

Report and evaluation from Workshop November 2024 at UFPR

Participation in the workshop was approximately 15-30 each day, with five from HVL and the rest from UFPR. Two staff members (Christian Frøyd and Birte Barsnes Frøyd) and three students (Stine A Liknes, Sara Bruvik and Vårin Ness) took part from HVL. In addition Prof SA Pettersen (UiT) and Master-students from HVL took part some of the program online. Professor Gleber Pereira and Paulo Bento, and Luana Cabral and Maria Souza led the workshop. 16 students are involved as coaches for the football program, and most of them took part in the workshop in addition to a few other students and Professors.

Program-classroom

The workshop had a program each day (pdf), and except one presentation that was cancelled, it was performed according to the program.

During the first week, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, Professors from Brazil lectured in Portuguese, with translation to English. Despite some language challenges, we took part in very interesting themes like women's role and possibilities as managers, players and referees in football, in past and present (Danielle Torri).

Cryslaine Oliveira talked about empowerment for young women in football, gender equality and women's rights, and strategies for confronting racism and violence. Football can influence girls in a wrong way, but it is also possibilities to improve empowerment in football. Prof Oliverira presented a project in Rio de Janeiro where football was used as a tool to talk about topics related to women's empowerment. We got information on how to work with the girls to on the field to increase empowerment. <https://www.empodera.org.br/>

Professor Fernando Santos talked about "Social justice life skills". Positive youth development (PYD), in and outside sport, how interaction between coaches, parents, organizations, communities and others influence the athlete. Help leaders understand what athletes consider is problematic. And opposite. Create spaces where the girls can communicate, talk about barriers. In the last part of this session, participants work in groups, to describe solutions related to social justice life skills in the football program FutDelas.

On Tuesday 7th Nov, students presented their work, thoughts about the project, and football in Norway and Brazil.

First Master student Jan Åge Hermundsgård presented (online) his master thesis, involving qualitative analysis of the girls experiences in the football program, based on diaries. Jan Åge emphasized the transformative power of sport and its capacity to

challenge societal norms, inspire individuals, and foster communities. Christian Frøyd presented the thesis of master student Håvard Fossum, containing an 8-week intervention with plyometric training for the girls in the football program. Long jump, but not 20-meter sprint or counter movement jump improved after the intervention.

Bachelor student Davi Zanlorensi had two presentations, in preparation for a local conference. In one study, 86 girls in the football program performed physical tests over approximately 6 months, and horizontal long jump and flexibility improved. In the other study, the performance was compared between Norwegian and Brazilian girls. Norwegian girls performed better in most of the tests. Motivation for testing was mentioned as a factor affecting test results of the Brazilian girls.

Master student, and coach for the women's team in Sogndal FK and a girls team age 13 and 14, Marianne Mellesdal, presented (online) her research question for her master thesis, To be a coach in football- an autoethnography: 1. How does gender become visible in the everyday life of a football coach? 2. What are acceptable ways of expressing oneself as a football coach? Marianne will analyze her own diary and notes from football practice, courses and meeting. She will hand in her thesis in May 2025.

Vårin Ness, master student, semi-professional football player in Sogndal, and employee (club developer) at the Norwegian Football Association, presented the organization and the work to improve girls in football in Norway. Girls in Norway normally start playing football when they are 5 or 6 yrs old, and girls have (or should have) the same possibilities as boys. Vårin presented specific projects for girls and coaching courses for women.

Isabel Stival presented "Differences between Brazil and Norway: social aspects, physical aspects and training", and Stine Liknes & Sara Bruvik presented "Women's football through Norwegian perspectives and experiences", with emphasis on their own experience as football players in Norway. In addition Stine and Sara presented their own research in the football program FutDelas, observation to study interaction between the girls and the coaches. Interestingly, differences between Norway and Brazil were described. Despite several benefits in Norway, it was interesting to hear that creativity, playfulness, individual adaptation was considered significant better in Brazil than in Norway.

After the presentation, we had good discussions, followed by a panel debate after lunch. Themes were the benefits for a girl to have a female coach, since a female coach may be better to listen and understand girls, caring about the whole person, menstruation, building relations, and gender equality in several aspects of football.

