and their personal lives. Several times during conversations which could not be recorded, I was asked to 'keep a secret'. Informants would share different types of information outside the organizational settings. On the way to sessions or during informal meetings on the weekend, some participants openly told me phrases, such as: 'Don't tell anyone, but I'll tell you something you should know.'

For example, while repeatedly visiting one of the project workers in her home, she revealed how she had to deal with families who wished to remove their children, especially young girls, from the development project as a consequence of the gender and sexuality workshops[25]. As Gold (1997) reminds us, 'The field-worker continually negotiates with informants what is mutually acceptable as proper, right, and safe to talk about at given stages in their relationship and thus of his or her understanding of what they are prepared to say' (Gold, 1997: 394). Long-term observations and time spent in the field were necessary to build trust and strong reciprocal relationships as well as the reconceptualization of research questions.

[25]More details can be found, for example, in chapter 7 focused on queer subjectivities.

There were, therefore, two different sides of me: my personal history, which helped me to become closer to people in the field and build a rapport with them—I spoke their language, spent time with project participants outside of the NGO setting, I was married to a Brazilian, and I did things the way people in the field did thing,s such as taking the same bus and living in their community. This personal history thus affected some people in the project to perceive me as someone who is 'different' from 'others' (international volunteers, researchers, foreigners).

Not only Roberta but other research participants, such as Adriana—mentioned in the previous chapter—also invited me to their homes to meet their families. Those moments were significant as they made me feel like an 'insider' in another culture I was studying. Moreover, it was not just me who felt that way, as Roberta herself acknowledged a few times, 'I sometimes forget you're not Brazilian'. It was my personal history that was essential in establishing proximity and relations based on trust.

Living in the community also allowed others to consider me more of an 'insider'. In fact, the experience of 'living in the community' did make me an insider in the eyes of the people I encountered. It was still visible that I am white, which itself did not imply my foreign status; however, it did implied that 'I am not from favela' as the majority of population inside the favelas and communities are non-White.

And still, in the middle of this kindness and generosity expressed by many families which invited me to their homes, one could identify within their narratives the rhetoric of 'benevolence for the "Northern" saviour' and 'gratitude for the assistance' (see Spivak, 1984). It is necessary here to recall and explain in more detail why, whilst being from central Europe—meaning I come from a different historical background than UK volunteers—I consider myself as part of the Global North. It is important to acknowledge how personal history adds another dimension to the Northern identity and creates new interesting dynamics, as Adriana many times repeated, 'You foreigners [meaning me and other international workers], leave your country to come here to help our community. We are so grateful for having you here. We only have to thank you' (Adriana, 46 years-old, November 2017, Campinho).

I argue that, as Spivak (1984) states, as researchers, we should be more 'vigilant about our practices' (Spivak, 1984: 185), that is, vigilant about how we negotiate our insider/outsider as well as our Northern identity in order to avoid placing ourselves uncritically as 'outsiders', and therefore escaping from acknowledging our own complicity in North–South politics.

4.2.1 The Myth of 'Womenhood'

Within the trust-establishing process and in dealing with power relations, it was necessary to reflect on gendered access to young women. I was cautious about how asymmetrical power relations and other aspects of my identity impact the research process, access, and the collection of data. For example, while trying to build rapport with female community leaders from Felicicade, Taís, the female coordinator was an important gatekeeper to the leader's group. As Roberta, a member of the group, later remembered, 'If she [Taís] hadn't have told us that you wanted to talk to us because of your research and that you are a foreign researcher, I would probably have never wanted to talk with you at all if I saw you on the pitch' (Fieldnotes, July 2018, Eldorado). Taís played a significant role here, but her influence was also limited, as was the case with Marcela.

That said, as a woman, I had a relative advantage of getting closer to female participants. I could enter diverse spaces, such as community events in which only women were allowed to participate or girls-only sessions. However, I argue that engaging in feminist-based interviews and questions while neglecting issues of race leaves invisible the experiences and struggles of women of colour (Best, 2003). The following quote is an excerpt from a conversation with a non-White, female participant about my research topic:

> It would be weird you going to the periferia, calling all the Black people and all the Black kids and saying, 'Oh, tell me what it is like to suffer racism.' Oh yes, it would be weird, but you are addressing female empowerment, pff. You have all my support. [. . .] I don't think a White guy will ever know what it is really like to suffer racism. You have never experienced it. Dude, you never suffered prejudice. You don't know what it is. You go to a store, you leave, and people keep looking at you, Black security keeps looking at you, thinking you stole something. Dude... So, about female empowerment, regardless of whether you're Brown, White, Black, Yellow, Blue, you're female. So, you wanting to research female empowerment is your obligation. (Roberta, May 2018, Eldorado)

In my research, from a location of a White woman, I conducted the majority of interviews with non-White participants, both women and men. Among the issues that women, more than young men, uncovered and that hinted at significant concerns in their everyday journeys, were direct experiences with racism. Here, being White presented barriers in understanding the particular forms of oppression and experiences in women's lives. In some situations, women themselves emphasized my

Whiteness as problematic and rendered me completely as an outsider, affecting and limiting my access to some female participants.

Marcela was a female educator with whom I never managed to establish a relationship, even though her refusal was not verbally expressed; we were distant from the very beginning of my fieldwork in Felicidade. I had better relations with her other female colleagues among whom she also had a friendly relationship. After she avoided a group interview and withdrew from talking to me, I respected her dismissal, maintained the distance already established in the earlier stages and did not interview her. It was a combination of diverse aspects which resulted in Marcela's distance. My thoughts in relation to her consisted mainly of self-doubt, whether it was the fact that I was a foreign, White woman which influenced this particular research relationship. Gender intersects with other categories (Mohanty, 1984) and, most importantly, the influence of gender on the research 'must be contextualized, that is, related directly to the kind of societies that are being studied' (Enguix, 2014: 84).

For example, Forde (2015), in his reflexive account of his experience as an SDP worker in Africa, presents the construction of race and masculinity and recognizes the 'problematic nature of analyzing whiteness' (Forde, 2015: 5) and masculinity in the SDP field. In an attempt to deconstruct Whiteness, there is a risk of limiting the description of one's own White privilege, which fails to acknowledge and challenge White supremacy as maintaining oppressions and inequalities.

I constantly negotiated my role in the field in an attempt to influence how people would identify and trust me. The long-term nature of the ethnographic research did allow me to establish trust with many young individuals, including LGBT youth; however, our bonds and relationships were by no means guaranteed.

They were the result of step-by-step negotiations which took place at different times and in different spaces both within and outside of the SDP environment. After Marcos shared his remark about trust and gringos, I realized that, to some degree, I had succeeded in building a rapport. With trust, there was also a commitment towards the research informants, since sharing their experiences with me occurred under a specific promise. They were concerned that once I was back from the field, I would 'disappear', usually adding, 'We trust you, don't disappoint us', and 'Once you write a book, don't forget about us'.

My position in the field was multiple, changeable, and privileged, specifically as a volunteer and researcher, between 'insider' and 'outsider'. The way in which these multiple positionalities played out differently in regard to my research status was especially worth considering when building rapport with LGBT youth. I address

those issues in the following section.

4.2.2 Studying LGBT youth

Everyday interactions and the relatively high level of trust established, allowed me to access various 'sensitive' stories. Whilst the primary aim of this thesis was to critically analyse the impact of the programmes on young people's lives in terms gender relation, the exploratory nature of the qualitative research process and the depth of engagement with participants and their families enabled a more extensive range of information beyond the primary research objectives being uncovered.

Sexuality and heteronormativity were among the topics which proved to be critical for the SFD programmes and their broader agenda. Moreover, the intersection of sexuality, safety, and homophobia started to emerge as new topics within the participants' narratives. Thus, my initial aim shifted from an exclusive focus on gender and empowerment to a focus on queer.

Over the course of my field research, I could not neglect the complex and tense relations regarding LGBT rights and the public debates occurring in Brazil. Furthermore, studying queer lives from the position of a young central European White heterosexual female researcher-development worker demanded engaging in the complex process of self-reflexivity (Berger, 2015; McDonald, 2013; Pillow, 2003). The numerous dilemmas which resulted from researching the sensitive topic of sexuality were recorded within my fieldnotes. Specifically, questions arose of whether and how my identity compromised the quality of the data and access to the participants (Callaway, 1992; McDonald, 2013), as well as questions concerning the power relations between researcher and the researched (England, 1994).

In order to be sensitive to queer subjects, Ferguson (2013) suggests the acceptance of 'a "language of difference" which is focused on the multilayered understanding of difference rather than a concern for stable identity' (Ferguson, 2013: 6). In other words, and as mentioned previously, it is important to reflect on how categories of difference shape our research. Furthermore, identities and identifications can change and be experienced differently throughout the research process (McDonald, 2013).

Multiple aspects of identity, such as gender, age, and sexuality, played an important role throughout all stages of the fieldwork, and they were experienced differently in relation to male and female participants. While I was able to establish a rapport with young women and girls, including those self-identified as lesbian or bisexual, to an exceptional degree, interviews with men identified as gay are almost entirely absent from the data. Interviews with young men were, however, conducted in the study. Still, my identity as a young White woman may have impacted the range

of issues men were willing to discuss. Furthermore, given that my first attempts to conduct an interview with a young man identified as gay were refused, my identity also had an impact on access to gay participants.

Whilst my outsider status was initially problematic, several times while trying to build a rapport, I was overcome by feelings of inadequacy and insecurity, and I struggled with personal feelings of being 'overlooked' and being perceived by others as an unknown 'stranger' (Fieldnotes, March 2018, Eldorado). Once I became frequently involved in the organization's events and activities, my outsider status shifted. While still perceived as a foreign woman, I was becoming more of an 'insider with good intentions', 'someone they could trust'. LGBT participants introduced me to their partners over time and, as they reported, 'You must have had good intentions; otherwise, the NGO would not receive you.' I realized at this point that my position within the field had changed, and I had gained their trust.

4.3 Language, power, and the 'technologies of colonization'

4.3.1 Language and situated voices

Ethnography, and particular forms of ethnography such as the ethnography on sport and development conducted in the Global South by researchers from the Global North, may require the researcher to work in two or more different languages or with the assistance of an interpreter. While researchers are expected to acknowledge and 'understand the role of the self in the creation of knowledge' (Berger, 2015: 2), that is, to be conscious and reflect on how their position, interests, and feelings shape the research process in all stages (Pillow, 2003), the ability/inability to speak the same language as the research participants has to date been rather neglected'(Gibb and Danero Iglesias, 2017). Struggles which may appear during the fieldwork and that the researcher must face are, to a certain extent, caused by a lack of language skills, proficiency, or even the ability to adopt the *language of the context.*

Puwar (2004) emphasizes the connection between colonialism and language when arguing that 'language is one of a range of methods that have been utilised to induce rationality, civility and civilisation in foreign bodies' (Puwar, 2004: 108). Messner and Bozada-Deas (2009) draw upon feminist linguists (e.g. Thorne et al., 1983) who have argued that 'language is a powerful element of social life . . . , it also helps to construct our notions of what is normal and what is an aberration' (Messner and Bozada-Deas, 2009: 58). In this sense, language-related issues play an essential role

in the insider/outsider debates and the role of language in rapport building with participants, but they also prove useful in reflexive processes in relation to social identity (including gender, race, class) as well as the Northern identity and power inequalities.

Considering its critical importance to understanding sport for development, it thus comes as a surprise that one of the issues which has received a disproportionate amount of attention within the SFD field is that of reflexivity and language. Relatively few scholars have written about and discussed the issues related to how knowledge of the research participants' language, or lack thereof, affects the research they have conducted.

One reflexive account on language within the context of SFD comes from Hayhurst (2016), who admits it was impossible for her to 'conduct the entire interview in English' with local workers in Uganda (Hayhurst, 2016: 18) and illustrates what limitations might arise when researchers from the Global North use the English language within cross-cultural SDP research in non-Western sites. For example, while referring to the concept of 'empowerment', Hayhurst (2016) points to its varying interpretation when translated from English to the local language. By illustrating complexities surrounding translation and language, the author also reflects upon broader neocolonial relations of power and knowledge within SDP, precisely on the use of English as a 'technology of colonization' (Hayhurst, 2016: 9).

In her auto-ethnographic study, Chawansky (2015) too brings language and power relations under academic scrutiny. She acknowledges that a lack of knowledge of the local language not only 'seemed to limit any substantial conversation' but also negatively affected participants' perceptions of themselves (Chawansky, 2015: 1). Various examples in her study are illustrative of how profoundly language proficiency/inability affects the researcher's position within the field, and, in particular, how the lack of language skills may consequently lead to 'self-silencing' as a result of the inability to speak the participant's language (Chawansky, 2015: 6).

Both studies therefore illuminate how power inequalities are exacerbated specifically through the researcher's reliance on local people's ability to speak the researcher's language. I argue that exploring the linguistic aspects of the researcher experience and its implication for the research relationship within the field setting prove to be necessary for discussions on how the outsider position of the researcher as an 'expert' together with the Global North/South divide might be strengthened due to the lack of common/mutual language skills; the linguistic aspect is essential to retheorizing the monolithic category of 'Northern' researcher.

Research relationships are inherently hierarchical; however, that does not imply

that one should not adopt 'strategies to counterbalance this inevitability' (England, 1994: 250). I took an active role especially within the sports sessions provided by English-only speaking sports coaches. I could engage more directly and critically within various social and sporting spaces to gain deeper insights. I was situated in a position which allowed me to obtain ethnographically rich material consisting of interviews and fieldnotes recorded in three distinct languages (namely Czech, English, and Portuguese), and I was continuously speaking, writing, reflecting, and interviewing principally in Portuguese.

That said, as a Portuguese-speaking woman, I was situated in an advantageous position which allowed me, to an extent, to mitigate these power imbalances embedded within the use of the English language as well as in the Northern identity more broadly, and negotiate my outsider status to one of insider.

> The sports session was about to begin, and children started to arrive. I was sitting next to Marcos, observing. The children did not know me yet, and I was nervous about the class beginning and presenting myself. As a tall, White woman, I was conscious of how different I looked. While waiting and listening to the children talk to each other, I heard from the group of boys behind me, saying between themselves in Portuguese, 'Hey, look. She is a gringa. Can you speak English? Say something in English to her [to me]. She will not understand Portuguese.' Once I heard that, and as the football session was about to begin, I turned to them and in Portuguese asked how they were doing, and if they wanted to join the game. They looked at each other and seemed confused and surprised. In reaction, one of the boys asked, 'Are you Brazilian?' (Fieldnotes, September 2017, Campinho)

This episode from the field diary reflects the issues of language, translation, and power as they were present throughout the daily interactions. As mentioned above, in both fields, I conducted interviews with Brazilian individuals in Portuguese and non-Brazilians in English. Compared to young children in the field who usually do not have access to quality education and do not learn English in public schools, I had the privilege of learning both languages (English and Portuguese) through the initial stages of my schooling.

Still, the use of local language was of high importance here. This episode demonstrates that until I started to speak with these boys in their native language, I was assumed as a gringa. Most of the development workers came to Bola Dourada with little or no knowledge of the Portuguese language, and over several months, they usually improved their language skills while working with local children.

As English-speaking volunteers stated in the interviews and as I observed, they usually learned phrases to guide the sport classes sufficiently and ask children and NGO workers basic questions. Some of the volunteers tried to overcome their language barrier; however, they would sometimes give orders to the children in English. Such an approach, as a consequence, created messy situations. In some cases, during a game, I heard children shouting to the coach in Portuguese, 'Please, speak Portuguese. We do not understand you' (Fieldnotes, March 2017, Campinho).

This point is of high relevance here. In a different research context, some authors (see Hayhurst, 2016; Watson and Scraton, 2001) explore English as the expression of privilege. Therefore, regardless of any 'good' intentions, the already powerful position of 'privileged volunteers' (Forde, 2015: 14) was strengthened by the use of English with children in the sessions. Volunteers were not only authorities, and, from the position of a White Western man (and sometimes woman), transmitting 'life-skills and values' through sport, but, together with limited language skills and a reliance on local children's ability to speak and understand English, they exacerbated colonial power relations, using English as a 'technology of colonization' (see also Palmary, 2014).

Regarding my position in the field, by speaking the local language, I succeeded in establishing relatively strong relationships with NGO workers and research participants. Being entirely and continuously embedded in the field was fundamental to building and cultivating confidence and trust, as I discussed in the previous chapter. In particular, Portuguese language skills provided me in-depth understanding and embedded experience in the field. It affected and extended possibilities of *what* I could see in the field as numerous times I assumed the 'translator' as well as 'conflict-resolving' roles in the field. I was the interpreter in meetings where local NGO workers and volunteers needed to settle organizational rules or resolve disagreements. Daily contact with local people in different spaces, and, most importantly, my ability to speak Portuguese fluently provided me the opportunity to make first-hand observations of what they did, allowing me to fully listen to their situated voices.

4.3.2 Language in the complex web of the researcher's identity

Despite being a foreigner, speaking the local language facilitated access to different research sites, enabled me to incorporate my multiple roles (volunteer, researcher, friend, coach) fully, and also ensured me access to various kinds of data and environments. Hence, distinguishable from some scholars and their concerns related to the use of a translator while conducting interviews and the issues related to the time-consuming process of learning a language before or during the fieldwork (Gibb and

Danero Iglesias, 2017), in my case, knowledge of the local language presented several benefits. I broke the linguistic barrier and avoided some of the ethical dilemmas above-mentioned researchers within SDP research have faced. Moreover, language skills resolved any difficulties concerning an adequate translator choice and problems of 'filtered meaning' (see MacKenzie, 2016). And, finally, employing the local language allowed me to hear what other researchers may miss; specifically, to listen to participant experiences situated in life as it goes.

However, numerous times, I found myself in an ambivalent position. As a White female researcher, multiple power relations entered into question as reminders that dominating/understanding the local language is not an isolated aspect but is rather bounded to other parts of a researcher's identity. I previously, uncritically assumed that the Portuguese language would render invisible or inhibit my outsider position and relatively privileged status; yet, in some situations the opposite occurred, as the following episode from the field diary reveals:

> Children frequently asked me in Portuguese, 'Say something in English.' I knew they were curious and aimed to hear and learn something in the language that many English volunteers before me spoke. However, with a smile, I would usually reply in Portuguese, 'I don't know what to say. English is not my native language.' After that, they usually asked about my origins, the culture and language we speak. Eventually, I would say some words in my native language. (Fieldnotes, October 2017, Campinho)

Puwar (2004)argues that 'the association of European languages with rational thinking, the values of civilisation and intelligence is part and parcel of the long routes of colonisation that make our postcolonial times today' (Puwar, 2004: 108-109). While young children were undoubtedly curious and may have learned English with volunteers before, their demand of me to speak English while knowing I speak Portuguese further emphasizes their perception of me as foreigner, and, therefore, highlights the need to rethink the role of language and its relation to social identity. While I assumed creating relationships and ties based on not knowing English or not having the language dominate could counterbalance colonial power relations, I did not escape being thought of as a foreigner when race, class, and gender were considered.

A similar situation also happened in Felicidade, where the presence of international volunteers or foreigners themselves was rather rare, and my ability to chat and interview in Portuguese created interesting dynamics and situations with the children. It was following an afternoon skate session when Marcelo, the local coach,

turned to me and asked if I could help children complete some questionnaires. As he explained, the younger children knew how to read; however, it was difficult for them to read as fast as adults. As it was the end of the class, the coach found it effective to ask me to help. Without hesitating, I agreed and sat next to Fernando, to whom I was asked to help. He was around eleven years old and holding the paper questionnaire in his hands.

I had already done the work questionnaires before and had not thought of it as something problematic. I started to slowly read in Portuguese the first question followed by three answers from which he was supposed to choose one option. As I finished reading and was waiting for him to reply, the young boy looked at me and said, 'I don't understand you. What language are you speaking?' I was surprised with his answer as I did not expect such a reaction. According to what I heard and observed while communicating with locals, I had assimilated new linguistic rules. My altered form of speaking and mastering of the local slang not only made myself feel less like a gringa and thus serve my personal feeling of confidence, but this 'chameleonic practice' (Baird, 2018: 5) was an essential strategy in strengthening human relationships and understanding as well, making me more accessible in daily interactions. But with Fernando, my foreign identity was revealed through my accent.

I told Fernando it was Portuguese and that I was foreigner, so my accent is been different. Suddenly, Fernando started to ask questions about where I came from, and it seemed that he did understand me. Some children had more intense contact with foreign volunteers/visits and were used to their accent. However, younger project participants might have had limited opportunities to speak to a foreigner and/or hear different accents, and the unusual way of speaking might have left him insecure. I asked Fernando whether he preferred to complete the questionnaire alone, and he agreed.

Later on, in my reflections, I recorded two possible explanations for this situation. First, that local coaches might use another language, the language of the context, as a strategy for avoiding the complexity of the formal language of questionnaires created by adults, or, second, my ability to build rapport through language did not result in the desired and intended outcome due to stronger forces of other aspects of my identity, such as race, class, gender, but also age.

Following these examples, I argue that the proficiency of language does not necessarily translate into *understanding* of the local context. There exist differences between how a researcher speaks and what 'language' is required in a given situation. Understanding the local context may happen not through the use of 'the legitimate language' (Bourdieu, 1992), but through slang and a different accent.

These observations speak to complexities, which are multiple positionalities based on race, class, or gender; education; but also on age and language accent.

I discovered that age, gender, time spent in the field, and language rendered me less of an outsider than I had anticipated. On the other hand, the same factors rendered me an outsider, principally within interactions with male coaches. For example, in Bola Dourada, 'other', principally male volunteers, whose language abilities were more limited, managed to create greater bonds with male coaches. Within the context of Latin America, Baird (2018) suggests that his 'maleness' while researching youth gang members in Colombia from the position of a White researcher helped him 'to build bonds in search for a common ground'. In particular, his strategy was to start conversations by talking about 'football, beer, or women, the usual gamut of what might be called "male patter" to ingratiate myself as "one of the boys"' (Baird, 2018: 13). As he argues, what is effective for male researchers (see also Bourgois et al., 2003; Rodgers, 2007) might not be open to female researchers (see Theidon, 2014) who might eventually become for male respondents sort of a 'friendly grandmother', who might access different types of information and data than a male researcher, mostly opposite to those as she would access as 'one of the boys'.

My situation was different. As suggested previously, the power of my position as a doctoral student at the university facilitated connecting with NGOs to gain access to participants. Conversely, principally males I interviewed subtly negotiated the power not only by determining whether they would be interviewed and when, and what information they shared, but also by interrupting my questions or attempting to lead the conversation about topics which interested them and were unrelated to the research. In their questions, a few times they crossed the line between what I considered I could reveal to them about the research and my personal experience and what I considered as too personal and intimidating.

4.4 Conclusions: Hybrid positionality: 'North', 'South', and in between

In this chapter, my aim was to engage with issues of positionality, power, and privilege that proved to be also relevant for framing the North/South debate in SDP. I argue that my position in the field was a hybrid, and also, given the complexity inherent to the insider and outsider status of the researcher, it led me to discuss the complexity of the category related to the Global North researcher identity.

I started from the point that being an insider/outsider is not static, and that the research process is characterized by fluidity as categories such as gender, class, race,

education, and sexuality play out differently with different individuals and groups. While I position myself as a White, middle-class, educated woman, these identities changed at different moments. By demonstrating how I negotiated my insider/outsider status in the field, I unveiled the processes which provided these categories with new, different, and less obvious meanings based only in actual fieldwork where certain issues arose.

I argue that a researcher is neither an insider nor an outsider, and similarly, as researchers are concerned with insider/outsider dilemmas, they could problematize the North/South dichotomy regarding the researcher identity. The interpretation of the Northern identity is a result of and mediated by interaction of a complex set of status variables, such as gender, class, age, sexuality, religion. Following Merriam et al. (2001), 'the reconstruing of insider/outsider status in terms of one's positionality vis-à-vis race, class, gender, culture and other factors, offer us better tools for understanding the dynamics of researching within and across one's culture' (Merriam et al., 2001: 405).

It has been assumed that the closer the researcher is to participants' class, gender, and race, the more accessible the field is to him or her. I was surprised that, although from a different background, some interactions and access went relatively smoothly, while other situations, particularly when I found myself in the position of a visitor, made me rethink my positionality in new and different ways.

For example, the category of Global North researcher is not monolithic and filled with obvious issues. There are subtle ways of language, personal history, or mutual sorts of empathy which can play a significant role in establishing friendship and trust more so than any other factor. Roberta and I were very different, as I described at the beginning of this chapter. Albeit of similar age, we came from different backgrounds. She is an Afro-Brazilian descendant, and her stories are marked by structural racism and homophobia. Still, she enjoyed my speaking Portuguese and considered me an insider-Brazilian, which she mentioned several times. I did not expect there would be any kind of sisterly bond between us. Still, she supported the idea of researching gender and sport, and presupposed that we had shared experiences as women.

