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MASTER THESIS

Changing gender relations in the context of ‘sports-for-development’ program:
Exploring the impact of the introduction of women's rugby in Colombia.

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Statutory Declaration

“I herewith declare that this Master Thesis entitled “Changing gender relations in the context of ‘sports-for-development’ program: Exploring the impact of the introduction of women's rugby in Colombia” is my original work for the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree in International Development Studies GLODEP. I confirm that the work contained herein is my own, except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text through references or acknowledgements. Furthermore, I declare that the submitted written (bound) copies of the present thesis and the version submitted on a data carrier are consistent with each other in contents.”

Place: *Bahia Solano*; Date: *30/05/2021*

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'M' followed by a series of horizontal and diagonal strokes.

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how the introduction of women's rugby in a context of imbalanced gendered relations change (or not) perceptions of femininity, masculinity, and ideas of development. The objective is to understand how Colombian women represent themselves as rugby players of an SDP organization and to find out how the community's perception of women is challenged by girls playing rugby.

Thus, the following research questions and sub-questions will be investigated:

Research questions

- To what extent does women's participation in rugby, an emerging sport in Colombia, challenge (or not) the gendered norms of the Colombian society?
- How does rugby define gender relations within the SDP organization and the community?

Research design:

This research will be carried out with the support of Buen Punto, a non-profit foundation that gives disadvantaged young people in Chocó, Colombia, the means to learn through sport. Their aim is to use rugby and surfing as a tool to support the social inclusion of „at-risk“ or disadvantaged youth in Colombia and the development of valuable skills such as leadership, trust, and respect.

The research methods will include dozens of interviews, observation of participants and, if possible, focus groups. Interviews will be conducted in Spanish, audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interviewees will vary from young girls playing rugby, parents, rugby coaches, programme managers, community leaders. The targeted interviewees and the questions asked may evolve according to their responses.

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Abstract

With the emergence of the SDP movement, researchers, policy makers, and international organizations saw the opportunity to empower women and girls through sport. However, research on the impact of SDP programs has largely focused on the absence or presence of positive effects, but that few researchers focus on negative effects, such as the potential for disempowerment. On the other hand, there is a lack of critical questioning related to the empowerment of women and girls in SDP to illustrate how their participation in programs does (or does not) develop girls' empowerment. This study aims to explore how Colombian women represent themselves as rugby players of an SDP organization and to find out how the community's perception of women is challenged by girls playing rugby. The research methods used for data collection include open and semi-open-ended interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. The results show that access a stimulating and supportive environment offered participants the opportunity to experience non-stereotypical gender relations based on respect and equity. However, this research highlights that participants' opportunities to develop capabilities are also restrained by the local context such as gender stereotypes within the community or power imbalances rooted in drug trafficking. Thus, this research invites researchers and practitioners to consciously consider local structural and social factors when setting up an SDP programme .

Keywords: Gender relations; Spor for Development and Peace; Colombia; Empowerment

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List of Abbreviations

CA	Capability Approach
FBP	Fundación Buen Punto
R4P	Rugby For Peace
SDP	Sport for Development and Peace

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Over the past 20 years, a multitude of actors (international NGOs, development agencies, sport governing bodies, academics, athletes, etc.) have become interested in sport and physical activity as tools to address development issues. With the emergence of the SDP movement, researchers, policy makers, and international organizations saw the opportunity to empower women and girls through sport. Available research on gender and SDP programs has highlighted potential channels for individual empowerment such as female athletes as role models, transforming public spaces to include women, and building physical strength (Brady 2007; Saavedra, 2009; Hayhurst 2013; Meier, 2015). However, research on the impact of SDP programs has largely focused on the absence or presence of positive effects, but that few researchers focus on negative effects, such as the potential for disempowerment. With the exception of Chawansky (2011), Oxford & McLachlan (2018), and Prince (2019) who have addressed disempowerment channels in their research, this is an unexplored but critical area to ensure that the program is not harming participants. Therefore, it is crucial to look beyond the inclusion of women and girls in sports spaces to consider how the complex contextual realities that girls experience can impact their participation in a SDP program (Oxford, 2019). On the other hand, there is a lack of critical questioning related to the empowerment of women and girls in SDP to illustrate how their participation in programs does (or does not) develop girls' empowerment. There is a gap between the empowerment outcomes claimed by researchers and the mechanisms for achieving them. It is therefore essential that researchers focus on understanding how participants experience SDP programs and how these experiences contribute to the empowerment process.

Thus this research contributes to the existing body of literature by providing new perspectives on SDP participants' experiences within local social and cultural structures and explores the mechanisms behind participants' empowerment processes. The results of this research can also help practitioners of SDP programs to adjust their programs to take into account contextual factors and potential disempowerment mechanisms.

Overall, there is very little research on SDP programs in Colombia, and any research undertaken in SDP organizations using soccer as a primary sport.

1.2 Aim and objectives of the research

This study aims to explore how the introduction of women's rugby in a context of imbalanced gendered relations changes (or not) perceptions of gender inequality that SDP participants and

communities in Colombia may hold. The objective is to understand how Colombian women represent themselves as rugby players of an SDP organization and to find out how the community's perception of women is challenged by girls playing rugby.

1.3 Research question and sub questions

Given the aim of this thesis, the following research questions are investigated:

1. To what extent does the participation of girls in rugby, an emerging sport in Colombia, contribute to their individual development?
2. How does rugby define gender relations within the SDP organization and the community?

To help answer the research question, this thesis addresses several sub-questions:

1. What is the context of gender relations in Colombia?
2. What were the successes, failures, and challenges of SDP organizations in Colombia targeting women's development?
3. From a historical point of view, what is the status of rugby in Colombia?
4. How female rugby players in Colombia experienced their participation in rugby within the SDP organization and the community?
5. When girls play rugby within the SDP organization, is the community perception of girls and their abilities transformed?

1.4 Approach and limitations

This research uses a qualitative approach to provide a deeper understanding of how participants experience rugby in an SDP program. The context of this research relies on the analysis of two SDP programs using rugby in Mosquera (Bogotá) and Bahía Solano (Chocó), run by the Colombian organization Fundación Buen Punto. Their objective is to provide an alternative way of life to children exposed to vulnerable contexts of violence and gender inequality. The research methods used for data collection include open and semi-open-ended interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. The interviews were conducted with a range of community members, such as coaches, parents, members of the Rugby Federation, players so that the various perspectives would allow me to better understand the social structures within the community. The interviews were conducted primarily in Spanish but also in English and French, recorded and transcribed verbatim.

From a theoretical perspective, this research draws on Amartya Sen's capability approach to better understand the experience of participants and how these experiences reflect the opportunities they have access to, limited by gender norms.

There are some limitations to this study that influence the significance and transferability of the findings that should be mentioned. Given the academic time constraints, this research is small scale as the findings are based on only two programs and the time spent in Mosquera was very limited. Furthermore, the results of the Bahia Solano program are mainly based on participant observation since the context of insecurity in Bahia Solano did not allow me to directly interview the participants in safe conditions.

1.5 Linguistic considerations

This research pays particular attention to the concepts used as it may reinforce dichotomies that represent the researcher as the savior and the research participants as victims in need of rescue. During the course of my research, a community member pointed out to me the negative linguistic connotation of the term "minority," implying an asymmetrical power relationship between the researcher from a "majority" and the participants from a "minority":

“Actually in my perception it is an incorrect word because talking about minority, always in the mentality of any person, will make them feel inferior and a community should not feel inferior for being different. [...] When I hear this word, because I consider myself as afro, I feel less and we feel less, we feel that we are being treated as if we were inferior, not as if we were simply a population with different characteristics”. (Natalia, community member in Bahia Solano)

Therefore, after discussion with the participants, it was decided to use the term community in this research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of the chapter

The previous chapter establishes the aim and objectives of this research project. In this chapter, I review the available literature related to girls' participation in SDP programmes and the conceptualisation of empowerment. To give the reader a better understanding of the context, the chapter begins with a brief discussion of the birth of the SDP movement, and the main challenges faced by researchers and practitioners. Next, a section analyses the available research on SDP programmes focusing on girls' empowerment and introduces the key concepts of empowerment, disempowerment. Finally, this chapter presents an overview of the Colombian political, social and cultural context to give the reader a better understanding of the structure of the Colombian patriarchal society. I review the few research studies that have focused on gender-oriented SDP programmes in Colombia and introduce the theme of rugby.