Planning girls training

The second week of the workshop started with Dr. Eduardo Fontes, initiating a group work, where participants worked in groups to plan a training session to enhance

cognitive skills. After planning, the groups presented their plans in the classroom. In the afternoon, the groups performed their plans with the girls in the football program. After the training session, Eduardo led the evaluation of the training with the participants of the workshop.

The next day, Eduardo lectured about “Maximizing Learning in Girls' Football: Addressing Neurobiological Mechanisms for Effective Instruction Before, During, and After Practice”. We heard about the importance and benefits of the football activity, including health, cognitive development, mental health, social skills and academic success. More in detail, mechanisms in neuroplasticity, with making of new pathways (connections) between neurons and brain areas, and termination of previous pathways, making the brain more efficient. Further how the knowledge about neurobiological mechanisms can be used to optimize pre-practice, during-practice and post-practice routines. Examples include instruction, feedback, learning-friendly environment, attention and cognitive load, recovery, reflection and skill reinforcement.

Dr. Luana Cabral and Dr. Maria Souza presented “History and Context” for the Empowering girls project. The project was summarized related to the goals of the project. The timeline with planning and designing, student exchange, COIL, starting and executing the football program, recruitment of the girls, workshops, testing and research was described. In total 23 Brazilian students has been involved as coaches/workshop/research, and 13 Norwegian students have taken part in Brazil during long-term exchange or workshops. 5 Brazilian students have been on long-term exchange to Norway, and 3 more will go in 2025. The football program (FutDelas) started in 2023, including training methodology, implementation of life skills and empowerment in several steps – both prior to (theory and discussions), during practical training sessions, and after training (discussion, reflection and application outside of training). Research includes action research, field observations, questionnaires, diaries and physical tests. During the last months, fNIRS (brain activity) has been measured during a STROOP-test. The research has led to several undergraduate thesis, both at UFPR and HVL, and four Master thesis at HVL. Seven presentations has or will be performed in conferences in Brazil in 2023-24, and five scientific papers has been approved or are in progress in Brazil. The main concern of the football program is the recruitment of low-income girls, and the dropout of girls. The positive element is that the football program will be extended with one year until mid-2026, and that it will be also performed at a local school.

On the last day of the workshop, Dr. Cabral and Davi Zanlorensi led a practical session demonstrating measurements with fNIRS during a STROOP (cognitive) test. After learning how to collect data and to analyze data with fNIRS, data collection now works well. Next step is to collect fNIRS-data during a practical session.

Training sessions and CopaDelas

On the Sunday in the middle of the workshop, all participants in FutDelas were invited to a football Cup (CopaDelas). The girls and a few coaches played in four teams, against each other. Participants got medals, and all girls got a football shirt from Sogndal.

Social activities

In addition to day-time activities, social activities make participants in the workshop to know each other better, and preparing the students going to Sogndal in January 2025 to be better prepared and taken care of when they arrive. The feedback and discussions are important for understanding the value of the project for the participants. In addition to a pizza night and barbeques, participants watched a (men's) game between Curitiba and Santos. Gustavo Piana has become physical coach for the women's team (Curitiba FC). We had the possibility to observe a training session with the senior team and junior team.

Evaluation

The workshop was evaluated at the last day of the workshop with all participants present. Mainly participant had very positive feedback. It was a good combination between lectures and practical activities. Many women are now involved in the project. The workshop is a good opportunity to share knowledge and to recruit new students to the project. Social activity are bonding, building relationships, in many situations. Getting to know each other's better. Participants learned to understand the whole project, and that the project is something bigger than yourselves. Digital lectures and Portuguese language with translation to English is a challenge. Challenges for the football program is the recruitment of girls and to prevent dropouts. The students emphasized the learning and knowledge they achieved during the project. Including inner learning, learning from others, making new possibilities as being a coach outside the project, writing thesis and going to Norway/Brazil and conferences. The possibilities for girls to empower and play football, and an example for others was also emphasized. Students going in exchange would like to study sport science in English language at the other university. Finally, plans were made for the students going to Sogndal from January 2025, online (COIL) collaboration, and internship in Sogndal with bonding between FutDelas and Sogndal girls.