Relations were sometimes based on friendship while on other occasions I was perceived as a visitor, and, therefore, most of the time, I occupied a space in between: sometimes 'North as outsider', sometimes 'Northern but insider', and sometimes 'gringa but different'. Therefore, I found it difficult to work with the binary opposition of North/South. While it is important to think of colonial relations in the field, it is important that this heterogeneity of the North, and some kind of multiple positionalities based on the fluid intersectional identities of the researcher and

researched, be more reflected within SFD studies. I also argue to problematize more assumptions about access, language, power, and insider and outsider status.

There might be a tendency within SFD to oversimplify the binary power relationship embedded within North and South categories of researcher from the North and the researched from the South, which risks that the multidimensional power relationship, shaped by the prevailing cultural values, gender, and educational background but also language and age, will be overlooked.

Conducting interviews in the language of participants instead of relying on their ability to adapt to the researcher's language was an imperative for successful ethnography, yet the very act of conducting research remains a privilege that is strongly determined by one's gender, race, class, and age, among other factors. In their everyday interactions, young people reminded me that, although the use of a mutual language may have served to build the rapport I needed to conduct my study, the episodes above depict that language is not an isolated aspect but rather is bounded to other parts of a researcher's identity. Moreover, language should not be taken for granted as well, and the ability to adopt to the language of the context is necessary.

In addition, although language might have helped to mitigate the distance and distinguish myself from other volunteers, for researchers and individuals whose relations with locals might be characterized more by emotional and physical distance, language is not an isolated aspect but rather is bounded to other parts of the researcher's identity.

My analysis can be applied to diverse contexts, including Global South and North and postcolonial contexts. Moreover, as SFD projects are also implemented within the Global North, this chapter might be of use to other researchers as well in thinking through their positionality. Research relationships are inherently hierarchical, and there are also inequalities within the North, where projects are delivered for marginalized populations (see Hayhurst et al., 2015). Therefore, the questions raised in this chapter are not limited merely to researching within the context of Latin America and Brazil.

Finally, as sport for development is entangled with asymmetrical power based dynamics—in the same way as, for example, feminist scholars are not only aware of power relations but negotiate them in the research process—in a similar sense, scholars within SDP should be aware that they bear their Northern identity in non-Western settings. I suggest that, as Spivak (1984) states, as researchers, we should be more 'vigilant about our practices' (Spivak, 1984: 185). That is, vigilant about how we negotiate our insider/outsider as well as our Northern identity in order to avoid placing ourselves uncritically as 'outsiders', and therefore escaping from

acknowledging our own complicity in North–South politics (see Kapoor, 2008).

5 | Girls want to play football: Participation, choices, and gender

Since the early 1980s, we have seen an increase in the role of NGOs in the development process (see Choudry and Kapoor, 2013; Turner and Hulme, 1997). It is crucial to bear in mind, however, that NGOs are not a homogeneous grouping, and this also applies to those NGOs that use sport as a tool for development. They are far from homogenous, and their objectives and strategies vary (Giulianotti et al., 2019; Kidd, 2008; Spaaij and Jeanes, 2013); furthermore, they may or may not be included under the umbrella of SDP and Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, there is no single model how to use sport for development, and various models exist. This was also the case of NGOs I studied in Brazil. One of the main differences I observed however was their different approaches to gender issues and 'empowerment'.

This chapter examines the process of women's participation, choices, and gender roles, and how these can be useful in overcoming previous limitations with the Western perception of empowerment. As Chawansky (2011) observed, SFD either seeks to 'empower' girls in a girl-only setting or allow them to participate in mixed settings. However, SFD is a vivid terrain and, given the heterogeneity among approaches and NGOs, even each of these approaches might encompass its specificities, peculiarities, and elements resulting from the broader cultural context. Moreover, sport/project participation itself is intertwined with daily negotiations, or rather, it requires contestations of a wide range of obstacles for women in their daily lives (see Hayhurst et al., 2015; Oxford, 2019; Shehu, 2010).

The postcolonial critique has suggested that participants of SFD programmes are predominantly presented in development discourse as passive, agency-less people, who are in constant need of capacity building and skills. However, this chapter illustrates that young women actively reject their subordinated position and question gender inequalities, significant processes, which occur many times and take place before they enter the programme. This chapter thus moves beyond the narrow con-

ceptualization of 'empowerment' which aligns with neoliberal approaches and pedagogies of empowerment for participants and emphasizes 'the importance of social interaction and culture in the construction of empowerment' (Mwaanga and Banda, 2014).

To address this, I build upon the stories of young people and families and explore questions, such as how women participate, why they do not, and how they negotiate their access to sport in general, and project participation in particular. Following my analysis, two key observations need to be done: First, female sport participation should not be overlooked nor conceived of as an a mere 'end' which SFD initiatives have achieved but as a process that constitutes women's empowerment given that it is a result of profound negotiation of structures and sources of power and subordination (see Batliwala, 1994). And second, given the complex *processes of contestation* of norms, access, and burdens that I identify and that happen also independently of the SFD initiatives, it is time to critically examine and define the diversified role SFD projects hold in fostering broader social change.

This chapter's structure is inspired by how the stories of sporting participation were narrated by the girls and women themselves, that is, embedded in some sort of chronological order and reflection. To provide a complex picture of their sporting experiences, in the first half of the chapter I demonstrate women's current understandings of their position within society, then, how they reflected about their initial experiences in football, followed by stigmas, discouragement, and negotiations in accessing sport. After, I move to address *how* they play, that is, issues resulting from the participation itself, such as performance, skills, and gender norms. And in the second half of the chapter, I analyse family negotiations and demonstrate the ambiguous role of family, which illustrates that negotiations and contestations are an ongoing process that affect the way young women perceive themselves and negotiate power. The main findings of this chapter, problematizing the role of SFD initiatives and 'participation', are summarized in the conclusion of this chapter.

5.1 Challenging the status quo

On National Women's Day, sports coaches from Bola Dourada decided to organize the women's football festival and invited Felicidade and other community groups to participate. The event was held in the community sports centre where similar events usually took place—a short distance from Bola Dourada's organizational building. This festival was the second girls-only event during my eleven-month fieldwork. Young women I talked to had little experience playing only with girls, and

similar events were not frequent.

Some of the girls' parents were present at the festival, but many of them were working or not interested. The audience consisted of predominantly young men—friends, classmates, or boyfriends. They were not allowed to enter the sports centre so as 'not to make girls feel uncomfortable'. They had to stay behind the fence and were only allowed to watch the games from a distance, or better, from the margins. After being historically excluded from leisure activities socially reserved for men, the event celebrating Women's Day offered an opportunity to do what female project participants desired—compete with girls from different neighbourhoods in a safe space and test their own skills.

The SFD initiative brought young working-class, predominantly non-White women with similar backgrounds together. They shared one space and strengthened their networks. Moreover, the women's only festival, in a country where women's football had been banned by law and was considered harmful for women, was also a political act—occupying pitches and playing football against other girls meant conquest for them, exercising their rights, and appropriating space which was historically created for and reserved to men.

The majority of the girls were aware of these advances, and the terms 'conquest' or 'our right' were mentioned by them frequently. Different from their parents, young people have access to feminist discourse. When I asked young project participants and their parents about women's and men's roles, they almost uniformly argued that women and men should have the same rights and opportunities and that, to an extent, they already possessed them. Inevitably, they looked at the past. As Maria stated,

> There exist many inequalities. And now we are questioning this. In the past, women did not strive to do the things that men do because of machismo. If I wanted to be a *mecânica*, I would suffer prejudice. . . . But now women are fighting because they know the power of the voice they have. They start to fight now for their rights. (Maria, 17 years old female participant, May 2018, Eldorado)

Looking at the past generation, the young woman's comments reveal that she has begun to realize her individual problems are shared with other women. Parpart et al. (2002), Batliwala and Dhanraj (2004), and León (1997) also suggested that empowerment includes both individual conscientization (power within) as well as the ability to work collectively. They further suggested that where individuals work together can consequently lead to politicized power with others and potentialities

for the power to bring about change. As Maria stated, 'And now we are questioning this.' By this, she means stop accepting domination and gaining the ability to seek alternatives recognized as being denied to them in the past, such as traditionally masculine professions. What is also important are elements such as the capacity 'to undo the effects of internalized oppressions "(power within)"' (Calvès, 2009: V).

Moreover, these youth grew up and were socialized within diverse and complex family structures. In some families, decisions about aspects of life, such as finances, education, health were made by participant's mothers. Furthermore, women working outside the home or being in the role of family provider was not seen as a novelty by youth nor by their parents. Seeing the mother as a unique family provider after the father left the family, in combination with participation in Felicidade's gender workshops, affected, for example, Luiza's perception about gender roles.

> Only men working? Why? I think this is not quite right. What if the woman has no husband? The woman has a son; she must sustain her son. And if she has no husband, she will have to work, buy things for her son. I think that this is not the truth, that only men can work, because women can also have the opportunity. You can be a physical education teacher. It can be like that. And I think this is important. (Luiza, 9 years old female participant, May 2018, Eldorado)

Luiza referred to economic independence as essential for women, which might also lead to other forms of autonomy, such as choosing a profession. She rejected the idea of men being the only provider for the family and, therefore, the idea of subordination of women to men. Luiza describes a situation faced by many young people in Brazil, and her family environment is not different from those of other peers and project participants. They are not socialized uniformly because they grow up in complex family situations in which they experience diverse gender arrangements. Witnessing the increase of females in the role of economic provider, they question binary categories and distance themselves from culturally prescribed feminine and masculine roles. Some youth were raised by their grandparents and started to live with their parents only when they were older. Others experienced situations with males in charge of the household responsibilities.

This chapter briefly illustrated the diversity of the broader context in which young women and men are socialized. It is important to note that they enter the projects with knowledge, opinions, and experiences acquired in other spheres. This also includes experiences of negotiating access to sport.

5.2 Negotiating access

Sitting in the office talking to the main coordinator, Taís, we repeatedly touched upon the lack of girls in the programme, an issue that I also widely observed in Bola Dourada. We talked about gender roles and patriarchy, understood by Taís as a main factor behind the low participation of women and girls. Given that the two projects were open to both girls and boys, the question hung in the air, 'Why do so few girls participate?' Taís consequently provided me with an answer:

> In this community, girls are responsible early in their childhood for the household tasks while their mothers work. Boys can occupy public spaces. They go to play football, go out on the street. Girls stay at home taking care of the house. This way of thinking, all this construction, is not quickly changed. (Taís, female coordinator, Eldorado, February 2018)

Taís had many years of experience working in Felicidade, and situations she recounted to me reflected the complex reality she experienced and faced in her daily work as coordinator. Her close relationship with young female leaders provided her with in-depth knowledge about their lives—I will discuss these more in the following chapter—which were impacted by participation in the project as well as by the broader context of social inequalities and family relationships.

Regarding the low participation of young women and girls in sport, in the sessions, and in Bola Dourada. I usually saw only a few women participating, which was a number disproportionate to that of men. Sometimes I was the only woman in a session which was supposed to be mixed-gendered, and, as suggested previously, at the time of the research, there was no systematic effort to increase girls' participation.

In Felicidade, while the process of increasing the participation of women in sport was considered an ongoing challenge, each sports session that was part of their gender-specific project (given Felicidade also provided other activities, for example, on the weekend) was required to consist of thirty children—half boys, half girls. Boys could not fill any of the places reserved for girls and vice versa. In this way, Felicidade aimed to guarantee an equal number of both girls and boys in their gender-specific project. However, during the weekend leisure activities which Felicidade provided, I realized how low the participation of girls was in these spaces, dominated, as they were, predominantly by men.

While considerable challenges to women's participation have already been discussed by feminist authors (e.g., Shehu, 2010), here too, several factors have been at play, restraining female participation in the sport projects. As Taís revealed, broader

gender inequalities prevented women from engaging in sport as they were responsible for household tasks and taking care of the family and house when their mother had to work. A similar view was also reflected by the participants themselves. As Adriana describes in the following:

> Some of them [girls] don't even have time to go. They would like to play football, but they must do something, must help their mom. Others had to find a job and work and couldn't play. That's why there are only a few girls participating in this project. (Adriana, 17 years old, female project participant, Brazil, 2018)

In her conceptualization of empowerment, Kabeer (1999) clarifies that power can be understood as 'the ability to make choices' (Kabeer, 1999: 13). Here, women were *disempowered* as they were denied the ability to choose and engage in sport. While liberal feminism brought women increased access to sport, 'choice enhancing', in this sense, was not transformative (Drydyk, 2013).

León (1997) observes that the individualist view of empowerment is disconnected from the broader political, social, and historical context, but these links between power structures and the everyday practices of individuals and groups are an important factor which affect women's empowerment. As Adriana explained, young women have an interest in sport but they cannot choose *otherwise*, as they have to meet their basic needs (see also Cornwall, 2018).

In addition, there is also a second reason. Given the historical prohibition of women's football in Brazil and the resulting concerns about the 'masculinization of women' in the context of sport, women faced prejudice and stigma regarding their sexuality (Caudwell, 2007) and, for these reasons, were discouraged by family and peers from participation or did not have interest in playing sports.

Young women I interviewed reflected, to different extents, on these factors, which constituted their perception of themselves and the broader reality. In the next section, I focus on the stories of how they negotiated these stigmas and access to sport, a moment which precedes the participation in the project itself. To do so, I have chosen the story of Isadora as it illustrates various difficulties which other young women face in terms of engagement in sport and the various forms of how they deal with marginalization, but also because she illustrates the process in which she started to perceive her reality differently, that is, recognize the situation of oppression as collective and not merely individual.

5.2.1 Isadora's choice

> The past generation is a generation of women, a very submissive generation, very submissive to the man. So, it is something that goes from generation to generation. Like, the woman, the mother tells her daughter, 'You have to accept what your husband says because he is the man of the house. Because he is this and that.' NO WAY. If the two are there, it's a relationship together. So, it's the two that must agree on something. My mother was very submissive to my father. So I said to her, 'No, mom. It's not like this.' I was bothering her about that. Because I think my generation is a generation of more information, more equality. 'I am equal to you, and it doesn't matter if you are a man or not.' I think equality is for everyone. And I think the story itself is about football. My grandmother did not want me to play, and I said, 'No, I will play.' I think, 'It's not because I am a woman that I'm not going to play ball. I will play, yes.' I want to play, so I play. (Isadora, 17 years old female participant, February 2018, Campinho)

Isadora, a project participant from Bola Dourada, indicates some of the tensions that younger generations of women I interviewed perceive between their personal gender experience and the gender arrangement observed in their family environments. They found themselves in a world with little resemblance to that of their parents and grandparents. Structural changes over generations (e.g., the expansion of women's schooling, changes in family organization, women's access to certain professions) (see Tai and Bagolin, 2019) and the increased visibility and engagement of women in various sites, not just in sport, impacted the youth's understanding of gender roles, family life, and the ways in which they imagine their own futures. Isadora also reveals that young women negotiate with other generations about the decisions which affect their lives, as in the case of football, where the experience is constructed around her grandmother's objections.

Kabeer (2005) and how she defines 'agency' can help here to explain Isadora's experience. According to Kabeer, agency refers to power to, that is, to people's ability to pursue their choices despite the possible opposition of others. For Kabeer, it is also important what the motivation or *sense* of agency is (Kabeer, 2005: 14). Despite young women being constantly exposed to discouragement while playing football, they found it important to participate because, first, they considered it their right; second, it was an act of contestation of male-dominated spaces; and, third, contestation also of the patriarchal ideology which has perpetuated gender

discrimination (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2004).

When I asked when she started to think about issues of women's rights and gender inequalities the way she reported in our interview, she replied in the following way:

> I think... hmm... I really started to care like that when I participated in a group called UJS, which is the Socialist Youth Union. So, there they debated feminism a lot, debated social inclusion a lot, debated many things a lot. So, it was something that came to me, like, 'Oh my god, what is that.' So, it was an incredible experience in my life. Which is where I started talking to my mom like, 'Oops, wait. He said *that*?, but it's not like that, we're taking it easy.' Until then, I think I was a very neutral person. I wasn't going to impose myself too much, right. I didn't say anything. I was very quiet a lot.

Similar to some other young women, Isadora also started to play when she was around seven or eight years old. She used to see her father playing football. As a little girl, he used to bring her to his football training and tournaments he organized. This initial contact with football planted the seeds of her interest. Following Isadora's words, by watching older boys and men play, she started to have *paixão*, a passion for football. Not all girls received this incentive from their fathers. Isadora's mother also supported her because she also played football when she was younger.

Despite many of the injuries and infinite disapproval from her grandmother, Isadora had an enormous passion for football. 'I used to skip school so I could go and play football', she remembered. It is interesting that while her father was supportive of her playing football, it was her grandmother who discouraged her. Isadora had to move to her grandmother's house when she was five and lived with her until she was fourteen because her parents had to work—many young people must live with their grandparents rather than with their parents for this reason. In this sense, Isadora's grandmother represented an important role in her education; she shaped her story and was more challenging in negotiations than Isadora's parents:

> My grandmother always said that I will hurt myself and that I should not play. But I could not say anything; you must respect the elders. But she should also have respect for my decision not to do ballet. I don't like it. When I was younger, I went to the pitch, which was next to my grandmother's house. I called my cousin, 'Let's go play ball.' We played and played. And my grandmother, she called after us. 'Girl, what are you doing there with this bunch of boys playing ball?' And then she came for me and took me back home.

Isadora played in Bola Dourada as well as other community spaces. She was among the few girls who had experience playing in football schools. When she was thirteen years old, Isadora had already won several medals and awards at the championships she participated in as a member of the football school. From the beginning, when she played with her father's friend or in football schools, Isadora used to play predominantly with boys. She had already passed through the phase of her life when she dreamed of becoming a professional football player, realizing that, for her, as a woman, it would be difficult due to the broader gender inequalities which affect female footballers in the country. While Brazilian football player Marta served as a role model to many young girls, they also recognized that her story was marked by symbolic, economic, and moral violence (see Moraes, 2014).

In our interview, we discussed and covered numerous topics from her experience with football, but she also unpacked many other family disapprovals which affected her life. For example, when Isadora's mother found a love letter Isadora had written to a girl she fell in love with at school, she was exposed to homophobic reactions inside the family, which did not want to accept her non-normative sexuality. The generational dimension may also play an important role in looking at how previous generations deal with queer subjectivities.

Isadora's grandmother's objections were never the reason for which she would stop playing. While relations between both women strengthened Isadora's view regarding gender relations and made her continuously deal with the 'burdens' of previous generations, Isadora's grandmother was also affected by the negotiations with her granddaughter. Isadora describes her behaviour in the following manner:

> She ended up seeing that no matter how much she talked, I didn't give her any reaction anymore, you know. I was quiet. It was good. 'Ah, I understand, okay. I respect your opinion, but that's what I like. I'm sorry.' Now she accepts more. I arrive these days, and she asks, 'Were you playing football again?' And I say, 'Yeah, grandma.' Only that. There is not much to say.

I did not have a chance to meet Isadora's grandmother. But my meeting with Isadora happened under very remarkable circumstances. She came to play football at one of the festivals organized for the community and project participants. I was there taking pictures and helping with the organizing and also occasionally providing 'medical assistance' by giving girls plasters for their injuries. Watching Isadora playing, one could tell she had a lot of experience. Some sports coaches even commented that she is so skilled that maybe her team will have a huge advantage in comparison to other teams.

She dribbled the ball with a lot of ease, and she ran a lot. I planned to take a picture, but suddenly, the scenario in front of us took everybody's breath away when Isadora's body rotated three hundred and sixty degrees, her feet passed over her head, and her body hit the concrete floor. She fell. Everything happened so quickly as she had been running at full speed, chasing the ball. The fans' noise and shouting disappeared and the audience fell quiet. My mind reproduced that scenario when her body hit the concrete floor over and over again, and it suddenly brought tears into my eyes. Nobody said a word; we were just waiting to see what would happen.

After a few seconds, Isadora's body finally moved. She stood up, holding her hand behind her back—probably the spot she had hit when she fell. She could barely walk. Then, as if it all was just a little accident, she looked around and smiled. As a reaction and out of happiness, the entire audience—women, parents, boys—started to clap their hands. It was for her. She made us sure that she was all right and that she wanted to carry on playing.

In a culture where social definitions of femininity construct women as 'weak', and thus subordinate and inferior, and where assumptions about the risk of destroying their 'femininity' through playing 'masculine' football are reproduced, some young women also think about themselves in hierarchical and dualistic terms. Isadora was certainly in a lot of pain, yet, avoiding its demonstration as it could be understood as her weakness in relation to the masculine norms, constructed as superior, strong, and dominant. In the next section, which overlaps with issues of access and initial experiences in football, I address issues of how women play, that is, issues such as performance, skills, and gender norms.

5.3 Maria macho: Empowerment and performance

5.3.1 Entering the pitch: Conformity or resistance?

Although young women from both projects usually replied that their parents were mostly supportive of their participation in the project, there was a long journey of discouragement when they were younger, similar to Isadora. As Denise shared in her interview as follows:

> When I was young, I wanted to play football. But my mother didn't agree. She said, 'No, you have to play with dolls.' My brothers would come and take off my dolls' heads to play ball. He would take off their heads and play ball with them. And he didn't let me play; he used to say that girls playing football was ugly. Today, he doesn't say that anymore.

(Denise, female 16 years old participant, Campinho)

Similar stories reveal how traditional assumptions regarding gender roles based on binary definitions, which allocated certain activities, behaviours, and attitudes towards women and others for men, were common among young women. Their initial experience with sport was marked by discouragement and prejudice. While Simone's mother let her play, she was surprised by her interest in football. As Simone recounted, 'When I told my mum I wanted to play football, she got wide-eyed, kind of startled, saying, like, "Are you sure this is what you want? . . . Be careful not to come home all hurt."'

Older women especially recognized the unequal power relations and gendered access to sport, particularly football. They critically reflected on how these norms affected their initial experiences with sport and resulted in contesting and questioning their sexuality, mostly by family members and friends.

> In the beginning, it was me playing with boys. It has always been like this because it is really difficult to find a girl who plays. It is because of prejudice. The people say, 'Ah, Maria macho.' Maria macho—it's when people judge you for playing football, telling you that you will become a man. Because football is a male sport and people judge a lot. (Nati, 16 years old participant, October 2017, Campinho)

The story of Nati indicates the prevalence of stereotypes concerned with 'destroying' her 'femininity' through involvement in 'male sports', which is expressed through the derogatory term used in Portuguese for female homosexuals, *Maria macho*. She is describing that as her 'playing with boys', which indicates she already had experience playing football in other spaces before. Similar stories also reveal different sorts of pre-negotiations and layers of negotiations (family members, community) which have marked the sporting experiences of others. The story of Duda reveals another layer of the broader community context and cultural norms. She described her pre-project experience as follows:

> I stopped frequenting the football school because they did not treat me well. There were only a few girls who participated, and they did let them play at all. They have different treatment towards girls and boys. I did not feel well there. Here [in Bola Dourada] it is much better. People respect you. (Duda, 13 years old participant, November 2017, Campinho).

Duda's experience is very illustrative here. A significant part of her sporting experience occurred before she entered the project and is illustrated, specifically,

by her recognition of 'not being treated well', or better, 'being treated differently' because she was a girl within a male space, the competitive and masculine space of the football school in which dominant notions of masculine superiority are still reproduced (Hovden and Pfister, 2006). In this case, it was not merely marked by negotiations of stigmas and gender norms within the family environment but also in other spaces within the broader community context. The fact that she compared the project as a place where she felt respected also speaks to the initiative, which was thought of a safer space in terms of discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes.

Young women were aware that the concept of a 'delicate', 'weak' woman contradicted the meanings associated with activities, such as football, which is constructed as competitive and masculine. They also acknowledged that their participation was in opposition to traditional stereotypes of women as homemakers. Yet, some of them thought of themselves in binary terms. Vitoria, who started to play football when she was a child, revealed, in our group interview, her angle regarding masculine and feminine traits, in which the dominant vision of football and its connection to masculinity is reproduced but also appropriated by the female player.

> I think the girl has more of that delicate personality. Also because of the nails—if you broke one, cut them all. Man is more rough and has a stronger personality, more aggressive. And if a girl starts training with little boys, she has that masculine personality. I think that's why boys keep calling us Maria macho. We have grown and have this more masculine personality. (Vitoria, 17 years old participant, Feburary 2018, Campinho)

It is essential to remember that gender is relational, and contemporary masculinities and femininities are understood better as 'more contradictory, fragmented, shifting and ambivalent then the dominant public definitions of these categories suggest' (Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007: 254). In a context such as sport, in which particular 'masculine' attributes are valued, the girls and women I interviewed tended to position themselves in relation to men and specific forms of masculinity. Victoria's answer suggests that young women may feel more accepted and valued if they embody male characteristics and practices, that is, if engaged in diverse types of masculine performance (see Halberstam, 1998) which then affects the way they experience their bodies and how they project that self onto others (Schippers, 2007).