2.2 Sport for Development & Peace

Over the past 20 years, a multitude of actors (international NGOs, development agencies, sport governing bodies, academics, athletes, etc.) have focused on sport and physical activity as tools to address development issues. SDP projects are primarily implemented in low and middle-income countries and in disadvantaged or post-conflict communities (Gadai, 2019). In the early 2000s, the movement gained momentum thanks to the support of the United Nations, which set up a specific office between 2008 and 2017 (United Nations Office for Sport, Development and Peace; UNOSDP). Many researchers in psychology, sport and sociology have recognized the multifaceted benefits generated through these programs, such as prevention of diseases such as AIDS (Mwanga 2012), conflict resolution (Levermore & Beacom, 2009), poverty and crime reduction, and socialization of marginalized communities (Hayhurst 2009; Levermore and Beacom 2009; Saavedra 2009). However, the enthusiasm of researchers about the potential of SDP practices has led to oversimplified claims and there is a gap between the claimed results and the mechanisms for achieving them (Chawansky, 2011). The UNOSDP which coordinated UN efforts to promote sport in a coherent manner, closed in 2017, somewhat diminishing the credibility of the SDP movement (Probst & Hunt, 2017). As such, SDP has the potential to foster development and peace, but it is crucial to carefully evaluate the impact and the outcomes of SDP initiatives, to identify the mechanisms that produces positive (or negative) changes, and to challenge neoliberal assumptions that Western stakeholders “know what is the best” (Spaaij et al, 2018).

2.3 SDP and gender relation

With the emergence of the SDP movement, researchers, policy makers and international organisations have seen the opportunity to empower women and girls through sport. The term empowerment is widely used by the international community and is for example included in the UN Sustainable Development Goals number 5 “to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. The concept of empowerment, its origins and dominant discourses related to it is discussed in more detail in this section. Researchers have shown positive results on the potential of SDP initiatives including girls in their programmes to promote women's empowerment. For example, Brady (2005) points out that programmes can redefine gendered public spaces through the inclusion of women in public spaces which were previously male dominated. Meier (2015), Meier & Saavedra (2009) have shown the emergence of female role models within the community to challenge gender normative behaviours.

According to Petry & Kroner (2019) SDP programmes can be a tool for gender transformation at the individual, structural and societal levels. For example, at the individual level, women's participation can increase their physical and emotional well-being, control over their bodies and their lives. However, researchers have questioned whether women's participation can become a major force for social transformation in machismo societies (Saavedra, 2009). Oxford defines machismo, a word used in Latin American social research, as a form of “sexism and male dominance linked to physical, symbolic, and structural violence” (2018, p. 1031). At the social and cultural level, Petry & Kroner (2019) point out that the transformation of gender inequality must be accompanied by a change in the traditional model of male dominance. According to the authors, this shift in power is difficult to achieve since it implies that men accept to abandon certain gender privileges. Under these conditions Chawansky (2011), Petry & Kroner (2019) point out that offering equal sports opportunities to women does not mean that it will improve gender equality if the culture devalues the women who participate. Moreover, Darnell & Hayhurst (2011) have been critical of the theoretical conceptualisation of gender based on feminism. They question the way in which researchers may portray women from SDP programmes as vulnerable and in need of empowerment. To provide the reader with a better understanding of the challenges facing gender-oriented SDP programmes, this section first discusses the concepts of empowerment and disempowerment. Then the potential channels of empowerment and channels of disempowerment are detailed.

2.3.1 Concepts of Empowerment & Disempowerment

The notion of empowerment is based on the idea of giving decision-making power back to the beneficiaries of development projects whose voices were not heard in the traditional approach to development. However, the term empowerment is now largely conceptualized by Northern

researchers who categorize women beneficiaries in two types: the victim in need of rescue or the empowered woman according to Western standards (Giraldo 2016). Therefore, when conducting research, it is important to define empowerment not from the researcher's point of view but with the criteria defined by the women under study.

In her doctoral dissertation, Prince (2019) points out that research on the impact of SDP programmes has largely focused on the absence or presence of positive effects but few researchers focus on negative effects, such as the potential for disempowerment. Except for Chawansky (2011) and Oxford (2019), Oxford & McLachlan (2018), who addressed disempowerment channels in their research, this is an unexplored yet essential area to ensure that the programme does not harm participants. Disempowerment in the context of SDP can be defined as the cultural and social factors outside of the programmes that may lead to unpredictable consequences in the lives of women participants. It is thus necessary for researchers to be mindful of factors external to the programmes that may negatively affect participants.

2.3.2 Channels of Empowerment & Disempowerment

The available research on gender-oriented SDP programmes emphasises the importance of female role models close to the community (Meier, 2015; Lindsey & Chapman, 2017). Some case studies have shown that the social inclusion of women in a previously male-dominated space can trigger social transformation and help individuals take control of what they consider important in their lives (Petry & Kroner, 2019). In her research on SDP initiatives to empower girls in Uganda, Hayhurst (2013) investigates a programme training young women to become martial arts teachers. With the money collected as a teacher, women can buy menstrual products to facilitate girls' access to sports programmes. According to the author, this enables young women to have control over their economic decisions, and thus promotes the individual development of the participants. However, there are many mechanisms that hinder women's participation, such as parents' reluctance to let their daughters participate in sports (Prince, 2019). According to Oxford and Spaaij (2019), cultural and local norms can pressure girls to conform to traditional gendered roles such as participating in domestic chores and childcare, letting them without time or money to engage in sport. Similarly, in her research on SDP programmes in Egypt and Kenya, Brady (2007), Brady & Khan (2002) points out that religious, cultural and social norms may prevent girls from accessing sports spaces. For example, the author noted that transportation means are not always suitable for women to travel. The authors highlight that girls may also face early marriage or pregnancy and prostitution, which are factors hindering girls' participation in sport (Oxford & Spaaij, 2019). Linked to the notion of disempowerment, recent research has highlighted that providing women with equal sporting opportunities does not mean that it will improve gender equity (Saavedra, 2009; Chawansky, 2011; Oxford, 2017). In her research in Israel, Caudwell (2007) explains that although the women's football team had access to pitches and

facilities to play, they were refused to participate in the mixed final tournament due to religious concerns that women should not show themselves to men in an improper manner. In her research, Oxford (2019) warns against the reluctance of some communities to welcome women into 'men's spaces'. Any form of redistribution of power towards gender equity, such as the inclusion of women in traditionally male spaces, can be resisted by patriarchal cultures (Chawansky, 2011). It is therefore crucial to look beyond the inclusion of women and girls in sport spaces to consider how the complex contextual realities that girls experience can impact on their participation in a SDP programme (Hayhurst, 2013; Oxford, 2017). Colombian authors Alvarez, Arango & Garcia (2012) point out that Colombian girls who play soccer have "experienced rejection censorship, marking and discrimination because they are not performing the stereotype of femininity that is privileged in this society". Thus, it is crucial to pay attention to the unpredictable cultural barriers that can impede girls' development. The case study of Colombia and girls' social inclusion in SDP programs with male-oriented structures is discussed in more detail in the next section.

2.4 SDP and gender norms in Colombia

2.4.1 Historical context of violence

In 2016 a final peace agreement was reached between the government and the guerrillas (FARC - Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) to end the armed conflicts that have plagued the country for decades. The agreement, which took place in Havana, Cuba, includes a bilateral ceasefire, cessation of hostilities and the handing over of weapons. However, the multitude of actors involved in the conflict, such as illegal smugglers, drug traffickers, paramilitaries and other illegal groups, has made effective peace difficult to achieve (Sobotová et al, 2016). Furthermore, the longest-running conflict in Latin America has left indelible physical scars such as the six million internally displaced persons (IDPs), and the millions of victims of violence waiting to be compensated. According to Oxford (2017), since 1985, more than 5.8 million people, or 10% of Colombians, have registered with the national government as victims of the conflict. The conflict has also left deep psychological scars that are reflected in the escalation of racial, economic and gender segregation. Deep-rooted inequalities between social classes have favoured elite families who own the majority of land and operate in the strata of the government where corruption maintains the system of discrimination in place.

This brief overview of the Colombian context is important for the reader to understand how the history of violence in Colombia has shaped gender and social roles by promoting a male hegemony based on violence (Oxford, 2017).