Vitoria distinguishes herself from other girls, who she describes as 'delicate'. Nevertheless, Vitoria clearly does not see herself as similar to a boy and, therefore, 'rough' or 'stronger', but, as she suggests, she thinks of herself as having a 'more masculine personality' because of football. While Vitoria may be read as a case

of 'female masculinity' due to her interests and behaviour in football (Halberstam, 1998), in our interview she emphasized her 'feminine' clothes when describing her non-sport identity, by which she presented a more traditionally feminine aesthetic.

Women did not usually consider themselves as 'masculine' in our interviews but engaged rather in some type of masculine performance. They believed that certain boundaries determining masculinity and femininity should be maintained. Jessica, the female participant from Bola Dourada, dreamed of a career as a football player. She rarely missed a session, and she also participated in a trip for a female group organized by Bola Dourada. I remember her sitting on the floor, with make-up products in her hands, looking into the little pocket mirror. 'I woke up late', she was explaining to other girls sitting around her, 'and I didn't have time to get ready.' Other girls of her age were also using make-up and perfume when going to play football. It is the 'invisible gaze' which forced young women into 'normalising' their bodies and maintaining particular attributes they associated with femininity (Markula-Denison and Pringle, 2007: 89).

While young women aspired to maintain some of the attributes they considered 'feminine' (e.g., make-up, perfumes, and specific clothes), they also pushed the boundaries of femininity. Fran mentioned in our interview that a woman wearing 'masculine shorts is strange', while a transgression of these norms in sport tended to be more acceptable, or at least, appropriated ambivalently or as necessary. Jac's words help to illustrate this situation:

> Some people usually tell me, 'You're a man.' It's because of my clothes that I'm using to play football, you know. I dress in big pants or big shorts, boots. I only tie my hair, and that's it. So, I go to play all dressed up, with makeup, but using a man's shirt. I don't care. It's the way you feel good playing. Comfortable. If you want to wear big pants and a shirt, you wear it. You will not stop being feminine because of it. (Jac, 16 years old participant, February 2017, Campinho)

Her friend Duda argued as follows:

> I saw girls playing in jean shorts. How are you going to play ball wearing jean shorts? You are playing ball. You aren't dancing to funk over there at the party. I'm outraged. Jean shorts? A t-shirt is okay, but it depends. A low-cut shirt showing the whole chest? You must have proper clothes whether you like it or not. We run, jump—we do many things when we play. You will bend down and show your body in a skimpy outfit? (Duda, 14 years old participant, February 2017, Campinho)

As I observed, young women used loose sporting clothes to confront the feminine norms regarding 'delicacy' or 'beauty', yet they did not resist or escape from traditional definitions of femininity entirely. Instead, they reconfigured them in ways which destabilized notions of one unique femininity. Young women exhibit rather multiple femininities, which is consistent with Connell (1995) and the way the author theorized masculinity and femininity. In sport, women have adopted a less rigid approach towards their appearance. They tried to distance themselves from several restrictions, arguing almost uniformly that 'nobody will tell me what clothes I should use', and, at the same time, they avoided using 'shorts and short shirts'. They contested what I identified as *outrageous nudity*. By using 'masculine' sports clothes, they attempted to avoid objectification of the female body.

It is interesting that, while Jeanes and Magee (2014) observed how young women emphasized their femininity in football in Africa, young women in Brazil avoided outrageous nudity in football, and prioritized 'masculine' aesthetics somewhat, even if they partly refused to accept it as a mere 'masculinized' practice. While some scholars would argue that conformity to established gender norms contributes to the reproduction of male dominance and heterosexual privilege (Blinde and Taub, 1992), following Pfister (2010), there exist ambivalences in the construction of gender in sport. Conformity and resistance are not mutually exclusive but coexist together.

Here, what is important is the ongoing process of *contestation*. As I have demonstrated, young women seek to fulfil some aspects of the traditional feminine scripts, but they tend to contest and resist others and develop an alternative, less rigid femininity. As Jac emphasized, 'If you want to wear big pants and a shirt, you wear it. You will not stop being feminine because of it.' Hence, young women negotiate and embody multiple femininities in which strategies of compliance and resistance but also cooperation with male interests may be identified (Connell, 1987).

Batliwala (1994) and Rowlands (1998) theoretical conceptualizations of empowerment are useful here in understanding and uncovering how women such as Jac negotiate their *power over* by entering the football pitch and their *power to* by negotiating boundaries of masculinity and femininity. They undertook actions, such as continuing with football, despite the opposition (Kabeer, 1999). There are other aspects of their identity, manifested through sport performance, which I will address in more detail in the following chapter through a discussion of how they deal and negotiate *power within* on the pitch (Rowlands, 1998).

5.3.2 'This girl can play?'

It was Saturday. Girls were waiting in front of the green gate, the main entrance to the community sport centre. Saturday was the day for girls-only football sessions. The centre was surrounded by fencing and walls, but the main gate remained open. Thus, people from the community could enter and use this space freely. Young women also used the pitch entrance before class to warm up, but not this Saturday. Due to a conflict with a group of boys who did not let the girls play the previous Saturday morning, the coach asked them not to enter the pitch until we arrived. Me and Vitor always started the session after the main gate was locked. We had control over who entered the pitch, yet we did not have authority to control and influence what was happening around the pitch. Every Saturday session, young men would watch the session from behind the fence. They were using drugs (to my knowledge, marijuana), watching the girls play, screaming at them.

'They are very rude. They call us chicken, piranha', reported a group of female friends, Natasha, Jessica, and Adry, during our group interview, 'The other day, boys from school were screaming things like, "Get out, you don't know how to play."' Before Vitor asked the boys to stop disrupting the session and to leave, I observed how the young men behind the fence behaved, and I tried to pay attention to what they screamed. It was not very easy to understand the words as the session was already rather loud.

Girls were chanting and shouting at each other as an act of support and encouragement. They also yelled at each other, disappointed with the game or with scored goals from the opponents. Whether women noticed the presence and manifestations of the boys around or not, they continued playing with confidence, and if they felt discomfort, they seemed to be ignoring it.

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They were aware of broader inequalities and emphasized that they had freedom, so they could 'do what men do'. Yet, in practice, this was more complex. Young women considered themselves as those 'who need to change', mainly by improving their football skills in order to bring about a shift in gender relations, or they demanded men alter their behaviours. One of the key examples is provided by Elyn:

> My brother, he wants me to achieve what he won't be able to achieve.

> But it's harder for me, because I'm a woman. My brother taught me that if I try, try, try, try, I will always be able to reach my goal. It doesn't matter that everybody says, 'You're a woman, get out. Do your ballet. Play with the doll.' My brother doesn't say that, and he always says, 'You are not alone. You can do it.' (Elyn, 14 years old participant, March 2017, Eldorado).

Elyn was conscious of the structures of inequality which shape her life and opportunities. She recognized and outlined how Latin patriarchy constructs women as submissive and fragile and, therefore, those who should practice 'softer sport', such as ballet. She rejects this notion, which is important to consider in the process of her empowerment. To be empowered, Batliwala (1994) argued means that 'women recognize systemic forces that oppress them, but act to change existing power relationships' (Batliwala, 1994: 130). But, at the same time, her answer reflects beliefs articulated by practitioners and policymakers who promote neoliberal forms of empowerment. That is, women are expected to realize their potential, become self-directed (Cornwall, 2018), and assimilate themselves into the social order and status quo.

More precisely, young women such as Elyn believed they had to challenge, disrupt, and reverse their situation via their own efforts without addressing male privilege. The way out of unequal relationships was seen as achievable through individual effort and abilities and as something which depends on themselves to overcome it. In this way, women actively participated in the construction of disciplined and gendered sporting identities. The notion of regulation and an emphasis on agency oriented toward changing and disciplining one's self were evident in their narratives. This connects with the critique presented by Chawansky (2011) and other scholars, who say that the onus seems to be on girls and women for gender equality to happen and that they are responsible for their own empowerment.

As Elyn revealed, gender inequalities and sexism were perceived as possible to change only when women adapt or transform their conduct. Female ideas about football resonated with the masculine way of playing and the self-disciplining discourse: They needed to work hard; they needed to be strong.

The girls improved their skills gradually, and, before they were accepted into the male group, they were often marginalized for being women. Fran from Bola Dourada reflected on her experience and her skills development, which, according to her, resulted in more acceptance from boys:

> When I grew up, boys stopped. We were all kids from the street that were playing, and the girls from my street too—in this case, my cousin.

> We started playing together with them, and they started to let us play normally. It was overnight—they let us play. Today, I play ball with them, and they keep saying nothing. My brother especially says, 'Wow, you play like this?' And I say, 'Yes, I do.' I'm not that kid who doesn't know how to play anymore (Fran, 16 years old female participant, Campinho).

Although they claimed that they would not be able to have the same skills as boys have due to domestic work and less time dedicated to practising, they developed their own self-images as knowledgeable, skilled individuals.

> They [boys] don't know you, so they judge and say, 'I'm not going to pick her for my team because she doesn't know how to play.' So, you are the last one to be picked. But I like it. I like it when boys undervalue me, because then I start playing and they come and say, like, 'What? This girl can play! I want her on my team.' So, then I show them they were wrong. (Nati, 16 years old participant, October 2017, Campinho)

Here, I again identify multiple processes of contestation which lead to further empowerment, empowerment in the sense that Sardenberg (2009) defines it: liberating empowerment. As Sardenberg (2008) argued, the major objective of *liberating empowerment* is to 'question, destabilise and, eventually, transform the gender order of patriarchal domination' (Sardenberg, 2008: 19). Within the power relations, the gesture of accepting the position of inferior and being the last to be chosen can be thought of as an act of gaining power to and, consequently, reverting the situation and power relations.

Here, power works as productive, creating new situations. When boys accept women on the team, this might bring about change in the gender order. More precisely, this dimension of female participation refers to the contestation of gender norms. For Butler (1993), it is the repetitive character that makes the structure of norms vulnerable and unstable, because the repetition may fail or be appropriated for purposes other than the consolidation of norms (Butler, 1993; Mahmood, 2011). Nati demonstrates how restrictions, male hegemony, and stigmas still surround and affect young Brazilian women's football participation and experience. Her story is also illustrative of resistance to dominant gender ideologies. Nati accepted othering, stereotyping, exclusion, marginality, and disrespectful behaviour as a norm that she aimed to change.

The construction of women as weak is being challenged by women who are perceived as 'women but skilled'. However, if they do not prove their ability to play

football 'as good as men', they remain rather excluded. As the following example reveals:

> I returned to play football through my cousin; she played football here in Bola Dourada. I get interested and asked her if girls can also play and if boys let them play. And she said yes, but that the training was mixed. Then she took me there one day. In the beginning, I didn't like it. The boys swore at us (Kelly and her female friends) for not knowing how to kick the ball every time. They all complained if you didn't know how to play. They complained even outside, on the bench waiting for their turn. Some boys were very rude and didn't respect us. In the end, I left this group and started to train in a different one. (Kelly, 16 years old participant, October 2017, Campinho)

It has been suggested that mixed sports settings generate a more inclusive model in which girls and women are accepted as equals, which 'disrupts the orthodox masculinity that pervades segregated sports such as football' (Dashper, 2012: 215). As this comment revealed, instead of shifting gender relationships and including girls in the SFD programme through a mixed setting, the opposite effect was generated.

In contrast, within the narratives of Camila and Jessica, they revealed a dimension of the process of contestation, specifically of the heterosexual image in and through sport and the programme. They demanded that its men must change and alter their behaviours, especially in terms of how they treated sporty girls. They also illuminated the personal level of empowerment related to their sport participation in the following way:

> When they start calling me Maria macho, I turn around and show them what I can do. You can keep cursing me, calling me that name, but I don't care. Before, I was sad and angry because of that. But, nowadays, I don't care anymore. There are many girls who care about that. It's sad. No girl deserves to be called Maria macho. (Camila, 16 years old participant, 2017, Brazil

> They told me I am a girl who must play with dolls. And I said that I must do what I like and not what others want. Many people have already put me down. I get discouraged, but I always turn around. And though I don't have to think about others, I have to think about myself. If this is what I want, I'll do it. It is no use for others to be talking. Like, when they say, 'You play ball so bad.' So, I'll try to improve; I'll do my best. (Jessica, 15 years old participant, February, Brazil 2018)

Both women valued the new capacity to resist broader stigmas and create a feminine identity for themselves, which incorporated through football elements of physical strength and skills. In other words, feminine identity was not substituted but revisited, extended. As Hovden and Pfister (2006) argue, the sport context might provide alternatives to heteronormativity and male domination (Hovden and Pfister, 2006). Dominant norms and values, including those of traditional femininity and masculinity, can be challenged and resisted through sport (Knijnik, 2015; Larneby, 2016; Pfister and Hartmann-Tews, 2003).

Young women were aware that their participation in football provided them with the opportunity to develop alternative representations of female identity, which challenged traditional gender discourses. Camila and Jessica, but also Nati above, positioned themselves similarly concerning the negative labels and stigma. They focused rather on what their bodies could do and less on embodying heterosexual appeal. Developing or improving the skills which would ensure competition with male counterparts allowed them to experience their bodies as strong and powerful (Theberge, 1985). In this sense, the existing patterns of male dominance were supported by female participants' own discourses and the performance of their gender identity in football. Rather than questioning male dominance, female participants' efforts appear aimed at being recognized as 'woman but skilled'.

Moreover, women had to deal with Maria macho stigmas and the devaluation of their capacities before engaging in the project. Experiencing their body as strong and competent provided them with a sense of empowerment. Following the words of Mahmood (2011), this aligns with the process of 'seeking self-empowerment through the cultivation of self-esteem, a psychological capacity that enabled one to pursue self-directed choices and actions unhindered by other people's opinions' (Mahmood, 2011: 172). Women's decisions were not restricted only to whether to play football or not. Young women saw a range of possibilities for their own lives outside of sport. They wanted to become bus drivers, physical education teachers, and professional football players; traditional feminine occupations were rarely mentioned.

These sections illustrate how young female participants recognized and dealt with the presence and dynamics of power and oppression in their everyday lives before, but, as in Jessica's example with dolls, also during participation in the SFD initiative. Sport participation provides them with resources and space to expand their self-esteem. Young women challenge the system, which has created specific roles that constrain them in their everyday lives within and outside the programme, including other sports spaces. In the definition of empowerment as presented by Batliwala and other feminist scholars within development, for women to be empowered, it is

essential to realize the oppressions and naturalized male privilege and continuously challenge it in daily practice.

In short, on the one hand, sport participation resulted in multilayered processes of contesting stereotypes and gender norms, which further speak to women's empowered status. Through their football participation, among other methods, they recognized existing structures of domination that are responsible for their exclusion and disempowerment (Romano, 2002). On the other hand, however, I identify a dark side to these contestations and empowerment which generates new situations and put burdens on young women and girls. One of the factors are the considerable constraints put on their participation from their families, a point I will address further in this chapter.

5.4 Negotiating participation

With time spent in the field, the complexity of women's participation in sport became more apparent. It was interesting that while young women, and this can be seen in the example of Denise, reported that in the beginning it was their parents who did not let them play, parents themselves usually thought of themselves as distinct from other parents whose children, in general, and daughters, in particular, did not participate in the programmes or sport. Some of them even criticized the assumption that 'football is for boys only', and their perception of female sport participation was embedded within liberal feminism, that is, based on the idea of equality of access.

However, young women's noncompliance with gender norms requires parents to position themselves in relation to traditional gender roles. Project participants negotiate those meanings in different spaces, but most importantly, at home and in the family environment. Negotiations of gender norms define whether young women enter the project, but they also shape how women engage in it, what new constraints are generated, and to what extent these restrictions might result in dropping out of the project. In what follows, I explore how young women contest gender roles in the family environment, and how this affected their engagement in sport.

5.4.1 Football as a reward

I visited Adriana's house several times during the fieldwork. She was a mother of four children (three boys and one girl) out of which only her daughter Natasha played football. Adriana was unemployed and worked only occasionally in informal, underpaid jobs. She mirrored a generation of local women who had encountered high levels of economic deprivation and various forms of oppression. Her family was

passing through severe financial difficulties, and she was continually searching for permanent employment without success. Adriana invited me several times to lunch with her family, and I spent afternoons watching movies with her and their children in their house. 'Don't look around. Our house is very humble, but full of love', she said before my first interview. Her home consisted of a kitchen which extended to a narrow living room where one couch and a television were located, one bedroom upstairs, half the size of the lower part of the house where Adriana and her family slept, and a bathroom with no distance between basin and lavatory.

During one of our first shared afternoons, Adriana started to call me 'my White daughter'. She used to say this because I was far 'from home', and she assumed that I missed my family. 'You are my White daughter, and I'm your mãe negra', she added whenever we said goodbye. I did not feel comfortable with such designations at the beginning as it seemed to exacerbate the power relations vastly, issues that I discuss in more detail in chapter 4. Nevertheless, as long as she felt more familiar with me, I would not impede her from calling me that way.

While Bola Dourada, where my temporary home was located, was not far from Adriana's house, after my visit, she insisted on accompanying me to the main crossroads, from which I continued on alone for fifty metres back to the house. She always asked me to call her back as soon as I arrived home. She was worried about street violence, and that was one of the reasons she preferred and forced her children to spend their free time at home rather than on the street. In a broad sense, Adriana's preoccupation was also shared by other parents. They understood the project as a safe space for socialization which prevented girls, as well as boys, from being on the streets, exposed to the 'wrong things', such as drugs, violence, or the traffic of human organs. Street violence, sexism, and criminality were also reasons why she wanted to move somewhere else. She reported that the main reason for her fears was the lack of safety. 'The problem here is safety. I want to leave São Paulo. But we are not in a condition to, so we must live here.'

Adriana was among those parents I met who supported the girls' participation and perceived football, and sport in general, as beneficial and worthy within young women's lives. Football was constructed as not only for men. As Adriana emphasized, 'Sport is for both boys and girls. For me, it is important they do sports the way they like and have respect for themselves and for each other. For me, it is normal.'

But, at the same time, and similarly to other parents, Adriana was also surprised by her daughter's passion for football. 'Girl, you are crazy', was Adriana's first reply when Natasha asked her permission to play football after school. It was after Adriana realized that Natasha was being serious and begging to play football with her friends

that Adriana started to wonder more about her daughter's request for authorization to participate in the programme:

> At first, I thought it was a lie. Because she said, 'Mom, can I play football?' I told her, 'Girl, where will you play football here?' And she said it was near the school. And she even cried to go. So, I sent my husband and said, 'Take a look, because you don't know where this girl is going.' And then my son said, 'Mum, Bola Dourada is an institution to help children.' So, after that, I let her play and started to trust that it was a good thing. Because I get a little worried, right? She is in her adolescence. (Adriana, 46 years old, November 2017, Campinho)

Natasha participated in a female football group on Saturdays, but it was in a rugby session where I first met her. She liked both sports. Football was her passion, but rugby was a relatively new project delivered by Bola Dourada, and she wanted to learn it. Rugby sessions did not happen in the community sports spaces but at an autonomous sports club in the city centre. Coaches used a van that Bola Dourada possessed to transport the children. The meeting point was in front of the organizational building. It was also there that we waited for latecomers before we hit the road to the city, Natasha usually amongst them.

Before one of these Tuesday afternoon sessions, we were waiting for her. Her three female friends had already arrived. 'Where is she? Is she coming today at all?', asked Brad, an international volunteer who worked in Bola Dourada as a rugby coach. 'She didn't say anything at school about not coming today', replied her friend Eduarda. 'Well, let's go. We can pick her up at her house', said Brad, adding, 'Who knows where she lives?' Brad did not want Natasha to miss the class. He truly believed in the potential of sport to transform lives, and, whenever someone was missing, he tried to find out why. He felt responsible for the youth he trained and knew that sometimes project participants avoided their class due to a complicated family situation that impeded them.

'She lives next to me', said Lucas, a male intern. In a few minutes, he was navigating the driver towards Natasha's house. It did not take long, and the van stopped in front of the little green entrance gate. Many stairs led down to somewhere below eyesight. We could see there were houses beyond the gate. 'Maybe neighbours', I guessed. The houses had brick exposed, unpainted. Next to the stairs, there was a wall dividing an area with houses where Natasha lived from an area that looked burned, destroyed, or like a dumping ground. Tires covered the area. Looking at that scenario filled me with feelings of pollution. 'I'm coming. Putting my shoes on',

shouted Natasha from somewhere below. In a couple of minutes, she passed through the green entrance gate and, with a smile mixed with surprise, she jumped into the van.

Her missed or nearly missed classes and late arrivals were not the only reasons why others—coaches, boys, her close female friends—were worried about Natasha. 'Yesterday, she came crying to the session', Brad told me after a couple of days. I was in another football session with Coach Vitor, so I did not come to rugby with them that day. 'It seems like her mother is not letting her play anymore', added Brad while we were sitting on the balcony hearing sounds from an ongoing capoeira class.

It was a peculiar situation that shows the fragility of the social effect of the programme. Adriana encouraged Natasha to play both rugby and football. As she said, 'Natasha is doing what she has chosen, not what I chose for her', thus empowering her daughter to make her choices and approve them. Shenalso emphasized, 'Football is something Natasha likes a lot. I would never forbid her.' The recognition of the benefits of sport that made her daughter's time and mind 'busy' and created new openings for her to learn were, however, perceived and constrained by the broader hegemonic masculine culture. While the shift in Adriana's thinking regarding female participation and inclusion in 'masculine' sports (football and rugby) could be identified in her discourse and practices, as well as in the way Adriana strongly advocated for equal rights and access to sport, there was still a burden of traditional gender norms.

The root causes of Natasha's late arrivals and emotional expression observed by Brad were those daily tensions at home. Adriana required her daughter to fulfil household duties to which Natasha was circumscribed as a woman. After Natasha accomplished all the tasks her mother demanded, mainly cleaning the house and cooking for family members, she was allowed to practice sport. Predicaments arose when Natasha deviated from and challenged the social scripts regarding gender roles.

> Sometimes she cries a lot to go [play football] when I say, 'You won't go.' I say this just to keep up the pressure, so she doesn't forget the things she should do here at home. Because if not, she leaves everything dirty and goes out. And then I tell her, 'You're not going today, and you are not going to train anymore.'

Adriana approves and threatens Natasha's participation concurrently. While Natasha's has chosen and was supported to practice the activity she liked, her involvement was restricted and defined by her conformity to traditional gender norms. Adriana's specific conditions reflect the complexity of parental perceptions of female participation

in sport and gender roles. While Adriana's view regarding female sport participation might have changed over time, her understanding of traditional gender roles remains unchanged. While the benefits of the sport were emphasized and perceived as important, conforming to gender norms is understood as a precondition. Broader structures of gender inequality impact participants' lives significantly and also shape their sporting experience. Yet, recalling Risman (2018), discussions and action towards a gender-equal society require looking at the institutions, as well as in everyday life and personal behaviour, which ought to be changed (Risman, 2018). As this example of Natasha demonstrates, sport is constructed as a reward, and the price of not complying with traditional gender norms is high.

Natasha's resistance to social expectations results in several sanctions. Thus, while Natasha benefits and enjoys opportunities to practice sports, networks, and the trust she shares with her friends and other project participants, the benefits are limited due to her family and community environment. Natasha questioned traditional gender roles at home when she admitted that she is the only person who must help her mother. However, she perceived sanctions as restrictions coming from her mother's individual decisions. She did not recognize it as a consequence of the broader hegemonic patriarchal culture into which Natasha and previous generations were socialized. Speaking to Natasha about her family situation, she started questioning gender relations and restrictions that result from it and which also affected other female participants.

What is relevant here is that, despite the broader patriarchal, heteronormative society and family environment that discouraged her, Natasha decided to play; she made her decision. Moreover, this contestation of household tasks in order to participate in the project is a contestation of traditional gender norms, and so the participation here is a sign of resistance to the established order and traditional gender roles. However, 'empowerment requires analysis of women's particular situation rather than an assumption of oppression' (Mosedale, 2005: 245).

There is also another angle. Considering Adriana and her conditions, many restrictive gender ideologies remain intact for some, but, as Donnelly et al. (2011) suggest, for others, dominant ideologies can intensify. This can result in some young women having to contribute even more to their home lives in order to play or else they are forbidden. While Adriana's approach to her daughter's participation was not based on forbidding Natasha to play nor continually discouraging her from maintaining participation, there were subtle forms of power Natasha had to negotiate with her mother. Her story illustrates that to be 'allowed' to play she had to demonstrate that gender norms remained constant. This becomes even more evident when

Natasha alleged that her brother was not assigned any domestic work whatsoever.

On other occasions, mostly in Felicidade, young women reported that when they negotiated their household duties with their parents, they were 'punished'. Their families were stricter, providing them with more domestic duties or prohibiting them from participation in sport so as to ensure it did not compromise their domestic and family life. The young women suggested that through project participation and the sexuality/gender education they had participated in, they became more aware of their unequal positions in relation to men and the resultant responsibility for the household tasks. They also reported that they had started to contest such situations at home. However, their experiences were constrained by broader cultural expectations, so they were unable to disrupt what Rowlands (1997) defines as power over (Rowlands, 1997).

5.5 Conclusion

As was previously mentioned, the potential of SFD programmes to challenge gender norms is undermined by the fact that they are either aiming to empower women in girl-only settings or provide them with the access to participate in an environment alongside boys. However, there is also another dimension concerned with to what extent the role of the programmes and changes in gender relation can be credited to SFD initiatives.

Looking beyond the narrow conceptualizations of empowerment and exploring more the role of culture in the construction of empowerment (Mwaanga and Banda, 2014), insights from this chapter suggest that young women already enter the programme with experiences of contestations and multifaceted negotiations. Their opinions regarding gender roles have been developed and formed by various factors—the family and community environment, personal experience, school, peers, social media, Bola Dourada/Felicidade participation—which cannot be separated one from the other. It was evident from the women's stories above that they enter the programme with some knowledge already as well as consolidated ideas about how they think about themselves and broader society, notions and opinions formed before they entered the project. However, it was also evident that project participation can provide them with new experiences which leads to affirmations and a polishing of their attitudes.

While scholars focus on researching the *unintended* consequences of SFD, it is also relevant to analyse and study the actual 'role' of SFD in fostering broader social change. I also react to what has been suggested by Kay and Spaaij (2012) and

advocate for locating young women's experiences of and responses to sport and empowerment within their family context for developing a better understanding of the social and cultural environment within which international development programmes operate. In other words, family as well as community context are important mediators of the SFD effect.

The question arose, how do boys and men position themselves in front of these changing attitudes of women? These questions will illuminate in more detail how young women felt empowered by the programme and actively contributed to broader community change. When women's struggles are analysed along with the 'reactions' of boys and men to the SFD project and gender equality claims, new power struggles and the layers of empowerment become evident. I discuss these important and relevant questions in the chapter that follows.

6 | ‘We forgot the boys!’: Resistance, asymmetry, and (dis)empowering ‘girls only’?

The girls-only festival celebrating National Women’s Day has just started when I engaged myself in a conversation with Monica. She was standing next to the pitch and, through her gestures, one could tell she was in charge as she gave orders to younger female participants. It started smoothly. I came to her and asked what she thought of the festival. This was apparently a well-chosen ice-breaking’ strategy for someone seeing me for the first time. I expected a quick answer, but Monica surprised me. She engaged herself within our conversation very deeply and seriously, and, in her behaviour, I recognized specific features which could be characterized as *leadership*.

Monica entered Felicidade several years ago as a project participant. She remarked to me how important it was for her to be part of the project and to participate in the event dedicated to National Women’s Day. She was also convinced that girls’ participation in football should not be celebrated only at these particular events. ‘Every girl who starts playing football should be celebrated’, she explained, ‘because this is amazing having so many girls teams.’ We were standing near each other; still, I could barely hear a word of what she was saying. Almost a hundred female supporters/participants, together with the male audience behind the fence, were chanting in support of the teams playing at that moment. The teams were a mixture of young girls and adolescent women who were part of the Bola Dourada and Felicidade projects. It was that day that both fields overlapped at the same time and place, and I was provided with an unique opportunity to observe both, one with methodology grounded in a more *transformatory* approach toward women’s empowerment (Felicidade), and the other built on a more *access-enhancing* approach (Bola Dourada).

With the game coming to an end, the noise and enthusiasm were increasing. While

Monica cheerfully carried on sharing how she became a youth leader, a 12-year-old girl suddenly came to her and asked, 'Monica, who is going to play the next game? How should the girls on our team be divided?' Monica replied with a steady voice, 'Go back and talk to your team. It is up to you. It would be best if you decided, not me' (Fieldnotes, March 2018, Campinho). As a youth community leader, Monica inspired other girls to play football, but more importantly, she aimed to teach and encourage them to make their own decisions; thus, in their individual lives, they will not be confined to other's choices.

Monica's happiness about the girls' festival was shared by other women too, but, as I was told later, those who felt deprived, or better, losing due to it, were young boys and men. Global initiatives assume that investing in adolescent girls will have a positive impact on them to make the "right" choices to improve their communities and countries (Cornwall et al., 2008). But how do men themselves experience gender centred development initiatives? Young female leaders became active producers of change in their community, similarly to Monica, by questioning gender inequalities and encouraging other girls to make decisions, and this resulted in multiple reactions among young men. It has been suggested that gender centred development initiatives have largely been *for women*, which may plant some of the seeds of its potential to (dis)empower and homogenize men (Chant, 2000). Moreover, the question as to whether and how men should be included has been disputed amongst scholars.

Amidst these debates, this chapter aims to contribute. In the first half of this chapter, I explore in what way young girls and women feel empowered by the projects as well as what meanings they attach to empowerment. In the second half of the chapter, I investigate the diverse ways in which young men experience gender-centred programmes and 'react' to feminism and gender-equality efforts. I summarize my findings in the conclusion and suggest what these processes mean for social change through SFD programmes.

In order to understand what role SFD initiatives play in the process of empowerment, Ferguson (1990) offers a useful approach. He argues for observing the broader process of development, construction, and circulation of development discourses; engaging with diverse meanings that different actors, agents, subjects give to development; and attending to various intended and unintended consequences that it produces in a given setting. This approach might also be relevant to study and analyse development efforts coupled with women's empowerment. Ferguson (1990) asks, what does development create 'on the ground'? In his words, he says, 'What happens differently due to the "development" problematic that would not or could not happen without it?' (Ferguson, 1990: xiv). It means observing not only the broader

process and interpretations of 'development' and 'empowerment' but also the understanding of change or transformation from the points of view of those who are affected by these efforts. I explore this in more depth in what follows.

6.1 From individual to collective empowerment

'I have always been empowered, but...'

When talking with young girls and women about empowerment and the ways women tend to think about themselves, it was interesting to observe how this term was present differently in both fields. The broader process of improving the status of women, recognizing one's rights, acquiring knowledge about one's own position as well as the ability to raise one's voice, and recognizing oppression was frequently present in the interviews I conducted in both fields. Yet, these processes were labelled 'empowerment' only by women and girls from Felicidade. In Bola Dourada, the word was rather lacking in the vocabulary of most participants.

Despite lacking an interpretive framework in Bola Dourada, there were similarities in the responses of women from both fields, and the meanings of the term overlapped when it came to equal rights and opportunities for women. For example, women from both fields argued that 'women are equal to men' in theory but, in practice, their lives are marked by discrimination, prejudice, and disadvantages in relation to the lives of men. Women from Bola Dourada also put more emphasis on their own efforts, whereas women from Felicidade saw gender inequalities or empowerment as a process established in relation to men which were also responsible for their unequal status as they had *power over* them.

In our interviews, young women from Felicidade defined the term in diverse ways, mostly in the sense of the *autonomy* and *self-confidence* to pursue opportunities. Some of them claimed themselves as empowered either by the programme or considered participation in the project as being responsible for strengthening them even more. As Roberta replied:

> I learned here [in Felicidade] many things, but I was always an empowered woman. I was always very empowered, but I was even more empowered when I joined Felicidade. It opened my mind more. I didn't know much about feminism and these issues. I started to know more through the workshops. I had more direct contact and was always a very communicative person. So, I had many things at my school, I was always there. So, I've always been this way. I have always been very much like, 'If I

> want to do this, I will do it.' But, just like that, I always... My family is *machista*[26]. My father is a *machista*. So, I play ball, but I didn't have much contact with football before I joined Felicidade because I was always focused on dance. (Roberta, 18 years old, March 2018, Eldorado)

Roberta thought of empowerment in the sense of autonomy to make decisions. As she expressed in her words, 'I have always been very much like, "If I want to do this, I will do it."' Still, she offers interesting insights, specifically, into the way she reports about her family. While she claims she has always been empowered, in the sense of grabbing opportunities, contrary to other girls from the previous chapter, Roberta's first experience with football was when she entered Felicidade. This is an interesting point of friction because, as she pointed out, she did not have contact with football until she entered the project because of her gender socialization.

Young women and girls reported they used the knowledge and benefitted by building leadership skills, experienced improved social confidence, and improved their health by participating in the programme. Some of them, for example, reflected that losing their shyness, establishing new friendships, and defining new goals for their future were significant outcomes of project participation. Barbara describes this as follows:

> Well, I started to consider myself empowered when I joined Felicidade, in fact, when I became a leader. I started to feel more empowered like that. Not that before I did not feel it, but I felt it much more, because I realized that even I had said it, for me in the past, in my opinion, that women could do what they wanted. But only here did I really learn more about it. So, my opinion grew, it grew with this knowledge. Before I was a leader, I was very shy, like in the extreme. My shyness left me a little disempowered. Because I was too ashamed to talk to people. If I wanted to play then, like, the boys would say, 'No, it's only the boys who will play.' And everything else. And, like, I didn't say anything. I left them and just accepted it. But now, I question, I question a lot (Barbara, 17 years old female leader, May 2018, Eldorado)

Barbara felt 'disempowered' in the sense that men had *power over* her, that it excluded her from sport circles, and she felt discouraged from negotiating her opportunity to play with them. While Kabeer would argue that disempowerment is about the inability to make a choice, here disempowerment might also speak to a lack of

[26]This term refers to men as well as women who assume that men are superior to women. For further discussion regarding *machismo* in Latin American context, see for example Oxford (2019).

ability to recognize oppressive systemic forces and to act to change existing power relationships (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2004). However, Barbara's opinion about women and men was based on the notion of equality of rights for both, and there it speaks to her recognition of her right to equality and justice. Nonetheless, it is evident that women's (dis)empowerment is constructed in a dialectic and relational matter, and we must consider what relations and contexts men and women are acting within.

Other young women also critically appraised the way project participation has contributed to their improved status and highlight a more complex picture of the role SFD initiatives have in their lives in terms of the transformation of gender relations. Their capacity to challenge gender norms was heightened in regard to their increased awareness of empowerment, understood here more in the collective sense. This is how Fabi conveyed her experience as a youth leader:

> I will become a YouTuber, you know. I want to discuss women in sports and, in a way, support girls practicing sports. I will talk about gender inequalities, stereotypes, and prejudices. I searched and nothing like this exists. So later, people will watch my channel and start to think differently about women and girls in sport. I want to change their minds, you know (Fabi, 17 years old female leader, Eldorado).

In this sense, while there was an individual dimension to Fabi's empowerment, expressed by her confidence and developed consciousness about hegemonic gender relations, there was also a significant sense of leadership. Fabi saw an opportunity to act as a role model and community changer. This aligns with Freire (1973), who argued that education presented a mechanism for *conscientization*. It is a process through which individuals and groups become critically aware of the limitations and contradictions which define and constrain their lives and, consequently, inspire transformation of the social reality.

Moreover, going back to the example in the introduction of this chapter which portrays Monica as encouraging young girls to make decisions, this is one of the many examples of actions which result from young women's empowered status. Whether encouraging other girls to make their decision or engage in sport, young women were seeking to create conditions which support the empowerment of other girls, specifically mobilizing efforts to revert the situations of exclusion these girls experienced in other spaces. Programme participation was here used as a safe space to put women in a new situation, free of prejudice and discrimination. Here, again, it is important to consider what relations and contexts men and women are acting within. As Mayara describes, the situation at school was rather disempowering for women as a result of

relations with men and boys, but, in the context of the project, boys and men played their part in reverting this to improve their confidence:

> Once we were talking to the girls who feel scared. There was a girl, and she goes to class but does not participate in futsal. Her desire was to participate, but she did not want to participate for fear of what the others would say about her. And because boys didn't like it that girls participated. Like, that's the problem with her school. Girls can never play. So, she took this to Felicidade with her. And then, I sat down with her, and said, 'Look. But I'm here. I can help you. Do you want to play? I will play with you, no problem. Here, the boys will help you, they will not criticize you. No one will treat you badly. Everyone will treat you well.' And that is true. I can't be teasing a girl because she doesn't know how to play. On the contrary, I must help her learn. (Mayara, 16 years old female leader, May 2018, Eldorado)

Mayara's experience is similar to other young women in that once they entered football, they not only began to encourage more girls to participate but, when witnessing situations of exclusion, they aimed to revert this by providing each other support as well. This was highly important as it influenced their future actions. Their participation in sport served as a vessel to develop a sense of a leadership, expressed in the women's ability to act collectively with the aim of bringing more lasting transformation in spaces and environments which were important in their daily lives, such as school, community, and family.

Key examples are provided by Elyn and Renata, who speak not only of the notion of empowerment as individual consciousness (power within) but also in the sense of ability to work collectively. Elyn reported that a girls' group at school she was also a part of had started to challenge the gender situations there, a place that reinforced deep-rooted gender inequalities. Her experience is as follows:

> In physical education class there are only boys. So, we're going to ask them to let the girls play, but they don't let us. They say football is just for boys. So, we go and complain to a teacher, and he also says that football is for boys. But we can't do anything, and then the teacher says he's going to punish us because we don't do anything in physical education. The only fun thing to do is play ball, only the boys won't let you. That's it. (Elyn, 14 years old participant, March 2017, Eldorado)

The experience of Renata points to a similar process occurring within the school but with a different result:

> At the school I graduated from, boys wouldn't let girls play. They were prejudiced against the girls not being able to play. The boys did not accept it. But we went after it, me and the girls went after it to be able to participate in the championship. Because, when there was a championship, there was a men's championship, and we went so we could have a women's championship as well. And we started to have a friendship with the boys. (Renata, 16 years old female participant, May 2018, Eldorado)

Hence, I identify here a developing sense of collective identity which can be mutually reinforcing and result in situations in which women mobilize in order to challenge power relations. This became evident when young women's empowered status led them to launch more collective action to bring about change in other spaces, such as schools or shared community pitches.

A problem ceases to be seen an individual and begins to be looked at as a social or political issue which might have causes and solutions. This speaks to the collective aspect of empowerment; problems are not seen as individual but as structural and historical, that are changing. At the same time, there is an effort to generate new possibilities within their local community and collective action, and this is consistent with theoretical approach developed by Rowlands (1998).

This more collective action is defined by Rowlands (1998) as *power with*, or more precisely, collective power, created via a group process (Rowlands, 1998: 13). But there is an emphasis on group membership, and, therefore, this aligns with Stromquist (2002), who observed that 'a person must first become part of some collective group to develop a collective identity; but, developing a sense of collective identity also leads women to mobilize' (Stromquist, 2002: 32).

Hence, there is a precondition in which women recognize the fact that they are not alone but are part of a group which can collectively cooperate to change the structure that oppresses them. In this case, the group of girls who play football was important to engage in the process developing power with so they can take action in order to destabilize patriarchal domination (Sardenberg, 2008).

Other girls also reported how their peers, and their collective action, were important for them personally and influenced their own action. Fran, for example, stopped playing football at school because of the boys. But, once other girls called her to join them, and she saw them playing, it reinforced her desire to join the group, and she did so. As she explained, 'I went back to football. I think it was because of school and the girls who were playing there.'

However, as Elyn demonstrated, girls who claimed their right to use the space along with the boys, faced negative repercussions in their efforts to mobilize them-

selves. This is consistent with what León (2001) or Romano (2002) argued, that is, empowerment comes with conflicts, and everyday practices should not be disconnected from the wider social, political and historical contexts. For example, although Elyn's participation translated into efforts of leadership beyond her home and the project, culturally inscribed gender norms affected the efforts for more transformative action beyond the project to be translated into the broader community.

Therefore, women can claim themselves as empowered, and this depends on the various meanings they grant themselves, notwithstanding some usual 'but' in the process of empowerment which unties us from the uncritical acceptance and idealized ideas of empowerment as a panacea to counter marginalization and broader social and gender inequalities. Although the coordinator Taís saw the project as making a great difference in the lives of girls and women, as she said, 'They are going to college. They got a job. Others are doing some actions here in Eldorado, training a soccer team on Sunday, right there in the space. Independent. You see that this strengthening was good for their LIFE. Some may even be in the sport or not, but they went looking for ways for them.' But, when talking to women, some of them highlighted a more complex picture in terms of the transformation of gender relations. As Renata stated, 'I would like to become a professor of physical education. I entered the faculty, but I could not continue, because my father didn't have the money to pay for school.' It is therefore important to recall that empowerment takes place within the structural constraints of institutions and discursive practices (Parpart et al., 2002).

In the next chapter, I discuss different notions of empowerment, those which align with the idea of entrepreneurship, and how these were accepted by the women of Eldorado.

6.1.1 Top-down versus local discourses

I have already mentioned previously that I had a chance to meet Vilma in a woodworking workshop. It was an event organized by one of the private technology companies (name withheld) which Felicidade partnered with through their social responsibility agenda. That particular workshop was centred on entrepreneurship and female empowerment and was open only to women from Eldorado and their daughters. It started early in the morning, and the capacity was full many days in advance.

Although this was one of the events where I felt like an outsider due to my identity as a White, foreign woman, the young women and leaders who participated in the workshop with their mothers who I interviewed helped to deconstruct my feelings of inadequacy and my 'visitor' status. Moreover, if it was not for the purposes of the

research, I would not have had the access to be present at this event.

Leading the workshop were two White women, both around forty-five years old, and there was around thirty women participating. They began the lecture by telling their own story of becoming carpenters. As I listened, it was inevitable to realize how they were in a more privileged position in comparison to the women of the community participating. They started with this profession as a result of their opportunity to move to and live in Europe for a few years, and it was there where they gained the experience and learned how to run their own business. After that, they returned to Brazil and continued there.

Women from the community usually never travelled abroad, outside Brazil, and some of them never left Eldorado. It was not because they did not want to. Having spoke to the parents and young women, they wanted to leave Brazil to study abroad or visit other places, but it was impossible for them due to poverty. More to the point, one of the young leaders, Renata, with whom I was very close, used her girlfriend's bus card when she needed to get to the city centre by public transportation as she did not have enough money. Her only income was the salary she earned as a leader working in Felicidade, money she mainly used to help her father pay for the bills and food[27]. This aligned with the notion of Mohanty (1984) who alleged that women's oppression is falsely universalized by framing women as constrained equally by patriarchal gender relations Mohanty (1984). But oppression and marginalization are not experienced in the same manner by all non-Western women, they change with a woman's race, class, and cultural setting (Barriteau, 2000).

However, what was of interest concerning these two carpenter women was the way they spoke about gender, empowerment, and gender roles. They looked confident, self-assured, and fearless. They spoke of how women are oppressed by the traditional assumptions of masculine and feminine roles, professions, and expectations and that woodwork is one of the professions nobody would expect women to do. They put a lot of emphasis on deconstructing these views but, in their highly positive more liberal-feminist speech, to my knowledge, they did not mentioned any barriers they had to overcome or negative reactions to their decisions to become a carpenter. On the contrary, they mentioned support from their husbands and how they both could not have had a better job, life, and experiences from abroad. In their journeys, it seemed that 'desire' alone is enough to become successful. 'Here we are to show you that regardless of whether you are women or men, you can do it.' It was a phrase of theirs that I wrote down in my field diary.

[27]By the time of the research (2018), Renata was earning approx. BRL 400 per month, which, in July 2020, is equal to approx. EUR 65.

In presenting and describing this, I tried to avoid putting myself in danger of celebrating these entrepreneurial and neoliberal activities as an idealized way of achieving women's empowerment and solving their marginalization and subordination. As suggested by many authors, social entrepreneurial programmes encourage Global South women and girls to be 'the socially responsible citizen and the active, socially responsible individual who is in charge of her own destiny' (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2007: 25). Based on strategies which perpetuate neoliberal market-based approaches to development, the focus on empowerment shifts from its tranformatory meanings to 'self-empowerment' and 'improvement'.

At the time of the research, the company had published on their webpage the following statement of support for Felicidade, which were recorded in my notes from the field diary:

> Bringing lectures and training on topics related to sport and technology, [name withheld] guarantees subsidies so Felicidade can contribute to the education of children and young people from socially vulnerable communities. Some of the topics covered in the workshops are conflict mediation, financial planning, vocational testing, and entrepreneurship. (Fieldnotes, June 2018, Eldorado)

The rationale for these activities seems to be similar to broadly criticized neoliberal models which focus on cultivating individual skills and the 'improvement' of individuals (e.g., Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2013; Hayhurst, 2014). The concept of empowerment carries meanings as something that can be 'injected', in terms of a power being bestowed from outside, and aimed at empowering people through intervention provided by 'experts' (in this case the technological company). Hence it implies, first, the idea of *liberal empowerment*, which typically functions by 'taking power out of the equation' (Sardenberg, 2008). 'Instead', Sardenberg (2008) continues, 'the focus is on technical and instrumental aspects that can supposedly be "taught" in special training courses' (Sardenberg, 2008: 19). In this very top-down manner expert opinion is valued over the local.

Second, as Al-Dajani and Marlow (2013) questioned, we can identify here different rationality, moving beyond the notion that 'people from vulnerable communities', including women, are passive recipients. Instead, they are no longer seen as such, but as 'rational economic agents' who, through these strategic neoliberal interventions, are 'enabled' to release their potential and become 'entrepreneurs', 'resilient', and 'skilled' (Al-Dajani and Marlow, 2013).

I asked Denis, a male coach who was helping out with the organization, how

this idea of a woodworking workshop emerged and what he thought of its impact on women. His idea about that was far from romantic.

> I'll tell you the truth. This workshop is more to fix things at home for them. I don't think they will open their businesses; this would be an exception. But they can get one or two ideas, who knows. This is more an institutional event. As it's organized by our partner; we have to do it. He proposed more events and the coordination chose some of them that fit our projects. Because it deals with issues of empowerment, which is our focus. (Denis, 28 years old male coordinator, June 2018, Eldorado)

Postcolonial insights are of relevance here. Through this theoretical lens, Denis and his reply offers multiple readings, and, clearly, uncovers many layers which enrich our understanding, for example, in terms of NGO-corporate partnerships, top-down versus bottom-up strategies (e.g., Nicholls et al., 2011), diverse processes through which local needs adapt to the preferences of donors who have power and money (e.g., Hayhurst, 2016; Mwaanga, 2012), and, finally, voices of local people who are at the receiving end of these activities.

It is clear that local stakeholders contested some of the forms of women's empowerment, such as the woodworking workshop. Denis admitted that, while women could benefit from the workshop, according to him it was not helpful for women in terms of their professional lives. Instead, he saw only limited impact on the lives of individual women, who, moreover, I suggest could utilize the knowledge and skills within the confines of their traditional gender roles as houseworkers. That means, gaining knowledge of how to 'fix' something, may still be useful for the needs or necessities resulting and emerging mainly from their household tasks.

The room of the event was filled with tables and equipment needed to cut wood because that day women were supposed to learn how to make a little wooden chair they could then take home with them. So, it was practical workshop. Women were sitting around the tables, cutting wood, and talking, learning, producing, and spending time together. Many leaders I have interviewed were there too with their mothers. Others lived with their father only and were there alone.

Talking to them, I realized how they benefited from the event. The participating women found it motivating to an extent; 'empowering'; or as something that at least confirmed their own ideas about gender roles. Vilma commented later on it in our interview when talking about patriarchal gender relations in the following way:

> There are things people say, 'Women are not going to do it.' Just like in the carpentry workshop, women are not able to do carpentry. Why?

> Because women only know how to wash, iron, cook, and gossip. No. The woman can do it. People look at women as, 'No, she serves just for that. She only serves to be a mother and take care of the home. Nothing more. No.' But women can do other things. In the workshop, we learned to make a bank. But not just a bench. We learned that we have to have the right bench measures, the right material, the right tools to use to do that. So people think that women do not have the capacity to understand what is needed to do it. And many times,... Female empowerment, many women think like this, 'I will not succeed.' Many in the course looked at each other and said, 'I'm not going to do it, I'm not going to make it.' (Vilma, 45 years old mother, June 2018, Eldorado)

While other women in the workshop commented that it was something new, that they had never experienced, Vilma captured their insecurity. I suggest here that while the impact of these activities in economic terms is limited, strengthening the Western idea of empowering women economically in order to become autonomous (Cornwall, 2018), the workshop has a different role, particularly relevant to consciousness raising and collective solidarity.