2.4.2 Gender-sensitive SDP programs in Colombia

In her research on the social inclusion and exclusion of Colombian women in SPD football programmes, Oxford (2019) explores the social stigma that shapes women's participation. She argues that the gendered structures of Colombian society are rooted in the history of colonialism and highlights the gender roles in women's daily lives. According to her, the economic crisis of 1980 transformed family dynamics as women began to work, opening up spaces that were previously reserved for men. Yet, heteronormative hegemonic masculinity is still embedded in these spaces and it is difficult to effectively challenge restrictive gender roles. For example, Oxford (2019) points out that it is common for girls to be prevented from participating in sport because of the stigma that associates sport with female homosexuality. Furthermore, the author points out that football is an emblematic male sport, symbolic of Colombian culture. Colombian girls are rarely invited to play due to gender norms that idealise women as 'delicate'. Thus Oxford and Mclachlan (2018) argue that women's participation in traditionally masculine sport can challenge the female ideology that women are "fragile" and "delicate". However, the authors highlight that women are only accepted in the sporting space because they forsake their femininity to adopt a masculine behaviour on the football field. If girls are required to adopt male norms in gendered spaces to fit into SDP programmes, the patriarchal structure is not challenged. On the contrary, it can create challenges for women who have to negotiate their femininity while playing in a space that promotes masculine values.

Oxford & Spaaij (2019) point out that local communities define their own social hierarchy of masculinity and femininity, deciding which sports can be associated with masculinity and femininity and who can participate. From this perspective, I pay particular attention to the notion of masculinity and femininity as they are constructed in the local contexts under investigation. Finally, while the authors note an individual change in the participants' self-confidence, they question whether women's participation can really impact patriarchal structure to a larger extent. Overall, I argue that the literature on gender in SDP programmes pays little attention to the challenges that men performing 'feminine' behaviours may face in spaces promoting heteronormative hegemonic masculinity.

2.4.3 The introduction of rugby in Colombia

Rugby is a recent sport in Colombia and only took off in the 1980s when French and English expatriates began to play as a recreational activity in Bogotá. Since then, an increasing number of Colombians have joined the sport and the Rugby Federation of Colombia became official in 2010. The national team Los Tucanes has won several Suramericanos tournaments which include most of Latin American countries. However, football remains the most popular sport among Colombians, while rugby receives little support from the media and the government. Overall, there is very limited research on SDP programmes in Colombia, and all of it focuses on programmes using football. Thus

this research on rugby in Colombia is exploratory and aims to investigate the potential of rugby to challenge gender norms in Colombia.

2.5 Summary of the literature review

Overall, this chapter has provided a critical overview of the SDP movement and highlighted the importance of adopting a bottom-up, community-based approach to ensure that the colonial North-South relationship is not replicated. The available research on gender and SDP programs has highlighted potential channels of individual empowerment such as female athletes as role models, the transformation of public spaces to integrate women, and the acquisition of physical strength. However, some case studies have also pointed out the potential channels of disempowerment such as cultural beliefs and the reinforcement of social divisions.

To answer the sub-questions of this research, this chapter highlights how the history of violence in Colombia has shaped gender and social roles by promoting a male hegemony based on violence. As a result, girls are often prevented from participating in sport because of the stigma that associates sport with heteronormative masculinity. Research on SDP's gender programs in Colombia highlights that women are expected to adopt male behavior to be accepted in a sports space that promotes masculine values. If the structure that maintains gendered roles is not challenged, women's participation will not allow for the transformation of patriarchal society. Overall, this research is exploratory in nature as there is no other research focusing on SDP programmes using rugby as a tool to empower women. In the next chapter, I detail the capability theory used as a theoretical framework for this research.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Overview of the chapter

This chapter introduces the reader to the theoretical framework used in this research, based on the concepts of empowerment and disempowerment seen in the previous chapter. The objective of this chapter is to provide the reader with a better understanding of the theories and how they relate to the concepts. First, this chapter introduces the Capabilities Approach (CA) applied in this research, focusing on the concepts of capabilities and functionings developed by Sen. Next, a section details how the CA has been applied by other researchers in SDP programs.

3.2 The Capabilities Approach

Two limitations were identified from the feminist and post-colonial theories and taken into account when choosing a theoretical framework for this thesis: First, focusing on providing girls with the same opportunities as boys does not mean that it will improve gender equality if the culture devalues women for their participation. Second, it is important to move away from the colonial preconceptions that women in SDP programs are vulnerable and need to be rescued. The Capabilities Approach (CA) developed by Sen (1999) addresses both of these issues.

3.2.1 The functionings and capabilities by Sen

The CA relies on the idea that people's well-being cannot be measured solely in economic terms but is rather based on the freedom, a person has to choose what to do and what to be. Sen (1999) defines the quality of life of individuals based on two key concepts: the functionings and the capabilities. The functioning can be understood as the achievements that an individual wishes to do, such as going to school, practicing a sport, voting. Capabilities are the opportunities of an individual to transform a resource into a functioning. Sen (1999) gives the example of a person who owns a bicycle (resource), learns how to ride it (capability), and uses it as a means of transportation (functioning). The different combinations of resources and functionings that an individual has at his or her disposal constitute the capabilities. The author points out that access to resources and functioning is influenced by a diversity of personal, social and environmental factors. For example, it may be considered inappropriate for girls to ride bicycles in certain communities. Similarly, Zip et al. (2019) point out that access to an instructor to learn to ride a bike may be limited by gendered cultural norms, familial restrictions or religious laws. The authors highlight that these factors (personal, social and environmental) are often intertwined and deeply gendered. Thus, to connect the concept of empowerment to the CA,

empowerment can occur through the removal of barriers to access resources and functionings which enables a person to lead the life they value. Empowerment can be assessed in terms of the existing resources, people's ability to transform them into functionings, and the identification of obstacles that prevent an individual from exercising their own preferences. According to Svensson & Levine (2017), a traditional patriarchal structure or dictatorial political systems are examples of obstacles to the freedom of individuals to choose the life they want.

3.3 The Capabilities Approach applied to SDP context

Zipp et al. (2019) propose a theoretical framework based on Sen's capabilities approach adding a feminist perspective. In their research they seek to understand how participants experience SDP programs and how those experiences reflect the opportunities they have access to, constrained by gender norms. The authors argue that research has not focused enough on women's experience within SDP programs. For example, they point out that topics central to the feminist movement, such as menstruation and sexual hygiene, are paradoxically almost absent from SDP research despite their importance in women's lives.

The authors' model includes 4 capacities: self-efficacy, social affiliation, positive gender role attitudes, and health and well-being. They define "positive gender role attitudes" as the capability of participants to acknowledge and accept non-stereotypical gender roles. Self-efficacy is the individual's belief in its ability to use opportunities to achieve his or her desired life. For example, in SDP programs, a participant practices a physical activity and can see the progress of his or her efforts over time, which reinforces his or her sense of self-efficacy. However, self-efficacy in sport is affected by gender norms, as boys are more likely to be encouraged to improve their sport skills than girls in a family context.

In their model, Zipp et al (2019) have integrated another key concept of Sen's work, which is adaptive preferences. This is the idea that marginalized people (women, people of color, the LGBT community) become accustomed to systematic discrimination and thus become used to choose among limited opportunities. In other words, individuals are conditioned by their experiences of discrimination and self-limit their ability to realize certain opportunities. For example, if women playing soccer experience discrimination from the community, they may decide to switch to a sport where they will be less discriminated. Zipp et al. (2019) point out that the adaptive preference concept allows for a better understanding of the impact of the SDP program within a specific cultural, social and political structure. The CA approach thus provides an understanding of the empowerment process by focusing on the lived experiences of participants as they are shaped by social and cultural norms. Development is not restricted to program results but focuses on how participation in SDP programs is

experienced by each individual. The Figure 1 presents the CA used by Zipp et al (2019) applied to SDP programs.

To summarize the model, SDP programs provide resources (pitches, coaches, etc.) to participants which enable them to develop or improve certain capabilities. Participants' opportunities to develop capabilities are influenced by the local context, which are the personal (gender, education...), social (family, school, SDP program...) and environmental (social and cultural norms and politics) factors. Local factors can be both a support and a limitation to accessing opportunities as they relate to individuals and their local context. The participant may choose to seize the opportunities offered to them according to his or her personal history and adaptive preferences. For example, women might prefer to engage in a sport that is not traditionally male-dominated. The participant's choice to improve certain capabilities then ideally translates into achieved functioning such as improved skillset, network of support, etc., which in turn positively influence the individual's capabilities.

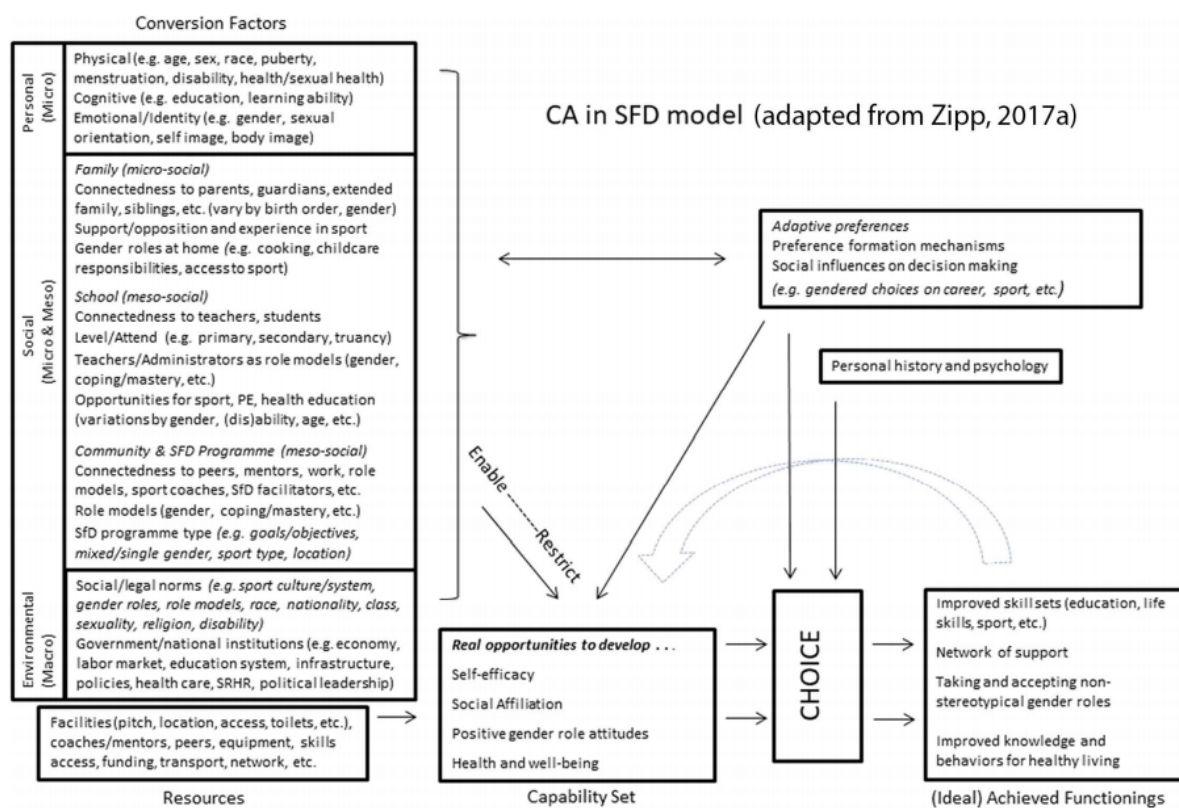


Figure 1: Capabilities approach (CA) in sport for development (SFD) model. Source: Zipp et al (2019).

One of the main criticisms of the CA is that it does not explain how and why gender inequalities are created. The model only allows us to acknowledge it without addressing the cause. Besides, in this model the set of capabilities defined by the researchers refers to their idea of preferred capabilities. In

response to these criticisms, it can be argued that the model is not designed to solve all development issues but to better understand and analyze the experiences of participants in traditionally gendered structures.

3.4 Summary of the theoretical framework

This chapter has provided an insight into Sen's Capabilities Approach (1999). The theory is based on a person's freedom to choose what they want to do and be through different combinations of resources, capabilities and functioning. Applied to the SDP context, the CA provides an understanding of how participants experience SDP programs and how these experiences reflect the opportunities they have access to, limited by gender norms. Thus, empowerment is seen as a process through which participants access opportunities in a specific context. Finally, the CA nuances the North-South relation in that if opportunities are offered, it is up to the individual to decide whether or not to take them.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

4.1 Overview of the chapter

This chapter presents the methodological approach used in this research. The objective of this chapter is to explain to the reader how I proceeded in terms of data collection and analysis. At this point, it seems important to recall the objectives and goals of this research since they will determine the choice of the methodological approach. This study aims to explore how the introduction of women's rugby in a context of imbalanced gendered relations changes (or not) perceptions of femininity, masculinity, and ideas of development. The objective is to understand how Colombian women represent themselves as rugby players of an SDP organization and to find out how the community's perception of women is challenged by girls playing rugby. Since this is an explanatory research which explores the impact of a new phenomenon, a qualitative approach suits better the objectives of this research. The qualitative method allows for a more in-depth understanding of how women participants experience playing rugby within an SDP program.

First, to give the reader the context of the case study, this chapter begins by presenting the practical considerations that led me to select a qualitative approach for this research. Next, I introduce the SDP organization Buen Punto through which the interviews were conducted as well as my role within the organization. I also describe the two sites where data were collected, and explain the motives underlying the choice of these specific locations. A second section details the data collection process, from the choice of the sample, the formulation of the interview guide, to the conduct of the interviews. Particular attention is paid to ethical considerations as well as limitations of the data and critical reflection of my social position as a researcher in this specific context. A third section details the data analysis process carried out using thematic analysis. Finally, a last section provides an ethical evaluation of the entire research process.

4.2 Research approach

4.2.1 Qualitative method

As Prince (2019) points out, a quantitative method can be adopted to research empowerment based on the idea that facts are knowable and measurable with numerical indicators. However, this approach provides a limited understanding, restricted to the results of SDP programs and does not take into account the voice of participants. As discussed in the previous chapter, the focus of this research is not on the outcomes of the programs but on the process of empowerment, on how participants experience

their participation. For this reason, I have decided to take a qualitative approach in order to explore the in-depth and unique experiences of participants within the SDP programs. Besides, the qualitative approach allows us to discover the significance of a new phenomenon (women's rugby in Colombia) for which there is not yet a database to conduct thorough quantitative research.

4.2.2 Context of the study: Colombia's peace process

Colombia is a particularly interesting field of research as the government has begun to integrate sport as a development tool to promote peace and reconciliation since the mid-1990s. Political reports emphasize that ex-combatants can engage in sports activities to avoid relapsing into violent actions (Calderón & Martínez, 2015). Within the framework of the peace process, sport is used for the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of armed conflict, focusing on areas that have been affected by violence and displacement. However, reports also point out that the lack of government support is preventing the full integration of sport into the peace process and appeal to NGOs and other non-state actors (Vega López, 2017). SDP programs have emerged in Colombia, mainly based on the Football for Peace methodology, which aims to transmit principles such as respect, discipline, fair play, team spirit and social skills to children. However, with the exception of Cardenas (2016), Sobotová et al (2016) and Oxford (2017, 2019), the SDP movement in Colombia has received little attention in academic research. Besides, the mentioned researches all focused on football-related programs.

4.2.3 Case study: the Fundación Buen Punto

The Fundación Buen Punto

The Fundación Buen Punto (FBP) was created in 2014 with the aim of introducing children to surfing while promoting a peaceful coexistence between the communities. In early 2018, the Foundation introduced rugby as a second physical activity (the founders are all former rugby players). Rugby being a sport recently brought to Colombia, the FBP is one of the only Colombian SDP organizations to use rugby as its main sport, along with the Fundación Rojo, Amarillo, Negro in Uzme (Bogotá). Their objective is to offer an alternative way of life to children exposed to vulnerable contexts of drugs or violence, so that young people have the opportunity to experience a different reality from the one they normally face.

The first project of the foundation "Rugby for Equality" in Mosquera (Bogotá) includes about 100 children and their families in the disadvantaged neighborhoods of Porvenir Rio and Trebol. The FBP receives the support of the Barbarian rugby club of Bogotá as the players volunteer to coach the kids in Mosquera.

The second project "Rugby for Choco" aims to teach rugby and social values of coexistence among young people in the coastal area of Choco, including the city of Bahia Solano (in three different communities), Cupika and el Valle. The project has an initial duration of one year, with the possibility of extending it to five to ten years with the financial support of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund, SCIAF. It is important to note that as the main donor, SCIAF has set goals of reaching 500 minors and 100 adults in the communities of Choco. .