6.1.2 Bringing 'empowerment' home and beyond

Estela and Evelyn

'I learned that many men are prejudiced against female empowerment in society. And a few girls are also prejudiced against it', explained eleven-year-old Estela, who participated in the Felicidade project. Her sister Evelyn was nine years old, and they both played football. They enjoyed not only the sports aspect but also the gender/sexuality workshops. As they emphasized, they 'learned a lot of things that school doesn't teach them'. In this way, it is evident that the role of the SFD project in their thinking about gender and empowerment was more transformatory. It allowed them to perceive a mechanism they did not perceived before, and when compared to the insight presented in chapter 5, the function or role of the initiative seems to be more tranformatory rather than affirming of the attitudes participants carry with themselves.

Similar to other girls and women, entry to football was not easy for them either. Vilma, their mother, wanted their older brother Pedro to become a professional player and had supported him from the beginning. But Vilma found it inappropriate that both sisters would also play football and banned them at first:

> I said to Evelyn, 'You're not going to do this [play football]. This is a boy thing.' I used to say to her, 'No. You will not play football, you won't play, that's a boy thing' [Vilma is speaking loudly, almost screaming]. And then, suddenly I said, 'Yes, you can. You can do it. Why not?' We learned that there exists 'boys' and 'girls' things, you know. We learned it this way. Many times, we heard things like that. And there are times when I must hold myself back. Because my mother always said, 'THIS IS A BOY'S THING. You will not do it.' But there are times when I say, 'Felicidade came to break paradigms.' (Vilma, 45 years old mother, May 2018, Eldorado)

Vilma's narrative uncovers numerous dilemmas regarding gender roles and generations, but also the impact of Felicidade on her life and the shift in how she thinks of gender roles. She is a single mother. And, as I came to know her with time, I realized she had as close a relationship with her mother as she had with her two daughters. Together, they frequently participated in community events that Felicidade organized, and these shared moments were of high importance for them. Whereas Vilma learned from her mother's prescriptions of gender roles, roles that she also performed throughout her life, she, to an extent, began to resign these learned gender scripts in relation to her daughters. She acted differently in relationship to their participation in traditionally masculine football, and her role was more supportive, which also aligns with Kay and Spaaij (2012), who provide analysis of the mediating role of family.

The fact that she allowed her daughters to participate in the programme helped her to question her sense of gender roles and identities. Vilma challenged the taken-for-granted distinctions between 'women' and 'men'. Yet, in another situation, she ambiguously appropriated her role as a 'caring' mother or 'traditional' woman. The following piece reveals how she perceives herself as the head of the household, and thus indicates how cultural expectations are also at play and affect the way she navigates traditional gender scripts:

> I'm a woman, almost a man. I am a mother and father because I work a lot, then I demand more like a man. I'm the breadwinner, and there are times when I tell myself, 'You are not a father, you are a mother.' Why? Because I work, I pay the bills. So, I'm a mix of man and woman.

Some gender and development scholars argued that men's resistance to gender equality results from their perception of it as a threat to their identity brought about by the change (e.g., Connell, 2005). In Brazil, where social definitions of masculinity

construct men as family providers and 'tough', it may also be difficult for women to deal with the crisis of masculinity or accept traditionally masculine roles. Vilma considered herself as doing a man's part by 'paying the bills'. While she could assert a liberal feminist idea of an 'independent' woman (Bessa, 2004), she constructed her subjective view based on patriarchal assumptions about men's and women's social roles.

Women of the previous generation are not barred from work, but when they do work outside of the home, they disrupt the normative gender roles they consider to a large extent as ideal. Performing what she considers a 'male' role and being the only provider of the family, place Vilma under pressure primarily to adjust to the position of 'the mother'. That is, the traditional division of labour reproduces gendered subjects, specifically reinforcing the notion of the responsible woman–mother. This implies that Vilma ambiguously appropriates the disciplining role of 'fathers'. She wants to show her children she is also a caring and loving mother.

Revealing various generational tensions surrounding gender roles and expectations, the experience of Vilma, filled with contradictions, provides a glimpse into the subtle processes of negotiations and the reworking of dominant perceptions of gender differences and also the mechanisms of discontinuing those of previous generations as well as Vilma's.

Whilst SFD and sport can offer potentialities for challenging gender hierarchies, as suggested throughout this thesis, there are tensions and the relationship between sport and gender development goals is replete with complexities, ambiguities and, as Ferguson would argue, situations 'that would not or could not happen without it' (Ferguson, 1990: xiv). Vilma's story is the key example of that, as she reveals how complex a process it is for the SFD effect to translate into the family environment. In the following section, I reveal the impact of these efforts on project participants, especially men and boys.

6.2 'Here comes the feminist!'

6.2.1 These boys are jealous: Resisting female empowerment

The sport session of the second week in May was sexual health education. As usual, youth were sitting in the circle where discussions took place either before or after the sports activities. It was a shared moment for all participants, a space for questions, discussion, and conversations. I was standing next to Jacqueline, an educator who was about to give an introduction to sexual health class. She was also in charge of courses dedicated to gender, LGBT rights, and others. 'Guys, we need

two people, two volunteers for today's session', she shouted toward the youth sitting in the circle on the floor. Sometimes educators used educative equipment to illustrate and teach particular 'practices'. That day, they were about to use a cloth bag as an imitation condom, one that could be 'dressed' on the person. Jacqueline needed two participants to assist with this activity.

The class consisted of half boys and half girls, all aged approximately between thirteen and sixteen. As nobody had raised their hand, Jacqueline repeated the request and waited a few more seconds, looking at the group. Two girls raised their hands. They stood and went to talk to Coach Denis, who provided them with the instructions for the activity. Suddenly, Jaqueline turned to me and whispered, 'Did you see it? All the boys were quiet. They are shy and afraid. None of them raised their hand. They know that someone is talking about women's rights, so they prefer to not speak and stay quiet. It did not use to be like that when I started to work here.'

The observation and Jacqueline's interpretation of the situation reveals how young people respond differently to a programme which addresses women's empowerment and gender equality. More precisely, this situation demonstrated that boys were reluctant to participate in the activity. Most authors within the GAD approach alleged that boys and men are rarely part of gender-focused development initiatives, although they are recognized as playing an important part in struggles to achieve and sustain gender equality (e.g., Chant, 2000; Cleaver, 2002; Cornwall and White, 2000). In the way Fecicidade was directed towards women, particularly with the concept of 'empowerment' being widely used within their agenda, the way they addressed violence against women and domestic violence, and in the question of increasing female participation, it became discouraging for men. And this was evident in the way in which they tended to avoid attending or participating in discussions of matters related primarily to the concerns of women (see Rowan-Campbell, 1999).

According to Jacqueline, the unwillingness of male participants to engage as volunteers in the workshop was conceived of as something new which did not use to happen, and she was not sure how to deal with this situation. When comparing her initial experiences, there was a difference in the boys' reactions, which indicates that young boys were changing their attitudes and behaviour over time.

Here, we cannot forget that power is entangled with notions of empowerment. Jaqueline commented on the boys' responses, but her example also speaks to the girls' answers. It was not only in this particular workshop, but other coordinators also noticed and highlighted that 'more girls raise their voice and actively participate in circle discussions' (Fieldnotes, February 201–April 2018, Eldorado). The role of

the workshop on sexuality and sexual health also deserves further attention as these topics remain, with some exceptions, taboo in the family environment. The Latin patriarchy sees the female as innocent and passive, and the male as the one who maintains moral superiority and control over female sexuality (see Ford et al., 2003). In this sense, the girls' desire to engage in the activity and possibly show young men how to use a condom also indicates a change in women's attitudes. It speaks to their empowered status and shifts the way these young women think about themselves and their lives.

Moreover, the change in behaviour of both women and men demonstrate that 'empowerment' is a process and thus should not be understood as a final outcome which can be evaluated and measured through predetermined indicators. These changing attitudes and, also importantly, responses to them (from boys in this case) are essential to understanding the process of women's empowerment and provide a more nuanced picture of the potential of these initiatives to foster broader social change in terms of gender relations.

Rowlands (1998) and her power distinction is useful here. As previously summarized, she distinguishes between four dimensions of power in any process of empowerment. Namely, *power over*, which speaks to controlling power/domination of marginalised groups; *power to*, which refers to the ability to generate new possibilities without domination; *power with*, which is collective power created through a group process; and, finally *power from within*, that is, the ability to think and see alternative ways of existing (Rowlands, 1998: 13).

For example, women are not empowered by 'taking the power' from men, they are empowered by standing up for themselves. According to Kabeer (1999), 'agency' is defined as 'power to', or as the capacity to define and pursue strategic choices despite possible opposition. Young women taking an active role in the workshop can be interpreted as their goal to pursue and take control of their lives and bodies, and as such, it is a sign of acquiring the ability to make strategic life choices. Here, we can talk about empowerment and, specifically, 'liberating' empowerment. While the workshop can be understood as 'technical and instrumental aspects that can supposedly be "taught" in special training courses' (Sardenberg, 2008: 19), the aim of women is to destabilize the gender order of patriarchal domination.

It is important to pay attention to the process of empowerment but also its outcomes. Those can be negative in the sense that they intensify gender inequalities because 'choice', particularly its conditions and consequences, is always shaped by context. This means that women exercising their choice do not necessarily have transformatory significance. The question is to what extent do the SFD outcomes, in

this case, the empowerment of women, challenge and destabilize gender inequalities or merely reproduce them.

Although the programme was supposed to be 'gender-specific', it was women who were at the centre. The initiative also supported more female leaders to be in positions of power. These mechanisms resulted in several consequences. While some of them are more subtle, such as boys' unwillingness to take part in the activities related to women's issues, as mentioned above, others have more visible manifestations.

Boys being 'quiet', 'shy', or 'afraid' can be read as boys' reactions to the positioning of 'empowered women' and their opposition to traditional gender scripts. In what follows, Flávia, a youth community leader, speaks more about the boys' reactions:

> As more girls entered the programme and became youth leaders, Felicidade started showing the boys that the girls could do sport, and they can do what they want. But you know, boys began to say that the girls came to have more authority here. So, the boys, they think that they started to lose what they had before. Ask the guys tomorrow about the festival. They'll definitely tell you that here, in Felicidade, it's girls who have more rights. They always fight when girls get something, like the tournament. They ask, 'And the boys won't have one? Why do girls have one?' But the thing is, men's tournaments have always existed. (Flávia, 17 years old youth leader, Felicidade, May 2018)

On the one hand, one might identify the positive benefits of providing girls safe spaces and more opportunities to engage themselves in sport in a meaningful way, such as through the festival. On the other hand, sport is still a very masculine domain, and to challenge deep-rooted social relations requires the transference of power. While girls and women were encouraged to question inequality, heteropatriarchal hegemony, and negotiate their social roles in everyday life through the Felicidade programme, boys and men were not equally encouraged to acknowledge their privilege and dominance in order to establish a relationship that would not be based on male authority.

As Connell (2012) acknowledges, each man is required to position themselves in relation to hegemonic masculinity. But it is clear that both women and men position themselves in relation to feminist claims and changing gender relations. The process that results first is male hostility to women's advancement (see Parpart, 2015), but second, it can also result in more positive micro-transformations in the attitudes of young boys and men, as I will discuss later below.

The first of these reactions towards the improved status of women was also expressed by Tamara.

> Talking about gender, here in our community, is obscene, it's taboo. Gender and women's rights are uncomfortable topics because they burn and hurt the macho ego. Our society is very macho. In a society where men and women are macho, you take these women and empower them. But now you need to work with these boys as well. We have talked so much about femininity that it has now become a necessity to speak about masculinity as well. Because if not, machismo grows, and boys rebound in two ways, through violence or victimization. They are either silent, because they know that someone is talking about girl's rights, or they say, 'Now, you girls have the same power, so I'm going to become even more macho.' (Tamara, 30 years old NGO worker, Brazil, May 2018)

It is clear that while gender-focused organizations are usually labelled as 'for women', here the need to include boys and men in the conversation is recognized by the NGO worker. As Flávia as well as Tamara revealed, young boys and men seem to have difficulties in accepting change in gender relations and pretended to affirm and strengthen their dominant macho position, which in the hierarchical gender order subordinates women. Here, the fear of non-ability to comply with the norms of hegemonic masculinity may lead to two reactions: violence or victimization, as Tamara suggested but as was also evident in the Jacqueline's example. Both are the result of men fearing a loss of power. Recalling Parpart (2015) and Rowlands (1998), those in positions of power might fear an inversion of the relationship, that is, in the situations where men fear losing control and power, the empowerment efforts of women are assumed as threatening.

Pease (2010) argues that 'dominant groups are conditioned not to see themselves as privileged or prejudiced because they are able to identify only the more blatant forms of discrimination enacted against marginalised groups' (Pease, 2010: 11). In this sense, young men envision women's 'gains' with resentment and perceive themselves as those who possess 'less rights and authority' in the programme because of women. Pease (2010) suggests that the benefits dominant groups receive are derived from the continued subordination of others. When young women gain space, men understand the situation as them losing something. Feelings of losing their authority resulted in rebellion and a reluctant reaction towards feminism, such as the refusal to participate in the activities related to gender and sexuality issues, or more verbal expression which the educator found to be a direct reaction to more feminist led discussions.

Another key example was provided by a young intern Sara:

> The session was about to start. Jacqueline and Antonio [educators re-

> sponsible for gender training] were over there waiting. The children already knew that there would be a gender session in our sports class. But, at the beginning of class, one boy said something terrible. He looked at them and said, 'Oh, there she comes, that feminist!' We asked why he said that. And he said, 'Well, because everything I say now, I'm being macho'. (Sara, 18 years old intern, June 2018, Eldorado)

Bringing the discussion about women's rights into mixed-gender spaces creates new conflicts (see also Meier and Saavedra, 2009). This aligns with theories of empowerment which deal with power. Conflict and coalition must be considered as part of the process of liberating empowerment (Romano, 2002). The SFD programme provides youth with an alternative gender experience and frameworks they can draw upon. If the programme would be girl-only, it would undoubtedly result in different tensions and power struggles.

Examples in this section revealed some of the reactions to the impossibility of asserting tough and dominant masculinity which was actively being challenged within the SFD environment. It has been argued that there are reasons for men's resistance toward feminist claims and broader gender equality. As Connell (2005) argued, ending patriarchy may present threats to identity that occur with change. More precisely, she said, 'If social definitions of masculinity include being the breadwinner and being "strong," then men may be offended by women's professional progress because it makes men seem less worthy of respect' (Connell, 2005: 1811). As I have demonstrated above, this resistance can take various forms, such as victimization and violence.

Conversely, I also identified forms of acceptance in relation to changes that gender equality could bring. I will discuss these issues in more depth in the next sections and demonstrate how the outcomes of the project are being disrupted but also assimilated when confronted with the broader context beyond the programme. As already suggested, young people negotiate their roles in families, which put burdens on them. Many times, they reflect their parents' views and attitudes. This may further lead to their disempowerment as men can also experience situations of vulnerability and marginalization inside and outside the project. This is discussed more in the two following sections.

6.2.2 'Men don't cry': Gender asymmetry

Some coordinators provided examples which suggest that there are differences in how youth behave inside and outside of the SDP programme. To sustain particular

patterns of masculinity requires men controlling their behaviour. Young participants are exposed to conflicting gender models; they encounter new situations in terms of gender differences inside the project, whereas the outside heteropatriarchal culture forces them into complying with particular patterns of masculinity. Tamara's experience revealed some of the difficulties as well as a situation of vulnerabilities which young boys and men encounter when seeking to shift their behaviour.

> When we worked in a park nearby, one boy got hurt. He was around seven years old. I came to him, and I bandaged him. But his father was watching the game, sitting on a nearby bench over there. The child got the bandage and continued crying, right. I was talking to him, making jokes to cheer him up. Then the father came and started to fight with him because he was crying. 'How many times do I have to tell you that a man doesn't cry?' That boy was a child. Imagine when he grows up. Then, I went to talk to his father. I said, 'Why doesn't a man cry?' 'Because a man doesn't cry! Will you show weakness?' And I said, 'But crying is not a weakness. It's a feeling, we need to get it out.' But he said, 'No, my son, man does not cry.' (Tamara, 17 years old leader, February 2018, Eldorado)

Toughness, as a signifier of successful masculinity, was systematically deconstructed within the project. However, the authority of the father legitimized and asserted it as an innate and desired feature of dominant masculinity. While Tamara's example suggests that the social effect of SFD programmes has a potential for continuity, and youth changes in gender relations may not be restricted to the SFD environment, the lack of continuity can be found in families. The majority of youth are exposed to different 'gender situations' inside the programme and outside the programme, and the family played an important part in the reproduction of masculine domination and masculine norms—and, as we saw in the previous chapter, in feminine norms too.

Therefore, while boys' reactions presented in the previous section may appear to be no more than resistance to the project, explanations based on the dichotomy that people are either privileged or oppressed leads to neglecting and overlooking complexities and contradictions in boys' experiences. Their reactions might be interpreted as boys' defence of male supremacy, but also their willingness to shift meanings as regards masculinity and men's social roles with the feeling of impossibility in doing so. It is important here to emphasize that, as Tamara's example partly documents, these experiences can also be disempowering for boys and men, who feel not only unable to shift their behaviour but also followed by shame and stigmatization.

SFD gender-focused programmes taught men to 'respect, include, [and] treat women equally', and they taught women to raise their voice and chase after their rights. While young women were encouraged to challenge patriarchy and negative labels, there was asymmetrical attention and expectations from the male participants, who were perceived as those who hinder the broader empowerment of women:

> It's not just about placing the girl on the pitch. We understand that it is necessary to work with the girls, but we also understand that it's very important to work with boys so that they recognize the right of the girls. It's not worth working with girls only. We need to strengthen them, create safe spaces, so that they can feel empowered, encouraged, and motivated to practice sport. But these boys also must understand and recognize the girls' rights.' (Taís, 45 years old coordinator, February 2018, Eldorado)

This statement should be viewed critically as an asymmetrical view of boys who should understand and recognize women's rights. However, and as the example of the shy and quiet boys revealed, young men are not expected to also be confronted within the transformed conditions. The onus and efforts seems to be here concentrated more on concerns with women and girls and whether they 'feel empowered', and 'motivated'.

This approach is, however, ambiguous. From the way Taís explained the situation of girls and women, empowerment is here understood as Batliwala (1994) expressed it, that is, identify power less in terms of domination over others, such as the assumption that women gaining power implies a loss of power for men, but in terms of the capacity of women to 'recognize the ideology that legitimizes male domination and understand how it perpetuates their oppression' (Batliwala, 1994: 131). It means that women must be convinced of their rights to play football and, therefore, acknowledge that the existing social order is neither just nor natural. In other words, we can speak of empowerment as being 'convinced of their innate right to equality, dignity and justice' (Batliwala, 1994: 132). However, this comes with the process of 'boys recognizing girls' rights'. This notion rather implies that power can be bestowed by men to women by letting them play (Mosedale, 2005).

This vision of empowerment is not transformatory. Instead, it strengthens the dominant position of men who still exert power over women in and through sport, while at the same time they fear an inversion of the relationship, that is, losing control and power.

A similar asymmetry, which was perpetuated within the programme, was raised by a couple of female leaders Joana and Roberta in our group interview, from which I have extracted the following piece:

Roberta Some time ago I had issues with one of the educators around gender, sexuality, diversity, and violence against women. And, you tell me, Joana, if she changed her attitudes. There exists violence against women, right? But it exists against men too. Only with women the frequency is higher. The quantity is greater. That's that. And she [the educator; name withheld] was going to start the discussion about this topic. But she kept saying, hitting hard, that it only exists against women, but it doesn't. I know many men who have suffered. You know. You may not suffer directly by being beaten but, like, psychologically. Like, a woman saying, 'You will not leave the house, you will stay here. You will have to do what I want.' Like, the woman rides on top of the man. There are many women like that. Only in the debate with her it was not. And I don't think it's cool. So, we passed it on to our coordinators, did anything change? They think that it is us who are wrong

Joana What matters to them most are women. They don't see the boys' side.

Roberta Yes, because for them, boys are already empowered, but girls, not yet.

That also suggests tendencies to strengthen the heteronormative framework as argued by other scholars within the SFD field (Carney and Chawansky, 2016). Portraying women as only targets of violence perpetuates the notion of men as oppressors and thus impedes further changes in their attitudes as well as more complex understandings of boys' experiences.

Although Roberta and Joana criticized the simplistic notion of gender which included only women, some young men did not see it that way. While groups of boys in programmes had a dominant or hegemonic pattern of masculinity and tended to exclude and devalue women's capabilities, there were also other patterns present. My findings suggest that there are not only negative aspects of boys' interactions with girls and women.

For example, boys and men critically appraised how the project participation and empowerment curricula that was delivered within mixed-genders sessions contributed to envisioning women's status differently and challenged the perception of women as submissive and weak. They felt that they were changing beliefs regarding the role as well as capabilities of women, since football, one of the key bastions of masculinity in Brazil, served as an arena for altering beliefs about women's position within sport and Brazilian society more broadly.

Some of the boys were involved in more equal and respectful, inclusive relations with girls as a result of participation in the programme. Older boys, such as Leo, who was around 16 years old, argued that 'there's no longer such a thing as women that should stay at home, next to the stove. Women are conquering more spaces today, and they can do what they want.'

Edu even reveals that the new gender situation he was exposed to in the programme translated to a shift in his perception of gender differences and changed his behaviour;

> Before I entered the project, I was thinking differently. When I entered the pitch at school and saw girls playing football, I complained. And I talked to the teacher, 'Teacher, what's this, girls playing?' But after some time, I realized it's ridiculous to think that way. Sport is for everyone. Regardless of whether they are girls, they can play with boys. And our gender sessions are not for the girls only but for boys too, to raise their consciousness so that things like, 'women are weak' or 'woman can't play football', don't exist anymore. (Edu, 17 years old participant, May 2018, Eldorado)

This example is also illustrative of the diversity of masculinities and of men's and boys' capacity for equality. Youth and children bring to the programme a set of practices they consider 'ideal' and 'normal' from their families and other environments. As Edu demonstrated, they might be challenged by the systematic effort of the programme, the result being micro-changes in the way youth think about gender differences.

But I also identified an asymmetrical view of gender from the boys' perspectives here. It was interesting that some boys saw themselves as losing power during occasions such as the women's festival, which could have resulted either in violence or victimization, as mentioned above, whereas other boys and young men saw the efforts to 'empower' women as *needed* and saw themselves as neither losing power nor as those experiencing marginalization. For example, Matheus replied that women are those who are disadvantaged compared to men and offered the sport system, next to the politics or other spheres, as one of the examples. 'In football, there is a great inequality in men's football for women, and you rarely see women's football on television.'

They rather thought of themselves as 'having everything already', whether in sport or beyond. While they emphasized that sessions were for both girls and boys, some of them did not criticize the predominant focus on women and femininity or

the little to no focus on masculinity as their perception of gender inequalities was rather based on a more simplistic notion, that is, that gender referred rather to issues regarding women. Zé, a youth leader, revealed his view as the following:

> I don't think we are losing, because a man already has a lot. Because he is a man, he already has a lot. How can I say... he has his rights established in basically everything. Now, women? Not at all. There is a lot that a woman cannot do because she is a woman. And I don't think we're missing anything. I think there is an equality when women are empowered (Zé, 16 years old male leader, June 2018, Eldorado)

As Batliwala (1994) argued, 'Empowerment is a process and the result of that process.' Continuing further, she says, 'It can be manifested as a redistribution of power' (Batliwala, 1994: 130). Therefore, men can see the process of women's empowerment rather as a 'redistribution of power' that was previously concentrated in the hands of men. For these reasons, they stated and saw the necessity for women to have the 'same rights'. As Matheus reported:

> When women are empowered, I think it stays the same, because men already have all their rights. And I don't think women... I don't think we are losing rights with this. The only thing is that men have many rights over women. And women try to conquer the same rights that men have. (Kalebe, 17 years old male leader, Eldorado)

Despite the different view on power as entangled with the notion of empowerment, this answer also suggests that some young men did not see themselves as those who might be potentially disempowered and experience disadvantage and vulnerability (Chant, 2000). According to men, it was only women who, recalling Rowlands, needed to gain their power over and power to seek alternatives and seek what they have been denied before.