4.2.4 Sites under investigation

Mosquera, Bogotá

The municipality of Mosquera is located in the province of Sabana de Occidente, 23 km from Bogotá, in the eastern mountain range (see Figure 4). It covers an area of 107 km², of which 94.2 KM² is rural.



Figure 4: Map of the municipality of Mosquera. *Source: Cobos Rey, 2014*

According to El Plan del Desarrollo 2020-2023 del Alcaldía de Mosquera¹ (2020), the rapid urbanisation of the municipality, combined with the migration of the Venezuelan population, has more than doubled the population from 63,000 in 2005 to 150,000 in 2020. The population census conducted by DANE (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística²) (2018) indicates that 98.8% live in the urban area with critical overcrowding (5.8%) in the urban centre of the municipality. In his research on the effects of the urbanisation process in Mosquera, Neme Echavez (2018) points out that the urbanisation of the municipality has been closely linked to the expansion of the industrial

¹ *The Development Plan 2020-2023 of the Mayor's Office of Mosquera*

² *National Administrative Department of Statistics*

sector in the city of Bogotá since the early 1970s. As a result, the establishment of economic relations between the capital and Mosquera influenced the development of the industrial sector in the municipality (Neme Echavez, 2018). Although Mosquera is mainly surrounded by an industrial sector, the urbanisation has affected the employment of people residing in the municipality. People are forced to search for jobs in neighbouring municipalities or in the city of Bogotá, which has an effect on the mobility, travel time and economy of the inhabitants (Neme Echavez, 2018). The majority of the population is socio-economically poor and falls between strata 1 (16%), 2 (54.3%) and 3 (29%) (Dane, 2018). (See Figure 2). Colombian households are categorized based on the housing conditions and the environment or area in which the people live. There are six socio-economic strata: belonging to stratum 1 means Low-low, 2 is Low, 3 - Medium-low, 4 - Medium, 5 - Medium-high and 6 - High (DANE, 2018).

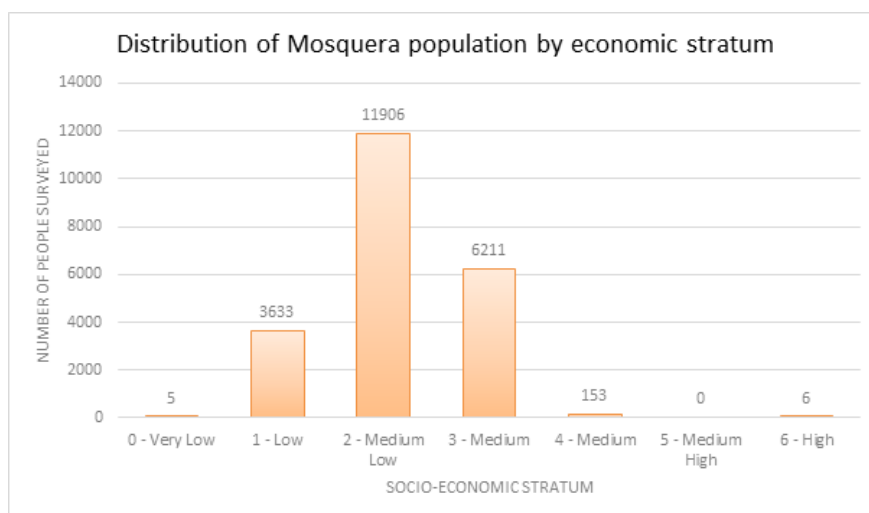


Figure 2: Population of Mosquera classified according to the system of economic strates. Source: Alcaldía de Mosquera, Plan de Desarrollo 2020-2023, 2020.

Neme Echavez (2018) explains that the phenomenon of insecurity is closely linked to the continuous arrival of new inhabitants in recent years as a consequence of urbanisation. Migrants are perceived as invaders and disrupters of the peace and tranquillity that the municipality has always known. The infrastructure of the urban centre (small, poorly lit streets, no security presence) favours the transit of people who use these spaces to commit criminal acts, such as theft and drug use.

The report of the Alcaldía de Mosquera (2020) highlights that women are affected by sexual harassment, especially in public transport, domestic violence and the lack of awareness and education on this topic. Figure 3 shows an increase in numbers of sexual assault reported against women within the municipality. Furthermore, women experience limitations in political participation and leadership, suffer from economic dependency, lack of support for entrepreneurship and lack of training to access employment opportunities.

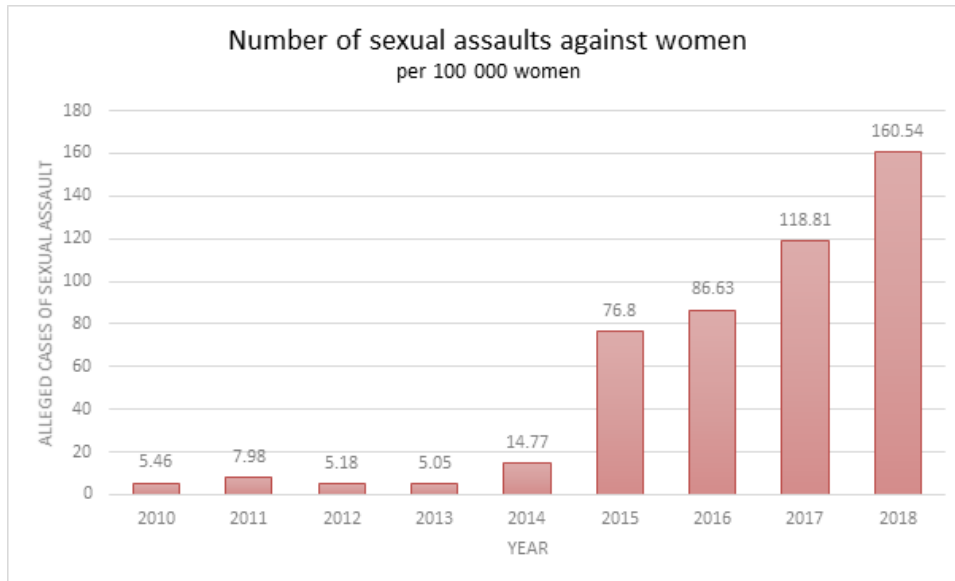


Figure 3: Number of sexual assault reported against women for every 100 000 women. Source: Alcaldía de Mosquera, Plan de Desarrollo 2020-2023, 2020.

The LGBTIQ+ community expressed the lack of recognition and spaces for participation due to stigma. Ethnic communities (Black³, Palenquera⁴, Raizal⁵, Indigenous and Roma⁶ population) indicate high level of discrimination, low inclusion in municipal events and low inclusion of the culture of the ethnic groups in the different spaces (Alcaldía de Mosquera, 2020).

Bahia Solano, Choco

Bahia Solano is a town of 2000 inhabitants located in the department of Choco on the Pacific coast. The department of Choco contains the entire border of Colombia with Panama and an opening to the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean coast (see Figure 5). In 2005, the total population of the department was less than half a million inhabitants, more than half of whom live in the Quibdó Valley. Chocó is inhabited primarily by Afro-Colombians, descendants of enslaved Africans imported and brought to the area by Spanish colonizers after the conquest of the Americas. Prior to the arrival of the Spanish, the lands of the Department of Chocó were inhabited by various indigenous groups known as Kunas, Emberas, and Waunanas (Departamento Choco, 2015). Through the colonial exploitation of its immense mineral wealth, Choco became the leading producer of platinum in the Americas and of gold in Colombia. However, the history of mining in Chocó is also the history of the human exploitation and alienation of the communities for the benefit of a minority, from which the entire department is

³ Ethnic group with afro Colombian descent, having their own culture, traditions and practices.

⁴ Afro Colombian ethnic group from the San Basilio Palenque.

⁵ Afro-Caribbean ethnic group of San Andres, Providencia and Santa Catalina Islands.

⁶ Ethnic group of traditionally itinerant people who originated in northern India.

still suffering (Departamento Chocó, 2015). Today, the population is composed of 82% Afro-Colombians, 18% indigenous (mainly Emberá communities), 5% white, mestizo (Hernández Romero, 2005).

Since 1996, the paramilitaries have sought to control the area traditionally used by the guerrillas (57th Front of the FARC) to smuggle arms and drugs across the border with Panama. The confrontation between the paramilitaries and the guerrillas has turned the northern part of Chocó into a land of displaced people, abandoning their homes and crops for fear of military exactions. In 2000, Justice and Peace reported that in Chocó the armed conflict had left more than 600 displaced people who fled Jurado in 2001 and are now settled in Bahía Solano (Archivos de los protestos globales, 2002). Today, the consequences of the armed conflict still weigh on communities and peoples affected by high levels of poverty, paramilitary groups and drug trafficking. The population has one of the lowest standards of living of all the departments of Colombia, with precarious public services, health care, education, and the constant rationing of water and electricity (G, personal communication, February 2021).

Moreover, in a conflict where sexual violence has been widely used as a weapon of war by all armed groups, women of Chocó constitute the majority of victims of conflict. The history of violence and colonization in Chocó has shaped gender and social roles by promoting male hegemony based on violence. Afro, indigenous and mestizo women in the region struggle daily against gender-based violence (Hernández Romero, 2005).



Figure 5: Map of the department of Chocó in Colombia. Source: Sessarego, 2017.

4.3 Data collection

4.3.1 Sample & access to the data

The research methods used for this research include open and semi-open interviews and participant observation.

Interviews

In Mosquera, and Bahia Solano, interviews were conducted with a range of community members, such as coaches, parents, members of the Rugby Federation of Bogotá, players... In total, 15 interviews and focus groups were conducted. Table 1 provides an overview of the participants identified by location and social function. A pseudonym is assigned to them to protect their identity. The aim of this selection is to obtain a heterogeneous mix of interviewees so that the diverse perspectives allow me to better grasp the social structures within the community. For example, comparing interviews between older adults and younger people gave me a sense of whether the community's perception of the programme had changed over time. Furthermore, I interviewed community members who were not directly involved in the SDP field (but were involved in sports or women's empowerment projects) in order to better understand the mechanisms of gender inequality in everyday life. The parents had to be interviewed as they are the ones who enable the children to participate. In this regard, changes were made regarding the selection of interviewees after discussion with the players in Bogotá. It appeared that the parents' reluctance to allow girls to participate in rugby was more likely to come from the mother than the father. Thus, I aimed to interview a greater number of the participants' mothers. The interviews were also conducted taking into consideration the diversity of the participants' personal characteristics such as sexual orientation, ethnicity to understand how other factors may influence the reproduction of gender roles.

	Participants' pseudonym	Location	Social fonction
1	Luisa	Mosquera	SDP Participant
2	Adriana	Mosquera	SDP Participant
3	Juan	Mosquera	Participant's parent
4	Daniela	Mosquera	Participant's parent
5	Alison	Mosquera	Participant's parent
6	Julian	Mosquera	Community member
7	Rodrigo	Bogota	Member of rugby club
8	Gerardo	Bogota	Member of the Fondation
9	Silvio	Bogota	Rugby player
10	Manuela	Bogota	Rugby player
11	Carolina	Bogota	Rugby player
12	Ricardo	Bogota	Member of the Rugby Federation
13	Leo	Bahia Solano	Community member
14	Natalia	Bahia Solano	Community member
15	Claudia	Bahia Solano	Community member

Table 1: Participant overview.

With Spanish-speaking SDP participants, I conducted semi-structured interviews using an interview guide so that all participants would answer the same questions (while leaving space for people to elaborate on other issues). Besides, the interview guide gave me support to interview the participants in Spanish as I was not perfectly fluent in the first weeks. This research also included open interviews which were conducted with members of the FBP and members of the rugby federation who spoke English and French. The purpose of these open interviews was to better understand the history of rugby, the context of gender relations in Colombia and the successes, failures, and challenges of SDP organizations in Colombia. In these interviews, questions were asked spontaneously as the discussion unfolded, allowing me to build on the participants' answers and facilitating the flow of the interview. Before conducting the interviews with the SDP participants, I always participated in at least one or two rugby training sessions to break the ice and gain their trust.

The interviews were conducted in cafes (selecting quiet places where music did not disturb the interview), at the participants' workplaces, at their homes, on the side of the rugby pitch after training, in a hotel lounge. In each case I left it up to the participants to choose the most appropriate place to conduct the interview, offering to pay for transport if the person had to travel. The interviews were conducted mainly in Spanish but also in English and French, recorded and transcribed verbatim. Of the 15 interviews conducted, 14 were face-to-face, 1 was by Skype. Most interviews lasted between 50 and 70 minutes, the shortest lasted 36 minutes and the longest just over 2 hours. Although the interviews were initially scheduled to take place once a day (to give me time to process the information for inclusion in the interview guide), I had to adapt to unforeseen circumstances and sometimes did 2-3 interviews a day to fit in with the participants' schedules.

The interview guide is structured in five parts: the first section covers general questions on the socio-economic and identity status of the participants. A second section examines the participant's perception of rugby and how they accessed rugby in the first place. A third part focuses on the participant's experience of participating in rugby training, the kind of facilities available and the gender relations between the male and female players on the pitch. A fourth section elaborates on the community's perception of rugby, whether the players have experienced any discrimination and how they have coped with it. Finally, a last section examines participants' perception of gender relations from an intersectional perspective, including notions of masculinity, femininity, homosexuality and ethnicity (see the Interview guide in the Appendix section).

Participants observation

Participatory observation allowed me to gain a better understanding of the gender roles and social pressures girls face in the community, as well as how public and private spaces are occupied. Through experiencing local contexts over a long period of time, I was able to immerse myself in the routine of the community and understand how participants experience their involvement in the SDP. Participant observation in Bahia Solano consisted of seven rugby sessions per week in the Afro and indigenous communities of Bahia Solano, el Valle, Chambacú and la Marianna. The three months I spent there were an opportunity to integrate myself and experience the life of the locals without being considered as a tourist after a certain time. I would have ice cream with the kids after the training, play football with them in the main square or teach them how to slackline, and even go on weekend hikes to swim in waterfalls together.

Conducting this ethnographic fieldwork in Bahia Solano was essential as the Rugbyforchoco project is relatively new. Consequently, the outcomes of empowerment might not be visible for many years, but individuals may still experience empowerment when participating in the SDP programme. I therefore focused more on the empowerment process, observing behavioural changes during the rugby sessions.

4.3.2 Ethical considerations

In their work on research and ethics, Bloodworth et al (2018) emphasise the importance of voluntary and informed consent from participants to take part in the research study. Thus, I wrote an informed consent which was read orally together with each participant prior to the interview. Although some researchers advocate written consent as the golden rule, the communities of Bahia Solano are characterized by a predominantly oral culture where the request for written consent can be seen as distrustful (especially in Colombia with the legacy of colonialism). Many participants expressed that

they did not need/want to sign a written consent, but were giving me their oral consent to participate in the research. As a result, the oral consent was read together to ensure that the participant understood the purpose of the research and the important information to consent or refuse to consent and the final consent was recorded orally. The consent reminds all participants of their right to withdraw from the investigation at any time and requests permission to record the interview. Besides, their identity is protected through the use of pseudonyms and identifying information is kept confidential. In Mosquera, the parents of minor children participating in the research had signed a written consent for data use provided by the Foundation.

4. 4 Data analysis

4.4.1 Thematic analysis

This research uses thematic analysis to analyze the data collected from the 24 interviews conducted. I chose a thematic analysis since it is well suited to large qualitative data sets and provides a comprehensive overview of the perceptions, lived experiences, and beliefs of individuals. This research builds on the work of Braun and Clarke (2006) who divide thematic analysis into 5 phases of data identification and interpretation. The first phase requires becoming familiar with the data collected. Therefore, I re-listened to each interview and transcribed all discussions verbatim in order to get an initial overview of my data. The second phase involves reading and reviewing the interviews several times to identify elements relevant to the research question. Codes are assigned to the elements to highlight common or divergent behaviors, beliefs, and perceptions of the participants. In phase three, the collected codes are grouped into a set of potential general themes that address the research objectives. Phase four involves refining the themes by combining them or removing some of them if there is not enough data to form a coherent model. The final phase consists of revising the themes to ensure that they fit into the overall story the analysis is telling.