This vision was also clear when I asked young male leaders to describe the process of women's 'empowerment' or what woman's empowerment meant for them, they referred more to a notion of skills and abilities which they were denied before and thus were making women feel disempowered. As Lucas suggested:

> Sometimes, the girls don't want to play but, nowadays, the girls are much more qualified, and they feel free to practice football. It also increases their performance. And they claim that they are capable regardless of whether they are girls; they can do it, and they can play with boys. (Lucas, 15 years old male participant, Eldorado)

In this sense, 'empowerment' or improving the status of women is considered something which women must recognize, feel, and acknowledge as their subordinated position, and that their inner subordination is unnatural and unjust. However, the youth were aware that it is not only women who have to recognize their right to social justice as it was the broader patriarchal system that perpetuated their marginalization and disempowerment:

> It is the culture, right, which has been, unfortunately, passed down from generation to generation—and even today they think it is a woman's—it is always under the man. It's a patriarchal society where they think man is in charge and the woman cannot be independent. (Zé, 16 years old male leader, June 2018, Eldorado)

A closer look will reveal that the patriarchal system was not blamed merely for disrupting the gender equality and empowerment of women, but also for being a barrier and impediment for men to play their part in these struggles. My findings indicate that sometimes men's support for gender equality took different forms in practice and principle, and while in principle they were aware of broader gender inequalities, in practice they were not able to revert the power.

The two following examples might be evidence of a more positive practice of supporting young women. First, many boys involved in the project came to watch female sessions. Some of them were the girls' friends, but others, when allowed by the coach, sat quietly on the bench watching. I would ask them why they watched girls playing and what they thought about girls' participation in football. 'It's different, but it's cool. I like it. That's why I usually come to watch them', responded Joaquim (16 years old) with a smile on his face. I saw him a few more times when he came to watch the girls' session, but it was difficult to record a longer interview as he had to help his mother out with domestic duties and look after his young sister.

Second, the young girls themselves also reflected how their brothers, who usually also participated in the program, adopted a more inclusive attitude toward female sport participation and also supported them despite the opposition of other family members:

> Some people put me down when I wanted to learn and play football. But my brother, as unbearable as he is, he always told me, 'Play. I'll teach you to play football. Let's go. Play.' And I always cried, replying, 'No, mom said it's just a boy thing.' But he would always take me with him to play football, saying, 'You will learn how to play football.' (Estela, 14 years old participant, March 2018, Eldorado).

However, while they might want to contribute to broader change, the heteronormative, patriarchal culture forces them to comply with specific patterns of masculinity and also reinforces the idea of men as perpetrators of violence—again an asymmetrical view discussed above. Vitor was one of the few men I interviewed who openly talked about and also expressed a stance toward gender discrimination and inequalities, sexism, and violence. Concerned with young women's well-being, he believed that projects and organizations improve young people's lives, especially women's. Aware of the broader macho culture, he was not convinced that sport could resolve the sexism and discrimination which affected women's everyday life, but, according to him, Bola Dourada was able to provide a safe space for women. Yet, as a man, he felt powerless to contribute to the more gender-equal participation of women in the project.

> If I had liberty, I would go and knock on each door and house in this community! Seriously. I wish I could call more girls to participate. I wish I could take them out of their homes. But I can't because I am a man. If I knock at the door and her mother opens, she will ask me 'What do you want with my daughter?' I am afraid of this macho society. But this organization does a 'good job'. Girls need someone to make a difference. All the disappointment, stereotypes, abandonment that girls must experience, that's enough. (Vitor, 18 years old coordinator, November 2017, Campinho)

As the quote suggests, Vitor and coordinators and educators also from Felicidade were concerned with the girl's low participation in sport and the programme, the point addressed in the previous chapter. They were aware that the project might provide an escape from the household duties girls and women were circumscribed. However, as a man, he was not allowed to do much in this situation.

It is clearly the case that young men and boys felt insecure, hesitant, and powerless about how to position themselves in a pro-feminist environment and contribute to a more gender-equal society. But they also did not see themselves as those who might be losing power, so there are diverse patterns and outcomes of these efforts. However, as I illustrate in the next section, there is more risk for men to be disempowered, especially when young women's agency results in negative actions which excerpts power over them.

6.2.3 Between empowerment and 'war'?

Two significant issues were raised when talking about the empowerment of women with youth. First, as analysed in the chapter above, was the process of empowerment itself and the meanings that youth assigned to it, and, second, its dark effects and unintended consequences, namely violence, were understood as a direct effect of empowerment. Below, Amanda offers a glimpse into how both are closely interrelated:

> Violence doesn't get you anything, it just gets you to lose what you've barely won. If I were the empowered, I can do anything. I'm going to punch that ball, and because I know how to play ball, everyone can leave. I wasn't going to win anything. Except that aggressive boys could come, and in the end, I suffer aggression because of my empowerment. I'm empowered to know how to argue, 'Look, I want to play ball, and if you don't let me play ball, you won't play either. Because if you can, I can too. We are equal. You're just a man, I'm a woman. So, let's play. If you have the right to play football, so do I.' (Isabela, 17 years old female participant, April 2018, Eldorado)

Based on Isabela's observation, one definition of empowerment was, therefore, the ability to know how to deal with opposition and navigate the conflict in order to avoid the reproduction of machismo. Given the fact that both initiatives aimed to create a safe space for their participants or, when excluded, to integrate them meaningfully, situations of exclusion occured mainly when women and girls contested outside spaces. They considered themselves more empowered to, for example, claim spaces occupied by boys only and counter their exclusion, however, without violence, which was not perceived as resulting in sustainable change in gender relations. As Roberta argued,

> At the park, here in Eldorado, the boys didn't want to let us play. So, we sat there in the middle of the field, saying 'Won't you let us play?' Ah, they got tired. 'Damn, these girls won't leave, so let's go, let's play.' And we played. 'Damn, you play a lot.' If we'd have got to the aggression part, we wouldn't have got to participate in the park. We wouldn't have had autonomy over that space like the boys have. And we started to gain space in a kind of way, as a joke, wanting to show that women can, she can arrive in the middle of the game and beat them four to zero. . . . An empowered woman is a woman with autonomy over herself and over a subject. Because, my definition, if I'm empowered, it's not just because

> I'm empowered, that I know everything. I can arrive and I can have a say. Empowerment is about having arguments and knowing how to talk. Empowerment is, you know, the place you should be and the time and the moment. It is not that I will get to the pitch and say to others. 'I will play here.' You don't have to get into violence. (Roberta, 18 years old, March 2018, Eldorado)

Here again, this speaks to a new situation, for a new gender negotiation, as women recognized their right to equality, justice, and the football pitch. This speaks to a specific dimension of Rowlands' power, the *power to*, mobilized to negotiate new possibilities without domination (Rowlands, 1998: 13). Whether women spoke of professions or sport, this referred to young women's struggles to gain the same that men had, not to 'take power' from them, as some boys' interpretations above suggested. In relation to sport, this process was evident in the unequal usage of community spaces.

As Roberta said, there does not need to be physcial agression, but rather dialogue in which they have negotiations related to why they should be given the opportunity to occupy and use the same spaces, in this case space traditionally occupied by men. These debates should then change boys' atittudes and thus expand the project outcome beyond the SFD environment to the broader community.

Still, other women tended to adopt particular practices traditionally related to masculinity and engaged themselves actively in conflicts. It was Kelly who called my attention to this issue. While locking the gate to the pitch after the session one night, I noticed that some girls were chasing boys and consequently beating them. This also happened several times during the sessions in Bola Dourada. She started to chase one boy, swearing at him. As soon as she got him, she began to beat him with her fists. When I asked her why she did it, she started to laugh and replied, 'It's just a joke. We are joking with each other. This is nothing serious.' But the issue of violence became 'serious' for the educators and coaches.

After the session, employees discussed acts of violence among the children with the NGO coordinators and directors. One of the employees explained her views in the following way: 'Kelly, she lives there, in Botafogo. There, the women are beaten by their husbands. So, she sees it from her mother, her grandmother. So, she beats others, too' (Fieldnotes, November 2017, Campinho). While Kelly beating a male participant may appear to be no more than an example of the internalization of masculinized behaviour, this explanation offers a limited understanding of women's agency. In Brazil, but also in other contexts, the violence between men and women in most cases arises either from men's use of force to dominate, that is, *dominat-*

ing violence, or from men reacting to women's contestation and rejection of male dominance, labelled as *compensatory violence* (Hautzinger, 2007: 22).

The act of women using violence may indicate their rejection of the subordinate position and efforts to break the chains of patriarchal oppression (Mahmood, 2011). Kelly may appropriate the aggression traditionally ascribed to men as a form of norm conveyed through generations among women who are victims of domestic violence, aiming to challenge the norm that position women as 'weak'.

The violence is extremely important to take into account in understanding the process of empowerment. In Felicidade, local coaches also mentioned violence from females as a result of the project's focus on women's empowerment. Taís and Jacqueline explained that implementation and execution of gender-focus curricula which centre on girls' rights and empowerment does not happen unproblematically and causes unintended consequences for young women.

> We must be careful that women and girls here do not start to express themselves violently. Because sometimes they reproduce this empowerment thing in a biased way, and they reproduce machismo, which ends up manifesting itself through violence, for example. It happened in the middle of the year. Girls being very, very, very... you know... they felt, they were feeling this way, of course, strengthened, that they were together. But then it happened that they put the boys in another situation, even of exclusion, thinking about themselves as now knowing everything, that they now dominated everything, right? And this is not the idea of empowerment, not in that sense. We can't be rivalling like that. It is not creating a fight between men and women. It is not for women to feel strong enough to fight with men. It is for them to feel strong enough to fight for their rights. Not to fight with the boys. (Taís, March 2018Eldorado)

The relationship between violence and male identity is pertinent to the analysis of gender, and more specifically, of empowerment. As Kabeer (2005) explained, one notion of 'agency' is that it refers to *power over*, the 'capacity of some actors to override the agency of others through, for example the exercise of authority or the use of violence' (Kabeer, 2005: 14). Hence, young women using violence as a sign of their empowered status can perpetuate the notion that sexism, violence, or aggression are somehow 'natural' to men (Connell, 2005).

Male privilege and the patriarchal order in which both women and men act under the script of men's privilege and women's subordination limit the youth's potential to establish a new relationship with their peers, which would no longer be grounded in male authority but in dialogue and equal treatment.

6.2.4 Dominance and competition: Letting girls play

I was watching an ongoing football session, sitting on the stairs. Looking around, I saw a young girl, Malena, who was on the stairs as well, not that far from me. Given the ongoing training, it was strange to me that she was not participating. She was wearing a t-shirt with the logo of the project she took part in, and I had already seen her many times playing football on the pitch. I did not hesitate to ask her why she was sitting on the stairs instead of playing. 'The boys won't kick the ball to me today. But at school, it is worse. Boys at school, they don't know that I play football here in Felicidade, so they don't let me play.'

I have already emphasized earlier that both Bola Dourada and Felicidade aimed to be recognized as *non-competitive* organizations and thus not be linked with football schools or other programmes that operated in the region and scouted talented athletes. The coaches also did not see themselves in the role of training athletes. As Ricardo stated, 'If one of them becomes a professional athlete, we will be happy, but this is not our primary goal.'

Despite the efforts to reject competitiveness and, unlike football schools, include children regardless of their skills, the young participants understood the programme in diverse ways. Moreover, they engaged in projects with different expectations. During the sports sessions, I spoke to young boys and girls, and I asked them why they had entered the programme and what they liked about it. Many young boys replied that they had joined the project because they needed to practice more, so in the future they can become football players. They expected that the programme would prepare them for a football career.

> Football schools are very expensive, so we are happy to go to Bola Dourada because it is for free. My mother doesn't have money to pay for a football school for me; its two hundred reais[28] to train during the week. So, I told her that I would come here, to Bola Dourada, as it is for free. (Wellison, 15 years old participant, November 2017, Campinho)

Young people, especially these young Brazilian boys, find their own interpretation of SFD programmes. Here I argue that the role of SDP organizations in fostering social change and their impact on young people have been, to an extent, romanticized (Levermore, 2009; Shehu, 2010). Many young people also enter the project to earn money, not to 'be developed'. Young men use the programme strategically in order to improve their life chances.

[28] In 2020, the national minimum wage in Brazil remained fixed at BRL 1.045 (Agencia IBGE).

Besnier et al. (2018) made a link between the ethos of neoliberalism, sport, and masculinity, and they address issues of sports careers and a way to reclaim both masculinity and economic productivity. Young boys in Brazil envision football as a way out of poverty, and the project as one of the ways how they could achieve it. They are dragged into a 'regime of hope', and in order to fit into global sport industries, they become 'neoliberal subjects' (Besnier et al., 2018: 843-864). In other words, the young participants are drawn towards hard work, self-improvement, and feelings of responsibility for their future successes and failures. This responsibility is also shared by their parents, who perceive their role as enabling their children to better fulfil their career aspirations and provide them with improved conditions.

> I feel like I'm failing because I couldn't pay the football school. I had to stop, because I either paid for football school, or I paid people to look after my children. Sometimes, I feel guilty that my son didn't go on with football. His dream is to be a football player. But we do not have money for it. (Vilma, May 2018, Eldorado)

It is interesting because, as Vilma said, she felt it was her responsibility and understood her situation as an individual failure. Children and young participants usually knew someone who 'lived next door' and 'succeeded' in play football for a living. Commercial sports, as Messner (2002) suggests, define the restored centrality of men and a particular version of masculinity. The overwhelming focus on male athletes in media and the celebration of force and competitiveness, despite the efforts of SFD initiatives to avoid competitiveness, make football a crucial site for these young men in the formation of a particular version of masculinity devised from sporting prowess.

As Pease (2010) remarks, 'To make things more complicated, many people experience both oppression and privilege. Not all men, for example, benefit equally from patriarchy and not all white people benefit equally from racism' (Pease, 2010: 20). This implies that individual experiences cannot be understood through categories either as privileged or oppressed. Through intersectional analysis, we can identify that some men (as well as women) may have access to some forms of privilege but not others. So while men may be privileged in some situations, and thus have more access to football and sport, they are also marginalized in other circumstances as compared, for example, with the opportunities and privileges of White men. This question is not fully addressed within the development literature and, given the gender development goals, the silence on men and masculinity within SFD hinders many of the mechanisms which can help to explain the real impact and the role of SFD on communities and men in the Global South.

Sport, with its 'civilizing legacy', assists in development and is viewed as continuing colonialism itself (Darnell and Millington, 2019; Giulianotti, 2004). In addition, the contemporary effects of colonialism, as well as the colonial history, are connected to the popularity of global sports like football. Football, however, has different political and social meanings across diverse contexts. In Brazil, football became an important part of society but also of people's everyday reality. Not all young men entered the project to become football players, but they did position themselves in relation to this masculine football 'ideal' which others aspired to accomplish.

The body played an essential role in the creation of the masculine identities of the young boys, with competitive demonstrations of skill and strength. As Kallebe described, 'Sometimes, boys here, they want to play, and they want to win. And they end up not passing the ball to others.' Marcos also recognized that there is high competition between young boys in the session, which leads to the exclusion of girls, as well as some boys.

Boys believed that while women should be treated equally to men, they do not treat them the same as other male counterparts, illustrated in the example of Malena, who was excluded by boys while playing football. Male responses were still entrenched within the traditional dichotomies. Men were described as strong and aggressive, while women were depicted as being delicate and weaker. This perception of gender scripts translated into the broader arena of football, within which some young men perceived women as inferior or 'naturally' unskilled, neither serious nor dedicated. Boys still acted in a way which sustained and cultivated male dominance by trivializing the performances of the young women.

> We were playing with girls, but with them, we only play for fun. They are not serious about playing. We don't think girls play like us. They are more, let's say, more fragile playing ball, I don't know. They don't play much. They don't play as much football as we do. We are born already starting to play football. Girls aren't. Girls grow up playing with dolls. They don't play ball. And when they come to play ball, they don't know how to kick the ball well. It is easier for us, and also, we play more seriously. The girls don't take it seriously. (Leo, 16 years old participant, February 2018, Campinho)

Leo acknowledges that there are differences in the way women and men are educated and socialized; there were also nuances in how young men and boys perceived existing gender differences. Women were central in many of the processes constructing masculinities in sport, mostly in those which resulted in affirming male supremacy.

> Some boys play well and some play bad. So, you're going to be equal to them. With girls on the team—not that they play bad—they play a little different. You feel superior among them. Like the best player among them. (Jonatham, 16 years old participant, March 2018, Campinho)

This example reveals how gender hierarchies were being reproduced through football, which served as a signifier of successful masculinity performed in relation to other masculinities (boys who do not play well) and femininities that become subordinated and marginalized. While Jonatham locates other boys at the same level, his response reveals he did not perceive women in the same manner, but rather as inferior. While boys commented critically on situations ('We don't see many girls playing.), from their perspective, women 'had the right to do what men do'. Whether they played football or not, it was their individual choice. Usually, they were naming laziness, lack of interest, and lack of training as the main motives which restricted girls and women from participation.

I was completing a questionnaire with some younger children for Bola Dourada's final report. Besides several questions about their experiences with the project, they were asked about their view regarding the role of women and men roles in society and how they understood girl's sport participation. The boys responded that girls do not play sport because they are lazy and like make-up. Some of them equated a women's role with household responsibilities and characteristics such as delicacy and weakness (Fieldnotes, December 2017, Campinho). These insights thus show ambiguities in the mixed-gendered setting and that young women are, to an extent, under the control of men.

Before I move on to analysing how queer participants experience sport for development programmes, I will provide a brief conclusion to this chapter.

6.3 Conclusion: New gender situation(s)?

This chapter illustrates that the delivery of gender focused projects is a complex, problematic, and contested process resulting in diverse and contradictory experiences which defy easy classification of the 'success' or 'failure' of the project. To resolve this issue, and also to respond to Ferguson's question of what happens differently due to the "development" (Ferguson, 1990), I argue, following my analysis, that SFD programmes created what I term here a new gender situation(s). The term is here used to understand what happened on the ground, that is, mechanisms and processes that lead to SFD outcomes and, more specifically, to capture the dynamic process of empowerment and disempowerment.

I am inspired here not merely by Ferguson, but also by Mosedale (2005), who alleged that 'empowerment is an ongoing process rather than a product' (Mosedale, 2005: 244). Individuals do not achieve a stage of being fully and completely empowered, instead 'people are empowered, or disempowered, relative to others or, importantly, relative to themselves at a previous time' (Mosedale, 2005: 244).

These insights help to understand the process of empowerment as facilitated by the programme. Young women enter the programme, some considering themselves empowered. Still, they described having acquired new experiences in the programme; however, they are not necessarily empowered merely through SFD participation. In relation to their previous selves, they become aware of this earlier situation, their current position, and what they want in the future. That is, they recognize the oppression and take their own decisions, as we could see throughout the chapters above. Moreover, women developed more of a sense of collective identity which is a necessary element in bringing about broader change. Programmes are able to secure power within and facilitate change beyond the project, as the example of the young girls challenging boys' spaces by negotiating access to football with the school directors demonstrated. In this context, it also suggests that the social effect of SDP programmes has the potential for continuity, and changes in gender relations and women's empowerment might not be restricted to the SDP environment but move beyond, to family and the community in which they live and wish to contribute.

The question of whether and how men should be included in development efforts and the processes of women's empowerment has been disputed among scholars. I suggest that the new gender situation(s) contributes to these debates. More precisely, the findings in this chapter illustrate that young men and boys felt insecure, hesitant, and powerless about how to position themselves in a pro-feminist environment. But there are rather diverse patterns and outcomes of these efforts entangled with asymmetries. Some of the men's reactions revealed that they did not seem to see any gains or benefits from gender equality, and their view was restricted to associating women's equal position and empowerment as threatening their privilege and dominance (Connell, 2012). However, others developed some awareness of their privileged position and did not see themselves as those who might be losing power. On the contrary, they aimed to contribute to a more gender-equal society. However, the conflicting gender models which young participants are exposed to affects females and can result in male disempowerment; they encounter a new situation in terms of gender differences inside the project, whereas outside they are forced into complying with particular patterns of masculinity which reinforce the idea of men as perpetrators of violence.

Yet, men and boys are usually seen as a homogenous group, the assumptions of which almost never imply men as *supporters, allies*, or *partners* in women's struggles toward social justice and gender equality. Therefore, I suggest that the new gender situation(s) may serve as a point of departure to explore the more alternative roles of boys and men within the process of empowerment based on 'positive deviancy' (Cleaver, 2002: 12), as well as to investigate how machismo affect them.

In the chapter that follows, I move to an analysis of how queer participants experience the sport for development environment.

7 | 'You're going to teach my son to be *viado*!'

> I discovered myself through the LGBT world, and the organization taught me how to behave in environments. Because it is a very difficult, very complicated situation. I thought I was a lesbian, but over time I find out I'm trans. It was this organization that was teaching me, showing me what it is, and where I learned about our rights. . . . I just must thank the organization for this, because it is something that I suffer from a lot. I suffer in my family, and I have suffered a lot up to today. The organization is very important in my life in relation to this. (Lolo, the pseudonym chosen by the participant, July 2018, Eldorado)

This personal testimony was narrated by a young recipient from one of the organizations under study. Although in Brazil, football is a bastion of hegemonic masculinity (Goellner et al., 2016; Knijnik, 2015), the SDP initiative played an important role in the development and support of Lolo's queer[29] identity, followed by feelings of acceptance and support. Addressing sexuality curricula through sport might be a 'risky' task given that sport has been a repressive place for queer individuals (Caudwell, 2007; Landi, 2018). Moreover, discussing issues of sexuality in school and family settings is still considered taboo in Brazil, and moral panic against educational programmes which address gender differences and sexuality has increased (Balieiro, 2018).

In this chapter, I focus on the critical exploration of sexuality and heteronormativity in the SFD field. I explore how LGBT individuals experience sport-for-development programmes in Brazil, which address sexuality and gender issues as part of their mission. While Felicidade addresses sexuality-focused agendas more

[29] Whilst 'queer' is not itself a form of the participant's identification, this thesis positions gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals under the umbrella of queer to escape labels of identification that tend to determine individuals (Msibi, 2012).

systematically, Bola Dourada declares itself as providing safe space regardless of diverse identities, including sexuality.

To understand the experience of queer individuals, it is necessary to uncover how the discourses and dominance of heterosexual-based hegemonic masculinity are being challenged, resisted, and sustained through the initiative. Therefore, in this chapter, I address the following questions: How does queer visibility in SFD programmes affect the dominant heteronormative discourses of sexuality, gender, and the body? How is an SFD environment that declares itself to be LGBT-friendly experienced, received, and resisted by young people with queer identities, as well as their families and communities? Participants' stories uncovered the following themes, which I will discuss one by one throughout this chapter: queer visibility/safety, contradictory interpretations regarding sexuality, and heteronormativity and 'otherness'.

7.1 Queer visibility: Toward an 'LGBT-safe' space

I was participating in a local event provided by one of the NGOs under study where I spent significant time talking to Camila and Taís. Both workers were discussing who was participating in the event when Camila looked around and said, 'There comes the... Well, I always just say "Hi" because I don't know what to call him, or is it her? I'm insecure. I don't want to say it wrong.' To which Taís replied, 'Now he is Lolo. Call him Lolo.' They were talking about a young person with short hair, a loose t-shirt, and a baseball cap. Then Taís turned to me and said, 'As you heard, we have trans people on our team, and Lolo is one of them.'

As the conversation between Taís and Camila indicates, within the environment provided by the initiative, Lolo's queer identity was recognized and accepted. Taís openly told me in our first interview that the organization provided a space of acceptance for LGBT-identified project participants and workers. However, given the local, hegemonic, particularly violent culture that establishes and normalizes heteronormativity, bringing LGBT issues to the forefront of their politics was complex and problematic, especially among male workers. 'Let's think', Taís explains,

> Our professional team is a diverse team. We have homosexual people; we even have transsexuals in our group. So, there is no way not to have respect between us. We want children we teach to have an attitude about diversity, so we are the reference and model for them in that respect. (Taís, February 2018, Eldorado)

While this statement speaks to the internal strategies of Felicidade which were based on active support of diversity, in Bola Dourada, there were only a few coaches

who discussed gender/sexuality issues with their participants. In some cases, gender hierarchies and heteronormativity were perpetuated within social relations between workers. As Douglas, an NGO worker, admitted, 'Today, diversity is more accepted and common here. But when I revealed myself a few years ago, several people stopped talking to me; they were telling awkward jokes, attacking me, usually telling me to "become a man".' This statement reveals that while the LGBT-inclusive spaces were secured for project participants, heteronormative attitudes toward the organization's workers were more common.

When asked about their subjective experiences within the programme and sport, young people revealed how 'important' and 'mind-opening' it was to be part of the project. Mainly, they depicted how the project was particularly crucial in terms of the self-perception of their sexuality and allowed them to disclose, claim, and express their sexual identities fully. Here I recall the critique of mainstream international development agencies and Northern donors which focus on quantifiable outcomes and results, shaping the notion of what counts as achievement. Also, similarly to what has been highlighted in other studies (e.g., Spaaij et al., 2016), while providing outcomes, such as making queer youth feel safe, was understood by young participants and local coordinators as a meaningful achievement, external funding agencies usually define 'achievement' or 'success' differently.