Finally, it should be noted that there are limitations to thematic analysis. Researchers cannot provide an absolute unbiased interpretation of the data since the coding will always be influenced by the researcher's beliefs, values and experiences. Thus the reliability of the data can be questioned as it is subject to the researcher's subjectivity. In this research, I addressed data quality concerns by systematically and rigorously detailing the research methods. To avoid contamination of my own biases, I used an inductive coding approach described by Boyatzis (1998). The author explains that themes can be initially generated inductively from raw information or deductively from previous research. Inductive analysis is thus a process of coding data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding framework, or into the researcher's analytical preconceptions. That is, my final coding was not influenced by my own codes but by those that emerged from the raw data in the interviews. This is why the final themes identified diverge somewhat from the specific questions that were asked in the

interview guide. By staying close to the raw information in the development of the themes, the inductive analysis therefore reduces bias in the interpretation of the data. This inductive method also addresses one of the criticisms of CA since the set of capabilities is not defined directly by the researcher beforehand but induced by the participants' responses.

4. 5 Evaluation of the research process

4.5.1 Limitation of the data

At the beginning of my stay I was unable to converse fluently in Spanish, which posed a limitation to data collection and analysis. I was conscious of this issue and thought about interviewing only English or French speaking participants (since I am a native French speaker). However, this would have excluded a large number of respondents and it is essential that the sample of interviewees embraces the diversity of the population (not just those who can speak English). To address my concerns about data quality, I considered involving a third person who spoke fluent Spanish to assist me during the interviews. However, as I discuss sensitive topics in my interviews, including a third person could have made the interviewee uncomfortable and reduced their willingness to share their experience in depth. Building trust with participants was a process I personally undertook and would have been compromised by the presence of a translator. I therefore decided to conduct the interviews myself in Spanish. To overcome the language barrier, I conducted numerous pilot interviews (which were not used in this thesis) to familiarise myself with Spanish, modify the questionnaires according to the feedback from the participants and detect interpretation errors. I certainly missed some relevant interactions in the first month of my participant observation during rugby training. However, the fact that I was making the effort to speak the language brought me closer to the participants, who repeatedly assured me that they were perfectly able to understand me during the interviews. Similarly, I made sure that every question was understood and did not hesitate to ask the meaning of a word if I did not understand it. Over the months I clearly felt an improvement in my language skills and reached a stage where I could easily converse with the children on the rugby pitch or conduct interviews without the support of the questionnaire.

Another factor that could be considered a limitation is the length of the visit to Mosquera as I spent two weeks in Bogotá and only two days in the community of Mosquera itself. I acknowledge that this time frame may have been too short to fully grasp the context of Mosquera and the challenges that the girls face in their everyday lives. However, the reader should consider the difficulty of getting to Mosquera, as it takes one and a half hours to drive there from the centre of Bogotá (leaving very early to avoid the traffic jam). Moreover, I could not go there alone for security matters and there was no question of living directly in the neighbourhood that the members of the

FBP consider to be more insecure than the city centre. Given the short time frame to write this thesis and the constraints of my internship I could not spend any more time in Bogotá. Therefore, to address this time restriction, I documented myself extensively on Mosquera through the investigations of other researchers in the area (notably Neme Echavez, 2018), as well as official reports from El Alcadia of Mosquera (2020). Besides, I could grasp the dynamics of the neighborhood thanks to some of the rugby players from the Barbarians club who coach the children in Mosquera and thus, are familiar with the local context.

Another level of complexity in my research involved interviewing young children (the youngest being 9 years old). As a result of the adult-child power dynamic and my status as a white European, young people would sometimes tell me a version of what they thought I wanted to hear. In order to minimize this, I sought to detach myself from the authority figure and outsider status by playing rugby with them and presenting myself as a friend. In the case of Bahia Solano, it was achieved by sharing moments with the kids outside of rugby training (as mentioned previously).

A strong limitation to this research is the context of drug trafficking maintained by local gangs and paramilitary groups in Bahia Solano, which did not allow me to conduct certain interviews while guaranteeing the safety of the participants and mine. Bahia Solano is a small town where everything is known quickly and a significant part of the population is involved in drug trafficking. Thus, interviewing some individuals could have been perceived as a potential threat as they could have revealed compromising information. The context did not allow me to interview participants directly in safe conditions. Thus, I decided to collect data only informally by having a field note diary. I was taking notes from discussions I had with the participants from the SDP program or any member of the community related to gender relations, the SDP program, community issues, and rugby practice. For practical reasons, the “notes” were recorded as a voice message on my phone. Only two interviews were conducted in a formal way using a questionnaire, both being people somehow directly involved with the RugbyforChoco project and with whom it was safe to carry out an interview.

Finally, it should also be noted that the RugbyforChoco programme rugby sessions are spread over four communities in Bahia Solano: Bahia, La marianna, el Valle and Chambacu. The children from each community have a specific training slot and are therefore not in contact with children from other communities. With the exception of the Afro community in El Valle, the communities live in the same town (Bahia) and are only a few hundred metres apart. However, they have different social and cultural characteristics which may limit the generalizability of the findings to all four communities.

4.5.2 Critical reflexivity

Many researchers have emphasized the importance of engaging in a process of critical reflection on how the researcher's social position affects the research (Ortlipp 2008, Silverman 2013). Therefore, I engaged in a process of critical reflexivity before entering the field to challenge any biases and

preconceptions I have that may affect this research process. In other words, as a white, European, and academic woman there is a risk that the results of my research will be biased by my own personal experiences, beliefs, and interests shaped by a Westernized culture. For example, the fact that I played rugby when I was younger and felt a positive personal change is a bias that could influence this research into the preconceived idea that rugby automatically empowers women. To overcome those biases, I consistently reflected on how my social position influences the process of data collection and analysis. This prompted me to ask questions throughout the whole research process such as: how does my position as a white European woman influence my interactions with the research participants?

Hayhurst (2013) further explores the concept in reflexivity by pointing out that ethnographic work is an invasion of space by the researcher who seeks to become embedded in the customs of a community that are not his own. The author invites researchers to reflect on the colonialist roots of research work in the field and how our practices are intertwined with neocolonial approaches. In the context of this research, the FBP introduced rugby to the community with the lofty goal of providing an alternative life for the youth. However, one may question whether rugby is really what the community is asking for. During rugby training, the children often demonstrated a willingness to learn foreign languages, especially English.

4.6 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has outlined the methodological approach and the methods of data collection and analysis used in this research. The qualitative approach was chosen to explore the in-depth experiences of participants in SDP programmes. This research focuses on two projects of the Foundation Buen Punto which uses rugby as a tool to teach values to children in disadvantaged areas. Next, this chapter described the data collection processes including open, semi-open interviews and participant observation. Particular emphasis is placed on ethical considerations such as the importance of participant's informed consent. Data limitations include the lack of fluency in Spanish, the length of the visit to Mosquera being too brief to capture the local context, the biased responses of young participants, and the context of drug trafficking in Bahia Solano restricting the safe conduct of interviews. This chapter then outlines the thematic analysis used based on the work of Braun and Clarke (2006). Finally, two ethical issues were discussed in the research process; the 'culture of speed' that characterises Western academia and the process of critical reflexivity. Critical reflexivity was adopted throughout the research process in order to challenge my prejudices and preconceptions. I constantly asked myself how my race, gender, social class and background influenced every step of the research.

5. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS & DISCUSSION ANALYSIS

5.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents the themes that emerged from the analysis of the "Rugby for Equality" in Mosquera and "Rugby for Choco" in Bahia Solano programmes. This chapter also discusses the data analysis by connecting the empirical findings to the theoretical literature and previous studies on SDP and gender. The aim of this chapter is to further explore the meaning, significance and relevance of the findings in relation to the research questions. Two common themes were found from the data analysis of both programmes: a greater respect and gender equity on the rugby pitch and a sense of auto-efficacy. The next section describes the four main themes found from the data analysis for the programme in Mosquera: the discrimination from the community; a greater mental and physical strength; the importance of role models and the marginalisations of participants from lower-socio-economic classes. Next, this chapter examines two themes found from the data analysis for the programme in Bahia Solano: parents letting their daughter play rugby and the culture of drug trafficking affecting participants' agencies.

The data is derived from the interviews and presented in the form of stories structured into several themes (pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the research participants). It should be noted that the original interviews were conducted in Spanish, thus the quotes have been translated into English using the Deepl translation software.

5.2 Common Themes

5.2.1 Theme 1: Respect and greater gender equity on the rugby field

Overall, when asked about their views on gender relations in their daily life, women participants emphasised that they feel vulnerable, unsafe and insecure on the streets. They report being regularly catcalled on the street by men and receiving disrespectful sexual comments if they are wearing short pants or leggings to come to rugby practice. Participants' parents acknowledged the macho culture in Colombia where *"women's traditional role involves keeping house, doing household chores and looking after children"* (Juan, participant's father, Mosquera). However, when asked about the gender relation on the rugby pitch, parents and participants emphasized equality and respect between players from both gender:

"Half court, half court. Here, no one is better than anyone else" (Carolina, player, Bogotá).