This was evident when local stakeholders received the chief of one of the donor agencies and presented the results of the project to him. LGBT and sexuality issues were not mentioned amongst the achievements, while success in increasing the number of girls and women was emphasized. What Carney and Chawansky (2016) alleged is of relevance here. Stories of sexual minorities 'may not fit into prescribed research or evaluation aims or intended outcomes' of the SDP interventions (Carney and Chawansky, 2016).

For LGBT individuals, being part of the project helped them to develop connections and mutual support with other queer participants, an example of which was described by Suelen as follows:

> Here [in the organization] I did not tell anyone face to face, you know. Firstly, I revealed it to my closest friends from here. Then I started to use different clothes, and then I remember that day. They organized this activity, skating. And I came to my coach and asked, 'Can I bring my girlfriend?' And he replied, 'Finally, you will bring her so we can meet her' (Suelen, 17 years old intern, July 2018, Eldorado).

In their study, Spaaij and Schulenkorf (2014) suggest that while a safe environment is not an outcome of SFD initiatives in its own right, the lack of a safe space might

generate an exclusionary and alienating experience from community sports projects or events. The authors are speaking about safety in terms of physical safety given the high levels of public violence which negatively affected youth participation in the project. But they also identified particular dimensions of social spaces which offer participants a sense of safety, security, and acceptance. Their research, however, has not focused on the experiences of LGBT individuals and the ways in which they experience and conceptualize those sport, SFD spaces.

In the case of Bola Dourada and Felicidade, creating an LGBT-safe space was their goal; therefore, it was not merely physical safety which could allow young participants to meet their peers and engage in sport and recreation activities but also the notion of safety in terms of social relations. For theorizing the concept of 'safe space', I recall Lefebvre (1991) and his understanding of space as 'fluid, constructed, and constantly altered' (Ravel and Rail, 2007: 405) and, specifically, his conceptualization of social space understood both as the medium and outcome of social relations (Van Ingen, 2003). Suelen did not feel comfortable only by the fact that she knew there were other queer individuals, but her experience and sense of safety inside the programme was defined against a wider external experience of social relations based on insecurity and intolerance.

As I suggested in chapter 4, once I became more involved in the organization's events and activities, my outsider status shifted, and I managed to build a rapport with LGBT youth in Felicidade. Over the course of a couple of weeks, I worked on building a rapport with Lolo at different events and occasions. We had not spoken a word until one day we both participated in an event Felicidade had organized for women and girls from Eldorado. I remember that because it was the World Cup in Russia, and Brazilians living in poor communities like Eldorado had a custom of decorating houses with little green and yellow flags and painting the sidewalks in support of the *Seleção*[30]. That day, Lolo talked to me directly for the first time as I was commenting on how I liked the flags and the football decorations. In reaction, he suggested he 'show me around the neighbourhood', and we went for a little walk to see more of Eldorado's football decorations.

Lolo began to share his story with me and showed me a few houses on different streets, pointing out places where he used to live with his family. Those places were his homes; nevertheless, as he added, they were also locations where he had to conceal his non-normative identity, and where nobody knew that outside he was called Lolo. 'At home, I'm Laura. But here, in the organization, I'm Lolo. I think they (the family) realize that something is happening with me, but I haven't told them anything yet.'

[30]The term in Portuguese that Brazilians use for their national football team.

Lolo's situation is similar to other participants, that is, many young, queer people performed a different identity in their homes than that which they perform within the project environment. Youth confirmed feelings of acceptance regarding diverse sexuality when narrating their stories. 'For me', Monica says'

> the organization has always been a very welcoming place. They work hard on issues of equality, the inclusion of all, regardless of their colour, sexuality, gender. Many young people there are gay, lesbian, and bisexual. And I believe it's a space where they like to be because they can be themselves'. (Monica, 17 years old intern, May 2018, Eldorado)

Whilst participants contrasted their experiences of hostile and homophobic practices within the larger society with the comfort and safety they encountered within the organization, spaces are not produced singularly or uniformly. Moreover, putting safety and security in opposition to violence presents only a limited representation of the relationship between violence and safety. Spaces are intertwined with multiple contradictions and tensions, enabling LGBT individuals to experience spaces differently (Held, 2015).

In this way, 'everyday spaces', such as family and community, were settings in which some of the LGBT youth were also able to perform and disclose their sexuality relatively freely:

> I knew that if I walked with Cris holding hands here in Capao Redondo, I might suffer prejudice. I don't know this place, so I avoid it. But if I walk in Eldorado, everyone knows that Cris and I are dating. So, it's where I feel technically free. In the organization, it's the same thing. Everyone knew we were dating. Everyone knew the way I was, and everyone knows my parents. Even when we broke up once, one guy came to my father and said, 'Your daughter broke up with her girlfriend, did you know?' (Roberta, March 2018, Eldorado)

Roberta felt relative freedom to disclose her sexuality at home; however, in our conversations, Roberta's mother revealed her stands towards homosexuality in general and her daughter's sexuality in particular in the following manner:

> I do not accept it, but I will not discriminate, abandon, or expel her from my family. But for me, it is not like, 'Oh, yes, I accept it. It is okay.' No. It's not okay with me. I don't want it to happen. (Luiza, 49 years old, July 2018, Eldorado)

The family environment shapes the participant's experiences within the organizational sports space. For example, Adriana has never revealed her sexuality and relationship at home. Still, she felt safe to disclose her sexuality and talk about those issues with young women from the project and the male coach. Regarding Adriana's parents, she admitted anxiety and fear about her parents' reaction to her sexuality: 'My parents do not accept homosexuals. My father says that if he had homosexual children, he would kick them out of the house' (Adriana, 16-year-old participant, October 2017, Campinho).

Differently, Roberta, Lolo, and Adriana reveal that family settings remained an alienating site for LGBT youth. While some parents may be more tolerant than the others, it is still difficult for young people participating in the project to shift their attitudes. The SDP environment plays a significant role in providing space relatively free from the stereotypes and stigmas, and it is crucial in the production of affective safety (Boulila, 2016; Brady, 2005; Oxford, 2017; Spaaij and Schulenkorf, 2014).

The SFD space provided queer youth with temporary refuge. While some families may be more tolerant than others in accepting non-heterosexuality concerning their children, they still tend to reproduce a heteronormative understanding of society. Project participants who reveal themselves not merely within the SDP space but also in the family environment may threaten the normalcy and status quo of heterosexuality. However, given the heteronormative culture, this impact is still rather individual as the delivery of sexuality projects and creating an LGBT-safe environment is a complex and contested process. I will discuss these concerns in the following section.

7.2 Sex/gender curricula: Contradictory interpretations

While the initiatives helped LGBT individuals to cope with the realities of heterosexism by creating temporary refuge in which they were able to 'make visible, communicate and embody' their sexuality (Eng, 2007: 52), SFD initiatives fill the uneasy space between the commitment to develop inclusive spaces for all, regardless of gender and sexuality, and the conventional norms in mainstream society, drawing upon hegemonic heteronormative practices.

Particularly religious traditions, which make individuals aware of a moral order of issues and standards of appropriate behaviour (Anderson, 2015; Verona, 2011), raised issues for the secular-based development initiative[31] pursuing gender and sexuality-related outcomes, such as female empowerment and the encouragement of young

[31]The term 'secular-based' here differs from the 'faith-based' initiatives whose activities draw specifically from religious teachings (see Clarke, Jennings, and Shaw, 2007).

LGBT individuals to acknowledge and exercise their rights. The efforts to develop inclusive spaces where differences are respected and heteronormativity is challenged translated into contradictory experences and interpretations with regard to participants' families. Kay and Spaaij (2012) illustrate the diverse ways in which family affects young people's experiences with SDP programmes. In line with the authors, family held a critical role in fostering social change for both programmes under study. Yet, forwarding their discussion, mediating the effect of family becomes more complex when considering the factor of religion.

The following story, narrated by an adult female educator, reveals the consequences of the initiative's efforts towards social change when confronted with the local community context and religion:

> I used to attend the church but when I entered here [the organization], I had to stop attending. I started to argue with the pastor. I didn't agree with things he was saying about the role of women, relations between women and men, and homosexuals. I stood up and responded to him, saying he was wrong. I started to learn different things here and realised I better leave the church. (Jacqueline, 33 years old educator, June 2018, Eldorado)

Jacqueline reported that the different understandings of gender and sexual relations she had acquired through the sports initiative shaped her decision to abandon the church despite many years of religious affiliation. Unlike the experience of Jacqueline, empirical data shows that the development outcomes and benefits achieved by the SDP initiative were rather restrained by the prescribed values and standards of the Evangelical and Catholic churches.

Religion was a significant element in the everyday lives of young people and families I interviewed. They were affiliated with Pentecostal and other churches nearby their homes, and some project participants frequently negotiated participation in sport-related trips on Saturdays with their religious commitments. While working as an international volunteer and throughout my daily presence in both communities, I observed people's diverse religious practices, such as crossing themselves before getting off the bus at night. Several times, I was asked by researcher participants and gatekeepers to join them in the religious ceremonies of their faith, but for many reasons I did not participate.

As I have shown already in other chapters of this thesis, parents were mostly supportive of their children's participation in sport and trusted the organizations. Vilma, for example, explained that she believed in the initiative's 'good intentions',

and thus, she also began to believe in the importance of discussion about gender and sexuality in which her two daughters were also engaged. She claimed that it was essential for the community to accept the organization because, in her words, 'It is good for us what they do. If it's doing good for our children, then it's good for ourselves as well. If people don't want to participate, no problem, but let others do it".

However, some families were resistant to their children's engagement in dance or gender and sexuality training. Parents understood activities of sexual education as encouraging children to 'begin sexual activity' and thus opposed with norms and moral orders mediated by religion (Verona, 2011).

Roberta revealed that some families understood gender and sexuality as merely 'unnecessary to discuss with the children' but also that 'learning about respecting others regarding homosexuality' was translated by families as helping children to 'become gay or lesbian'. Taís provided an example of this parental reading of SDP space:

> Some parents, they think, 'Ah, you're going to teach my son to be viado.' I say, if your child is not homosexual, he will not become that here. Now, if he happens to be homosexual, he will feel embraced by this group and know that this is a space of trust for him where nobody will beat him. And if he meets someone who is homosexual in the group, your child will learn to respect him. That will happen, that's it. We will not teach anyone to 'turn anything' because nobody 'turns' homosexual. (Taís, March 2018, Eldorado)

These attitudes are reflective of how SDP spaces are viewed, and they reflect the broader heteronormative logics affecting the initiative's effort to make social change. Claims of safety, as well as moral issues of tolerance and respect, work here as narratorial manoeuvring to resist and rework heteronormativity, which development initiatives seek to deconstruct so as to create comfortable and safe spaces for all participants, including those placed outside of heterosexuality.

Some educators explained that children refused to participate in sexuality/gender workshops as a result of their family influence, but the resistance worked both ways as the youth resisted these religious scripts and engaged:

> We were talking about homosexuality. And one girl, she answered something like, 'Ah, what naughtiness', and then she stopped participating. She used to say, 'It's sexuality today. I will not participate because my mother said I could not because of my religion.' So, I think she wanted to

> participate, but it was her mother who didn't want it. But one day, she came to me and asked whether she could join us for a sexuality workshop. And she started to like it. She engaged so much that when it was over, she was angry. (Doug, 34 years old educator, June 2018, Eldorado)

When narrating this story, Doug added how furious he was about the question of religion when it came to its strong influence on young participants and, consequently, the idea that the project affects the participants' lives negatively. While some parents trusted the initiative, as mentioned previously, others had a different vision of the project which did not correspond with the mantra or mission of Felicidade.

However, despite the mother's disapproval, becoming part of the sexuality curricula is a sign of acquiring the ability to make choices. As I discussed in chapter 4, young women are, under the Latin patriarchy, expected to be 'passive' and 'innocent'. This is a perspective that is usually strengthened by religion. The young woman's attitudes reflect her *power to*, that is, a capacity to define and pursue strategic choices despite possible opposition (Kabeer, 2005). The SFD project not only provided young people with sexuality curricula that is absent in school and the family environment but participants themselves perceived it as important for their lives, which resulted in resistance to their parent's opinion. Although a young woman pursuing and taking control over her life might be identified as a positive effect, this type of individual empowerment will have only limited impact on challenging deep-rooted inequalities and heteronormativity beyond the environment of the project.

In some cases, the effect and participation in the project is even out of the participant's control. That means, although providing a secure and accessible space for young people and children, some parents rejected the SFD initiative and removed their children from the programme afterwards. Their decision was based on interpretations of the programme's supposed attempt to influence their children's sexuality in a way perceived of as undesirable and, given the standards of behaviour prescribed by religion, also unacceptable. As Agatha, one of the LGBT research participants, recounted, her mother disagreed with the gender/sexuality workshops for its attempt to 'teach the children to reject their body', an expression that reflects the local, hegemonic culture which establishes and normalizes heteronormativity. It also offers a glimpse of how SDP programmes are affected by the dominant heteronormative discourses of sexuality, gender, and the body.

Developing queer issues through the SFD programme creates new conflicts which have further potential for change. Both Jacqueline and Doug's stories provide evidence that many struggles and negotiations occur between families and SFD, as well as families and project participants. Female participants may resist the family

environment and religious traditions which oppress them and reinforce their subordinated position, drawing from alternative frameworks that the programme offered to them.

7.3 *Viado* and *sapatão* Tackling heteronormativity and 'otherness'

Before the sexuality and gender sessions, together with educators, we drew coloured stripes on the children's faces as a starting point for discussion about disease prevention and sexual health. I turned to Danilo, who was among the last ones without colour on their face. I looked at him, dipped my finger into a glass with yellow paint, and the boy shook his head firmly as a sign of rejection, then turned and ran away from me. He sat on the stairs together with two more boys. They did not participate that day and only watched us from the stairs for the remainder of the session.

In our conversation afterward, Sara explained that some children are resistant to gender and sexuality discussions and verbally react in the following way: 'Is it sexuality today? I won't participate. Everything I say will be wrong.' This is in line with Oxford (2019) and her argument, particularly in relation to gendered socialization. In the context of Brazil, 'the pivotal significance of the machismo within Brazilian sexual culture' (Ford et al., 2003: 54) affects the ways in which young people and children experience SDP initiatives, particularly activities devoted to sexual education. Socialization together with other identities, particularly class and race, shapes how participants react to, receive, or resist the initiatives and sexuality curricula.

In order to undermine heteronormative discourses and challenge hegemonic masculinity (Messner and Sabo, 1994), both initiatives rejected competitiveness and disapproved of 'homophobic', 'sexist' humour between the children's interactions. The use of derogatory labels, such as viado for boys and Maria macho or sapatão for girls, was also forbidden. In other words, labels that, as Butler (1993) says, 'damaged, failed, or otherwise abjected gender' (Butler, 1993: 27) are used to question male and female sexuality.

Particularly in the case of hegemonic males, homophobic humour has 'the functional capacity to create their sense of heterosexuality and successful masculinity in opposition to other sexualities' (Dominic McCann et al., 2010: 506). Furthermore, humour serves as an 'othering' technique and might contribute to creating social distance between participants and 'other' sexualities.

As Simone described:

> A few days ago, I was wearing football shorts at home, and my mum came and said, 'Daughter, you look like a man. Soon you will become a sapatão.' I ended up imitating a man, and we both started laughing. We joke like this with each other. It is relaxing. (Simone, 16 years old intern, October 2017, Campinho)

Homophobic humour here captures insecurities about femininity and reactions to failures to embody the correct gender. The 'imitation of man', reported by Simone as 'joking' or 'playing', might be understood as a strategy used to distance herself from the 'other' sexuality within the broader heteronormative environment and family setting, both of which put pressure on young women and girls to conform to the established norms and present a constant 'heterosexual image' inside and outside of sport (Wellard, 2007). Young girls, especially between ten and fifteen years old, hesitated to wear loose sportswear, such as 'big pants' or 'big shirts', which were considered masculine. Paloma offered an example of a conversation with a young girl:

> We provide children with uniforms. And some girls from here they don't like tight clothes, but they are afraid. One day a girl came and asked me, 'Aren't these pants masculine?' I said, 'No, they aren't.' And she said, 'Can I use them?' I said, 'Of course, you can.' But she looked at me and replied, 'Do you think they will say that I'm Maria Macho?' (Paloma, 16 years old intern, July 2018, Eldorado)

Here it is also useful to recall Foucault to uncover the processes through which young girls and women feel forced into 'normalising' their bodies and comply with the heteronormative social scripts perceived by them as desirable. Following Held (2015), spaces are not produced in a singular or uniform way. Rather, everyday spaces are 'constituted as heterosexual through repetitive heterosexual performances' (Held, 2015: 35). This statement offers a glimpse at how young girls tended to adopt heteronormative performances within a space which was supposed to be 'safe' for diverse sexualities and free of such a labels.

Gender and sexuality norms were constantly deconstructed, contested, and negotiated in daily conversations and practices, yet links made between football, women's gender, and sexuality affected the sporting experience of young girls negatively. The following example illuminates how gender socialization plays out in regard to young boys and men:

> We were talking about hairs, body, and male hair shaving. Some boys said it was wrong, but others responded, 'No, it's a person's choice. If

> the man wants to, okay. If he doesn't, it's okay too.' And there was a boy, Jonatham. Well, his family is very much like that. And he said, 'No, masculine shaving is a viado thing. I think it's very wrong.' Then, Professor José lifted his sports pants and showed him: 'Look, I shave my legs.' And Jonatham replied, 'No, professor. I didn't want to say that it's a viado thing.' So, then you see that his discourse depends on the situation, which is also bad. Because when you fill out a questionnaire with him, he will answer what you want to hear even if he doesn't think that. (Sara, 18 years old female intern, June 2018, Eldorado)

It is clear that sexuality is still a contested issue for children themselves. The female intern refers to Jonatham and his family as a source of reinforcing heteronormative thinking and assumptions, which the SDP programme aims to challenge. This situation also provided a significant demonstration of the performative and discursive practices of negotiation and a redefinition of heteronormative categories within SDP spaces by educator José, a heterosexual man roughly aged 35, by showing his depilated leg. In this particular situation, the queer lens is useful here in revealing that the declared 'LGBT-friendly' SDP sport space is still contradictory as negotiation and redefinition of heteronormativity happen within the SDP space alongside the continuing dominance of heteronormative categories, which impacts upon the participant's language and expectations surrounding gender and sexual identities.

7.4 Final remarks: *Queering* sport-for-development?

This chapter indicates that the delivery of sexuality-focused projects is a complex, problematic, and contested process. The queer lens allowed for the revelation that, while Bola Dourada and Felicidade, to different extents, provided a relatively supportive environment regarding the free expression of queer desires, it creates *safe(r)* space not entirely void of heterosexism and homophobia. Homophobia and sexism 'are direct manifestations of patriarchy' (Msibi, 2012: 526), and given the high rates of violence, rates of suicide, and alienation which continue to affect the lives of LGBT people in Brazil, the focus on queer experiences with SFD programmes evidence a need for *queer* safe spacess (see Hartal, 2018).

In addition, more research on queer subjectivities and desires in the area of sport for development is needed, as well as more attention for the inclusion of sexuality in mainstream development discourses. As a scholar working within gender and development (GAD) alleged, sexuality is amongst the topics which have been rather ignored within development studies (e.g., Jolly, 2000; Menon, 2005). Gender and sex-

uality play an essential role in maintaining power relations, and the absence of issues around sexuality risk neglecting the hierarchy of oppressions which affect women in the Global South, and particularly those in Brazil.

I have demonstrated that environments facilitated by SFD programmes, although conceived as safe, are intertwined with tensions and contradictions, and raising the question of sexual diversity resulted in unexpected consequences outside the SDP space associated with misinterpretations, suspicions, and a rejection of the initiatives. While Forde and Frisby (2015) and their feminist discourse analysis opened relevant questions regarding understandings of gendered identities and sexual relations in the SDP organization manual, it is ethnographic research which can provide a culture-specific analysis and reveal 'sensitive' stories of those whose 'bodies and sexual desires do not fit the dominant standards of gender and sexuality' (Beemyn, 1996: 5).

I also cannot argue with Oxford and Spaaij (2019) who suggest that the sport and development initiative in Colombia is fused with heteronormative practices which further exclude different identities. Employing queer theory, my study offers a different perspective. I instead demonstrate how queer individuals experience the safety facilitated by the LGBT-inclusive programme in terms of their sexuality. Furthermore, as I have shown above, programmes that are conceived of as being LGBT-inclusive are also intertwined with tensions and threats, creating discomfort, and contributing to new conflicts.

Previously, I had argued that local voices are a necessary component to understanding and broadening the current landscape of SDP research. As SDP scholars have documented, much of the interventions are donor-defined, planned, and conducted with missionary zeal, whereas the most appropriate approach to community development assumes the expressed needs and available resources of the local population (Black, 2010; Kidd, 2008). Development initiatives which adopt *top-down* approaches (rather than bottom-up) and prioritize the interests of stakeholders over the needs, experiences, and voices of local populations are of particular concern to SDP scholars.

Amidst these discussions, following my analysis, I argue that queer theory might not only offer tools to challenge the heteronormative framework within SDP research (Carney and Chawansky, 2016) but may reveal and understand what I call here queer local voices. Within the shift toward reflexive, decolonial, and participant-centred SDP research, it is not enough to emphasize the lack of 'local voices' and 'local knowledge' within SDP research. There is a necessity to specify which 'voices' are to be heard as there is a plurality of voices that need to be investigated and included in research and praxis.

I agree here with Carney and Chawansky (2016), who argued that 'sexuality is about social relations, and therefore research that seeks to theorize about social change and ignores sexuality, is omitting an essential part' (Carney and Chawansky, 2016: 291). However, more complex discussions of queer subjectivities and sexuality can be complicated in contexts where homosexuality is understood and viewed as a serious issue. As Hayhurst et al. (2014), for example, argue, in Uganda, homosexuality is conceived as criminal act, and, therefore, it was difficult for the local stakeholders to 'move away from the heteronormative assumptions that provided justification for their focus on teaching self-defence to only young women and girls' (Hayhurst et al., 2014: 164). Therefore, there is need to address sexual, gender-based, and structural violence and engage in more complex approaches to gender while being aware of reconstructing local experiences in a contextualized manner.

While queer theory exposes to critical scrutiny relations between SFD, sexuality, gender, and inclusion within the broader sport-for-development field, this approach has important limitations to take into account in future studies. Queer theory has been criticized for being elitist, Western, colonialist, and White (Alexander, 2008; Halberstam, 2005). Furthermore, Benhabib (1992) argued that Butler's idea of subjectivity threatens the 'agency, autonomy and selfhood of women' (Benhabib, 1992: 214), one of the central points highlighted within postcolonial theories and feminism. Queer theorists have responded by redefining queer identities and queer theory to indicate and reflect the concerns of diverse subjects and subjectivities on questions of race, ethnicity, class, sex, desire, and gender (Alexander, 2008).

Although engaging with queer theory has the potential to give more visibility to stories, such as those of Lolo's, which have until now been rather unheard within SFD research and international development more broadly, the queering of SFD is not an easy task. Postcolonial theorists note that in using queer theory to question dichotomies and reconstruct heteronormativity, there is a risk of a reductive imposition of Western sexual categories in a non-Western context (Spurlin, 2006), and it may lead to 'ignoring local understanding and cultural meaning about sexualities' (Richardson, 2017: 214).

Whilst exploration of queer lives in future SDP research is needed, 'postcolonial queer inquiry' might offer appropriate theoretical insights into the ways in which sexualities are constructed and enable researchers to 'retheorize desire in response to shifting contexts and material conditions that are often the effects of various forms (or layers) of imperial domination' (Spurlin, 2006: 136).

8 | Conclusion

In Brazil, the passion of young women for football is boundless and impossible to overlook. Their desire to learn, play, compete, or become professional football players remains huge even if this implies they must surmount many barriers both on and off the pitch, mainly emanating from culturally inscribed norms. Given the continued commitment to gender equality in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, sport for development organizations position sport as a vessel for women's empowerment. These initiatives are celebrated for making a change in women's lives, who are supposed to gain abilities and knowledge to overcome their internalized oppression (Rowlands, 1997; Samie et al., 2015).

Yet, a closer look at women's experiences suggest that since their childhood they have had to perpetually counter their marginalization, exclusion, and stigmas by proving their abilities, adjusting their appearance, and negotiating gender norms to be included in football, a bastion of masculinity. Many times, they enter projects with 'knowledge' and 'skills' consolidated outside SFD spaces, primarily from the home environment, school, the community, and among peers, convinced that the existing social order is unjust or unnatural. Hence, the question which arose is to what extent is the SFD initiative the *primary vehicle* of change, and specifically in regard to women's empowerment, rather than an *indicator* of change? And, consequently, what are the key changes these initiatives bring in terms of advances in gender transformation?

This research was conducted in Brazil and builds and extends the debate on SFD research, examining the potential of SFD programmes to advance transformation in gender relations and offering new opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes inside and outside of sport. Through the analysis of two sport-for-development initiatives, I explored how youth participation in SFD initiatives has impacted gender relations, identities, and norms within participant families and communities. The main findings of this research fall into three main areas related to issues of (1) the role of SFD programmes in fostering social change, (2) the problematization of women's

empowerment, and, finally, (3) sexuality and heteronomativity in the SFD field.

Firstly, to discuss the role of SFD programmes in general, and their potential to foster gender equality in particular, I start from the point that development programmes are not inherently positive or beneficial but result in diverse and contradictory experiences which defy and complicate the simple classification of the 'success' of 'failure' of the project. Several authors alleged that most SFD programmes are still weakly theorised (Coalter, 2010; Spaaij and Schaillée, 2020; Whitley et al., 2019), which hamper the understanding and identification of how SDP works. As Spaaij and Schaillée (2020) argued in their recent study 'The range of theoretical frameworks that have been deployed in SfD research to date is narrow' (Spaaij and Schaillée, 2020: 2).

In order to move beyond the narrow theorizing of SFD programmes (see Schulenkorf and Spaaij, 2015; Whitley et al., 2019) and to discuss the role they play in fostering social development and the empowerment of women, it was essential to draw upon theoretical inspirations from development studies—more precisely, from gender and development (GAD). Furthermore, employing the concept of empowerment and gender in this thesis proved to be useful in understanding and clarifying the abovementioned questions and objectives, related to the question of how SFD works. Reading SDP through these theoretical lenses allowed youth experiences to be linked with aspects of empowerment as well as to understand the culturally specific outcomes of these programmes.

Based on my analysis, I identify the frictions between SFD as a primary vehicle of transformation in gender relations and women's empowerment and as an indicator of change. One of the programmes' roles lies in confirming and maintaining attitudes, values, and opinions which have been not only developed but also consolidated in other environments, and through different tools other than sport. More precisely, rather than resulting from mere SFD participation, youth opinions regarding gender roles have been developed and formed by various factors—their family and community environment, personal experience, school, peers, social media—which cannot be separated from one another.

This point can be illustrated through women's sport *participation*. Young women enjoyed the sporting opportunities the programme offered, created a new friendships, and gained skills through their participation in the relatively safe space which the organization provided. Yet, what may not be immediately noticeable for those who 'evaluate' these programmes is that they enter the pitch and the programme with knowledge, opinions, and attitudes toward the hierarchical gender order already consolidated independently of the SFD project. That said, while women and girls can use

the programme to counter their marginalization and exclusion (Jeanes and Magee, 2014), locating their experiences of and responses to sport and empowerment within their family context, women's participation in sport, and, therefore, in SFD programmes is already a result of profound negotiation of the structures and sources of power and subordination (Batliwala and Dhanraj, 2004).

These observations do not mean that there is no impact beyond the sport programme on the broader community and, therefore, emphasize the potential for SFD to be a primary mover of change. I argue, following my analysis, that SFD programmes created what I term here a *new gender situation(s)*. The term is here used to understand what happened *on the ground*, that is, mechanisms and processes which lead to SFD outcomes, in terms of the shifts in gender relations and women's empowerment and, more specifically, to capture the dynamic process of empowerment and (dis)empowerment. As chapters of this thesis revealed, the programmes are able to facilitate change beyond the project. In terms of women's empowerment, women feel empowered independently of the programmes but also partly by the programme, describing having acquired new experiences, self-esteem, making choices regarding their lives, and also (re)negotiating their gender roles in families. In this context, it suggests that the social effect of SFD programmes has the potential for continuity, and changes in gender relations and women's empowerment might not be restricted to the SFD environment but move beyond, to family and the community in which they live and wish to contribute. In other words, we can speak about some sort of pre-change and post-change, about a change *before*, *during*, and *after* involvement in the SFD project.

Thus, we can see that adopting or measuring women's empowerment through predetermined indicators and categories commonly used in the SFD field and evaluation research (e.g., Kay, 2012; Levermore and Beacom, 2009) bears significant limitations in understanding development outcomes. The findings speak to the ambiguous role of SFD when it comes to questioning its potential for broader social change. Moreover, while patriarchy can be contested, it is still very prevalent in the daily lives of participant families, with girls, and some boys more capable of challenging it than their parents. Here, I agree with Saavedra (2009), that any outcomes of these programmes, including gender-specific ones, should not be thought of as 'evidence' of the wider phenomenon but understood in their context (Saavedra, 2009).

In relation to the previous point, this research was grounded in the participant's experiences and the role of the broader environment, such as family and community. In this way, it has also contributed to the emerging, but still underexplored topic of how family influences youth experiences and the responses of SFD (Kay and

Spaaij, 2012; McSweeney, 2020; Oxford and Spaaij, 2019), particularly in response to McSweeney (2020) and Kay and Spaaij (2012) and their contentions that more studies need to explore how families experience SFD and the ways familial support, or the lack thereof, affect youth participants. While I agree with Kay and Spaaij (2012), who suggest that, 'young people's responses to sport progammes in development contexts will depend not only on the ways in which programmes are delivered, but also on how they are experienced and interpreted within, and mediated through, young people's family reliances' (Kay and Spaaij, 2012: 92), my findings expand these debates by moving beyond the family context. More precisely, I demonstrate that not only family, but other institutions, such as schools and churches—that is, the broader community context—hinder or facilitate girls' and boys' (dis)empowerment, as well as influence parents experiences in multiple and contradictory ways. Morevover, the intersection of where the impact of the broader environment overlaps with the impact of the project is an essential task to be researched and should not be limitied to being understood from the perspectives of youth only (see Oxford and Spaaij, 2019).

I acknowledge that the experiences and stories presented within this thesis are not homogenous given that there is no shared women's oppression (but rather it is based on class, race, sexuality, and religion) nor do all men benefit equally from patriarchy (Connell, 2005; Messerschmidt et al., 2005); hence, the participants targeted by SFD initiatives accept, use, and give meanings to these programmes in different ways and participate in sport for different purposes.

This only intensifies the need to explore in more depth the role of SFD initiatives and how broader social, political, historical conditions affect these outcomes and, therefore, their roles. The research should move beyond the mere focus on SFD itself and adopt a bottom-up perspective, not just to illustrate how sport reproduces hegemonic norms of masculinity associated with competition and heterosexuality but also to offer an alternative interpretation of SFD outcomes and development. Whilst the programmes emphasized their non-competitive elements, as oppose to those associated with football school scouting and training professional athletes, some youth use the programmes as a site to improve on skills needed to become a professional player. Hence, young people find their own ways and meanings, which they attach to SFD in their communities. This is to say, that social inequalities, poverty and economic exploitation, racism and, at the same time, the national and historical popularity of football in Brazilian society, and its 'social mobility' potential, makes it an important site for the analysis of SFD programmes and outcomes.

Second, when analysing gender specific projects, tensions and unintended consequences resulting from 'empowering women', which put boys and men in new and

diverse situations, become evident, as do way in which the relationship between sport and gender development goals become fraught with complexities. I am inspired here not only by Ferguson (1990) but also by Mosedale (2005), who alleges that empowerment is an ongoing process. Individuals do not achieve a stage of being fully and completely empowered; instead, 'people are empowered, or disempowered, relative to others or, importantly, relative to themselves at a previous time' (Mosedale, 2005: 244). Moreover, empowerment is relational, not fixed; it is negotiated with others in particular contexts, and there are also different definitions of empowerment related to different systems of knowledge.

In order to determine to what extent a project contributes or facilitates women's empowerment, it was helpful to analyse these experiences through Rownlands's theoretical conceptualization of empowerment. She distinguishes between four dimensions of power in any process of empowerment: (1) power over (controlling power/domination of marginalized groups); (2) power to (generate new possibilities without domination); (3) power with (collective power, power created through a group process); and, finally, (4) power from within (ability to think and see alternative ways of existing) (Rowlands, 1998: 13).

To be more specific, the question is not whether young women are empowered or not by the programme, but what means and processes led to these outcomes, and in what way do they challenge power relations (Sardenberg, 2008). Reading women's experiences through Rowlands's lens, young women's empowerment includes the following processes of power negotiation: negotiating their access to sport within different environments (power over), the result of which is them being able to achieve and negotiate access to new spaces they are convinced they have been denied previously (power to). Sport also provides them with a sense of collective identity, which can lead to broader change (power with) and provide them with different knowledge, consciousness, and self-esteem to the overcome effects of internalized oppression, for example through developing skills which help them to experience their body in new ways and counter, ignore, and revert stigmas and negative labels (power with).

When interpreted within predetermined categories—neoliberal or Western led—and not grounded in women's experiences and understanding of transformation, struggles and 'achievements' are overlooked by simplistic conceptualizations of empowerment which can be measured and quantified and, therefore, provide 'credible' evidence of individual or group 'empowerment'. However, I demonstrate that to theorize women's empowerment through SFD, an alternative approach is necessary to employ, one which will help to interpret women's experiences and move beyond presenting empowerment as an end in itself. The development of empowerment is an ongoing pro-

cess rather than a final output or goal, and, as such, it deserves further exploration beyond the boundaries of narrow top-down, Western understandings. Postcolonial theory is essential to identify how SFD initiatives affect the communities they target. More specifically, as Mwaanga (2012) suggested, 'program assumptions informed by Eurocentric discourse often go unchallenged at the risk of eroding communal values and practices' (Mwaanga, 2012: 178). Amidst these debates, studies focusing on empowerment need to highlight the role of culture in the process of empowerment.

However, my findings also suggest another direction through which to theorize empowerment. When women's struggles are analysed alongside the 'reactions' of boys and men to the SFD project and gender equality claims, new power struggles and the layers of empowerment as well as unpredictable outcomes become evident. The question of whether and how men should be included in development efforts and the processes of women's empowerment has been disputed among feminist development scholars working within the GAD framework, but these questions are not sufficiently addressed within the SFD field. Many previous feminist studies have focused mainly on women's and girls' experience as the target of SDP programmes (e.g., Hayhurst et al., 2015; Zipp, 2017), noticeably highlighting the negative aspects of men's interactions with women as well as the impact on men, and, subsenquently, the impact of this on their interactions with women (e.g. defensive, resistant behaviours, new forms of exclusion). More precisely, they suggest that boys and men reinforce women's marginalization and exclusion without addressing the other roles men can play within the development (through sport) and empowerment process nor the fact that both men and women can experience disempowerment, although its nature, proportion, and processes may vary (e.g., Chant, 2000; Connell, 2014; Cornwall, 1997).

Against this backdrop, this thesis brings a unique and novel contribution to the current SFD research, in which including men's and boys' experiences into the analysis has been rather rare (see Oxford, 2019). I suggest here that having mixed-gendered projects which provide curricula on empowerment and are gender specific is still an underexplored area. As was previously mentioned, SFD programmes are often women-centric, either aiming to 'empower' women in a girl-only setting or provide them with the access to participate in an environment alongside boys. In this sense, my field proves to be unique for the analysis not only of how young women feel empowered by the project as well as what the role of sport is, but for envisioning gender as a more complex category and analysing men's reaction and the ways in which they positioned themselves toward the project.

The findings revealed that young men and boys felt insecure, hesitant, and powerless about how to position themselves in a pro-feminist environment. But there

are rather diverse patterns and outcomes of these efforts entangled with unintended consequences. Some of the men's reactions revealed that they did not seem to see any gains or benefits from gender equality, and their view was restricted to associating women's equal position and empowerment with a threat to their privilege and dominance, resulting in various forms of resistance toward women's empowered status, such as victimization and violence. Others developed some awareness of their privileged position and did not see themselves as those who might be losing power. On the contrary, they aimed to contribute to a transformation of gender relations and supported women's improved status. However, the conflicting gender models which young participants are exposed to affects not only females negatively but also can result in male disempowerment; they encounter a new situation in terms of gender differences inside the project, whereas outside they are forced into complying with particular patterns of masculinity which reinforce the idea of men as perpetrators of violence. I illustrated significant challenges for SFD initiatives that, to an extent, reinforced an asymmetrical view that gender issues relate to women only.

In addition, men and boys are usually seen as a homogenous group, the assumptions of which almost never imply men as 'supporters', 'allies' or 'partners' in women's struggles toward social justice and gender equality. I suggest that the new gender situation(s) may serve as a point of departure to explore the more alternative roles of boys and men within the process of empowerment based on 'positive deviancy' (Cleaver, 2002: 12), as well as to investigate how machismo affects them. But there is also another important point, which speaks to possible negative effects of women's empowerment on boys and men. The empowerment was understood by some women in the sense of a 'reversal of relationships' (Rowlands, 1998: 13), that is, they felt in positions of power and excerpted power over men in turn. This generated inequalities and oppression for men and boys, for example, through women's use of violence. In this sense, male privilege and the patriarchal order in which both women and men act under the script of men's privilege and women's subordination limit, first, the potential of youth to establish a new relationship with their peers, not based on authority, and, second, it limits the impact of SFD initiatives aiming to transform gender relations and empower women.

And finally, whilst the programmes were to different extents committed to being LGBT-inclusive, these spaces were not completely void of heterosexism and homophobia. The queer lens here allowed for the revelation that, whilst the SDP initiative provided a relatively supportive environment regarding the free expression of queer desires, it creates rather *safe(r)* spaces and a temporary refuge for queer individuals. Furthermore, I suggest that any attempts to raise the question of sexual diversity

resulted in unexpected consequences outside the SFD space associated with misinterpretations, suspicions, and a rejection of the initiatives.

Moreover, following my analysis, I argue that queer theory is useful to reveal and understand *queer local voices*, which needs to be more explored in future studies. Within the shift toward reflexive, decolonial, and participant-centred SDP research, it is not enough to emphasize the lack of local voices within SDP research (see Collison and Marchesseault, 2018), there is a necessity to specify which voices are to be heard and included in future SDP research and praxis. Whilst exploration of queer lives in future SFD research is needed, the queering of SFD is not an easy task. Postcolonial theorists note that in using queer theory to question dichotomies and reconstruct heteronormativity, there is a risk of a reductive imposition of Western sexual categories in a non-Western context (Spurlin, 2006), and it may lead to 'ignoring local understanding and cultural meaning about sexualities' (Richardson, 2017: 214).

Therefore, given the top-down approaches (rather than bottom-up) in which the interests of stakeholders over the needs, experiences, and voices of local populations are prioritized, 'postcolonial queer inquiry' might offer appropriate theoretical insights into the ways in which sexualities are constructed and enable researchers to 'retheorize desire in response to shifting contexts and material conditions that are often the effects of various forms (or layers) of imperial domination' (Spurlin, 2006: 136).

In addition, more research on queer subjectivities and desires in the area of sport for development is needed, as well as more attention to the research of sexuality in the mainstream development field. As Carney and Chawansky (2016) argued, 'Sexuality is about social relations, and therefore research that seeks to theorize about social change and ignores sexuality, is omitting an essential part' (Carney and Chawansky, 2016: 291). As scholars working within GAD observed, sexuality is amongst the topics which have been rather ignored within development studies (e.g., Jolly, 2000; Menon, 2005). However, deconstruction of the heteronormative framework within which SFD operates, and a move toward more complex discussions of queer subjectivities and sexuality, can be complicated in contexts where homosexuality is understood and viewed as a serious issue. As Hayhurst et al. (2014), for example, argue, in Uganda, homosexuality is conceived as criminal act, and, therefore, it was difficult for the local stakeholders to 'move away from the heteronormative assumptions that provided justification for their focus on teaching self-defence to only young women and girls' (Hayhurst et al., 2014: 164).

Therefore, there is need to address sexual, gender-based, and structural violence

and engage in more complex approaches to gender while being aware of reconstructing local experiences in a contextualized manner. Gender and sexuality play an essential role in maintaining power relations, and the absence of issues around sexuality risk neglecting the hierarchy of oppressions which affect women in the Global South, and particularly those in Brazil. These findings may be applied by practitioners and development agencies to adapt gender interventions through sport to local situations and contexts.

Before I move to discuss the role and value of ethnographic research in sport for development in the next section, it is important to recall some of the limitations of this research. While the topic of gender and sexuality needs to be further investigated, I suggest that theorizing and analysis of empowerment must put greater emphasis on intersectionality, that is, understand empowerment in terms of gender inequalities but also other determinants among women and men (including race, class, ethnicity), as well as in terms of the unequal position of North and South in the global scenario (Sen and Grown, 1987). While this study contributed to theorizing empowerment and power, more studies on empowerment are needed that also highlight the diverse roles men play in this process. Not all men have power over women, and some women can be superior to both other men and women. Therefore, empowerment is negotiated with others, in particular contexts, meaning that men as well as women can both be disempowered in particular situations. Therefore, empowerment needs to be theorized considering also how hegemonic and subordinated masculinities (Messerschmidt et al., 2005) shift the discussion from 'men as obstacles to women's empowerment', toward a more complex approach in which men's role in empowerment efforts is understood as heterogenous.

8.1 Concluding methodological remarks

This dissertation thesis has several methodological implications for further research. The methodological approach I adopted for this research, that is, in-depth ethnography, presents an effort to accentuate the important and indispensable role as well as numerous potentialities of ethnography in SDP research. To date, studies have rarely drawn from first-hand, long term engagement within the research of sport for development programming, and gender-focused research in particular. Frequently, researchers demand a commitment to the qualitative study of SDP (e.g., Darnell et al., 2016) and participant-centred research (e.g., Collison and Marchesseault, 2018; Darnell et al., 2019; Kay, 2009; Spaaij et al., 2017) to enhance the understanding of development implications on the SDP sector, which is, at present, predominantly

drawn from the quantitative monitoring and evaluation of SDP programming.

While ethnography offers a fruitful form of research praxis, given the demands for a demonstrable impact, this methodological approach was still marginalized beyond the emphasis on evidence-based, quantitative research. In recent studies (e.g., Thorpe, 2016a), scholars continually stress the critical importance of qualitative research to provide a better understanding of 'the mechanisms and contexts' which underpin sport and development outcomes (Spaaij and Schaillée, 2020: 1). The SDP sector has been shifting toward a new 'methodological turn' as many SDP scholars employ innovative methodological approaches. Those emerged within the shift toward reflexive, decolonial, ethical, and participant-centred SDP research.

In some ways, the in-depth 'everyday' ethnography presented in this thesis also demonstrates such a commitment to reflexive and participant-centred research. That said, this dissertation thesis drew on empirical research which moves away from strict quantitative monitoring and evaluation to in-depth ethnographic engagement in the daily routines of diverse actors involved directly or indirectly in two SFD programmes in Brazil. I argue that qualitative ethnographic research possesses numerous potentialities for SDP scholars. As McCall (2005) notes, 'Case studies and qualitative research more generally have always been distinguished by their ability to delve into the complexities of social life—to reveal diversity, variation, and heterogeneity where quantitative researchers see singularity, sameness, and homogeneity' (McCall, 2005: 1782).

This is particularly important for SDP research. Ethnography holds the potential to reveal the complexities of social life and illuminate the heterogeneity and diversity of experiences, outcomes, and transformations. In regard to the young people under study and their families, my immersion in the field positioned me in an advantageous position to explore the negotiations of gender norms and reactions to women's empowerment in a family environment. Moreover, I was able to explore how sexual minorities experience SDP programmes. This issue has not been systematically studied in SDP literature due to challenging questions of establishing trust and accessing LGBT individuals. This exploratory potential is amongst the main advantages that ethnography offers SDP research, as well as other fields, in contrast to short-term, formal interviewing, which might lead to misinterpretation, homogenization, and the overlooking of diverse experiences and outcomes of local populations.

While I am not arguing that ethnography is the only way how to investigate sport, development, and empowerment, I advocate that researchers engage more with this fruitful approach. Participation in the daily routines of people under study enabled me to develop strong social bonds and allowed me to understand the complexity of

queer experiences. Future studies might investigate, for instance, the multiple ways in which the participants 'perform' their sexualities in SDP programmes.

Adopting a research approach rooted in first-hand exploration of the research setting as well as developing close and continuing relationships with those being studied is salient, allowing us to, what I label, *zoom* in for more accurate pictures about the groups we study. Ethnography enables the revelation of what programmes create on the ground (outcomes, experiences), how they operate on a daily basis, and the exploration of the meanings participants, families, and communities assign to them. Long-term engagement in people's daily routines was a necessary element for this SDP ethnography so that I could capture and describe the key outcomes from the youth's perspective. To put it briefly, the role of ethnography in SDP research is indispensable.

I further suggest that language proficiency also significantly shapes the way the ethnographer engages with and understands the research setting and data. Furthermore, language proficiency enhances deeper collaborations with research participants. In my research, language skills contributed to building closeness and navigating distances within research interactions and enabled me to engage directly within various social and sporting spaces. Knowledge of the participants' language helped me to become part of their daily life and become more easily accepted within the group of people who are more open to speaking their mother tongue.

Speaking English with many of the participants would be impossible as their families cannot afford courses, and they frequent public schools with low-quality education. I argue that this fieldwork conducted in English would allow me to interview only a limited number of important actors in SDP, such as volunteers and donors, whereas the Portuguese language allowed me to produce a different story than would have been produced in the case of English interviews or in the presence of local translators. Knowledge of the local language allowed me to hear what was said, and primarily and most valuably, observe how things were done on the ground. When some issues, doubts, and questions about slang or specific local terms appeared, participants' explanations of these words also served as a way to explain their meanings as well as revealed the participants views.

There were unique opportunities to engage with a variety of recipients of development programmes and their families; in other words, deep interactions not possible in the company of a translator or without the ability to lead a fluent conversation in the participants' mother tongue. I was also able to gain deeper insights into certain phrases spoken by natives, and language positioned me to be in a favourable position to understand the cultural-specific context that is central for effective and successful

ethnography.

Relatively few SDP scholars have discussed issues related to how knowledge of the research participants' language, or lack thereof, affects the research. With some exceptions (e.g., Chawansky, 2015; Hayhurst, 2016), the dilemmas surrounding language skills, power, and translation are still among the neglected issues within SDP research. Of particular concern when discussing issues of language and power is how the outsider position of the researcher as a 'knowing subject' together with the Global North/South divide might be strengthened due to the lack of common/mutual language skills. Given the prevailing trends of decolonial research, I argue that language and its connection to power deserve more attention and future investigation so as to destabilize neocolonial discourses and practices. I hope my first-hand research indicating some of the language-related issues contributes to the reflexive research on SDP. In some manner, chapter 4, focused on ethnographic reflexivity, was a step forward to achieve this aim.

8.2 Final thoughts

As mentioned in chapter 4, I gained trust by committing myself to not 'disappear', and, 'once I write a book, [not to] forget about' the people in the field. Whether withdrawal from my promise would be labelled as the reproduction of colonial practices or—in the participants' own terms—'disappearance', it is necessary to contextualize this in the broader debates regarding the dissemination and communication of research results to local communities (Levermore, 2011). Speaking the local language was essential to gathering data. The language will also be fundamental in making the results of this study accessible to local communities (through presentations and reports) , organizations, or policymakers so they can use this knowledge, repertoire, and tools in their endeavours for social change and, for example, for improving the quality of life for LGBT youth.

In addition, given the flow of international, predominantly Northern workers to the Global South, and situated within the broader discussion regarding Northern/-Southern knowledge, the presence of development workers needs to be further addressed within the SDP sector. I interrogate the assumptions that Northern workers need to acknowledge their privileged position to be able to contribute to broader development. As examples from this thesis show, their internalized dominance affects how they understand their role in development and comply with meanings which circulate in the development discourse. Together with Heron (2007), I argue that development workers need to be considered 'a separate, significant group of transna-

tionals who are transmitters of Northern knowledge, values, and identities' (Heron, 2007: 14).

Throughout this thesis, I aimed to emphasize local knowledge and highlight that local populations should be included in the project planning, because 'universalistic approaches, based on global strategies of problem-solving, can only succeed when they are mediated by local knowledge' (Diawara, 2000: 370). As the author goes on to note, projects can succeed 'when the concepts and conceptions of development experts are transmitted through local languages and measured against the practical judgment of local populations' (Diawara, 2000: 370).

One of these practical judgments could be Daniel's provocative question about whether the project changes people's lives, which I addressed at the beginning of this thesis. I would probably not have quoted him if more participatory development practices had been used and would ensure that his voice and opinion was heard. I am not suggesting that Daniel's words were indicative of the failure or success of the project—this is not a task of this thesis. Moreover, this does not depend only on the local communities and their contributions but on the broader sociopolitical context. Recently, Brazil has been governed by Bolsonaro, whose government is active in promoting a conservative gender ideology. SDP programmes do not exist in a societal vacuum, they are subject to the general and political environment within which they take place; hence, they also suffer from larger political problems. Analysing how projects adapt to or resist broader sociopolitical turbulence could also be a tasks for future research.

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