“It's very equanimous. I mean, we train mixed. They don't often feel that it's a girl or a boy.” (Adriana, participante, Mosquera)

“[on the pitch] everything is based on equality. There are no men and women, not like that, they are players.” (Daniela, participant's mother, Mosquera)

In addition, participants mentioned that they felt accepted and valued in the team, regardless of their body shape or stature (“las flacas”⁷ are often on the wing because they run fast and “las gordas”⁸ have the role of props). Luisa indicates that she prefers to train with the boys because she can learn from them: *“That has never been a limitation for me to train with boys on the contrary.”* (Luisa, participante, Mosquera). However, the sense of gender equality on the pitch is nuanced by Mosquera's younger female participants who feel that men do not pass the ball to them enough. Overall, girls and women participants noted a difference in behavior between the respectful treatment of male rugby players and the machismo behavior of men in their daily lives. According to Luisa, this difference can be explained by the fact that women can demonstrate their value on the rugby pitch:

“Obviously men see you playing, they see you tackling, they see you walking, they see you running. And then you go out to a normal store and live like normal life, there is a drastic change, because it is not what you show on the pitch, outside. Then the treatment is different. Because people don't know you. It is a worse treatment. But it's like... being a woman, you know what I mean?” (Luisa, participante, Mosquera).

When asked if male players maintain their respectful attitudes off the rugby pitch, responses were mixed. While several participants noted that they had seen boys being equally respectful to other girls in their everyday lives, the answer from one of the foundation's members suggested that kids do change their behavior: *“In the pitch they're equals, outside, it's boys and girls, as always”.* (Gerardo, member of FBP).

In Bahia Solano, I realized that girls participants were conscious of the macho culture but did not necessarily criticize it. For example, after a training session, one participant told me that she had to help with the household chores while her brother, also a participant in the programme, was out playing in the street. Criticism came mainly from women who had the opportunity to study outside the community like Natalia: *“Here women believe that they are still meant only to be in the house to attend to the man who, when he arrives, will have his food served. Like basically slaves.”* (Natalia, community member). However, I could also observe some situations on the pitch where participants

⁷ *The skinny ones*

⁸ *The fat ones*

experienced gender equity in their interactions with each other. During the first rugby sessions, participants always separated boys and girls when asked to form two teams. After a few weeks of training, the boys started asking girls to join their team when they realised that they could be tactical and good players too. Furthermore, I could also observe some participants forming couples within the team, and sharing physical affection and tenderness in the pitch, whereas it is rare to observe couples showing affection to each other in a public space.

Thus, it seems that the space given through the programme allows participants to experience non-stereotypical gender relations, based on the values of respect and gender equity. Similarly, in her research on gendered spaces in Colombia, Oxford highlights that the VIDA programme provides a space 'where girls and boys can take risks and perform in alternative ways that contradict strict gender norms without severe repercussions' (Oxford, 2019, p. 9). She noted that participants felt socially accepted and comfortable despite individual differences.

Finally, having noted a significant presence of openly lesbian or bisexual women in the rugby teams I played with, I asked the participants in Mosquera about the perception of other players regarding homosexuality or other forms of sexuality. Most of the lesbian/bisexual participants said that they had never been discriminated against on for their sexuality and even considered rugby the pitch to be a place where they could freely assert their identity. However, they pointed out that it is probably more difficult for a gay man to be included on a rugby team since they have to conform to certain gendered norms of masculinity.

“Even in the team there's a teammate who is gay and its much more complicated being a gay man playing rugby. [...] its much more complicated being a gay man playing rugby then a lesbienne” (Manuela, player, Bogota).

5.2.2 Theme 2: Greater sense of auto-efficacy

In Mosquera, the research participants widely argued that self-confidence is an essential component in their personal development through rugby. Adriana recounts the day when, faced with a coach who didn't value her enough no matter how hard she tried, she told herself that she didn't need anyone's approval to know that she was a great player. For Carolina, it was the day she managed to tackle a woman much bigger at a tournament that she realised she could do anything in her life:

“When you play rugby you realize that you are not just a little girl who runs slowly, or that you are not just a skinny, short girl, whatever. You realize everything you are capable of in the world and I apply that every day to my life. [...]. It changed the chip in my head

and changed my perspective. It opened many worlds to me, many capacities that I had. I told myself that I am capable.” (Carolina, player, Bogota).

In Bahia Solano, during my participant observation in the indigenous community, I observed a reluctance from some of the girls when we started tackling (which involves physical contact to knock the opponent down). They stepped back from the pitch and said they "couldn't do it". At the next session, as they watched the other girls attempt to tackle, they got out of their comfort zone, tried it, succeeded, and there was no more hesitation when they jumped in to tackle girls and boys (field note, Indigenous community la Marianna). Thus, in both cases participants emphasised or demonstrated an increased self-confidence in their own ability, for example when they witnessed the progress of their efforts over time.

This echoes the findings of researchers who have found that participation in an SDP program can lead to an increase in self-confidence among women (Hayhurst, 2013). This self-confidence is achieved by changing their perception of what they are capable of doing.

5.3 Themes for the SDP program in Mosquera (Bogotá)

5.3.1 Theme 1: Discrimination from the community

In this research, Mosquera participants faced gender stereotypes within the community when they started playing rugby, which was sometimes stigmatised as a violent sport that was not suitable for 'delicate' girls. One of the predominant stereotypes that they dealt with was the idea that rugby is a sport of strength and that gender is a biological determinant to be strong.

This finding relates to recent research focusing on the mechanisms that hinder the social inclusion of young women and girls in public spaces (Prince, 2019). The concept of space is recurrent in the research of Oxford (2017) and Brady (2005) who define it as a culturally constructed space. It means that individuals attach symbolic values to spaces that reflect the cultural and social norms of the community and influence how space is occupied. For example, if the local culture defines masculinity with certain physical characteristics of strength and performance and femininity with more "delicate" characteristics, women will have little access to sports spaces. In this research, participants pointed out the resistance of some parents to let their daughters play rugby. For Julian, the resistance stems from the fact that the sport is traditionally seen as a male activity. He explains that rugby was unpopular, even for men as he had to struggle to convince his mother to let him play. Both Carolina and Luisa also point out that the resistance came from their mothers refusing to let their daughter play:

“My mom said why are you going to play such a rough sport, it's for boys, why do you like to fight... But not with my father. It's more the women. I don't know what, but it's like cultural.” (Luisa, participante, Mosquera).

This issue is highlighted in Prince's (2019) research, which points out that one of the primary problems is family reluctance to let girls play sports (or to only allow them to play sports that are considered 'feminine'). Mothers, in particular, fear that their daughters will participate in 'boys' activities' and that programmes will be mixed.

Additionally, Adriana points out that there are stereotypes associated with the sexual orientation of women who play rugby and even of men.

“So it is a surprise if a man who plays rugby is gay and it is a surprise that a woman who plays rugby is heterosexual in Colombia” (Adriana, participant, Mosquera)

The issue of discrimination by the community is also highlighted by Oxford & McLachlan (2018). The authors report that while women participating in football programmes in Colombia achieve some short-term empowerment, they suffer discrimination from the community because their participation contradicts the cultural ideology of women's roles in Colombia. In her investigation of an SDP self-defence programme in Uganda, Hayhurst (2013) points out that while female participants gained self-esteem and confidence, their participation led to discrimination from the community. In Mosquera's context, the participants' choice to play rugby despite gender stereotypes can be explained by Sen's concept of adaptive preferences. This is the idea that marginalised people become accustomed to systematic discrimination and are conditioned by their experiences of discrimination. For example, if women playing football experience discrimination from the community, they may decide to switch to a sport where they will be less discriminated against. Although the Mosquera participants experience some gender stereotypes when they start playing rugby, they may be less discriminated against (because rugby is still relatively unknown) in comparison to football, which is historically considered to be a male activity.

However, the participants and parents point out that the perception of some community members slightly changed when people came to watch a session or a game and acknowledged positive changes in the life of the participants. Alison, a participant's mother, noted that when she invited reluctant parents to attend a rugby tournament, they were surprised to see the girls playing rough but then changed their minds and admired them for their tenacity. Similarly, Adriana pointed out:

“In my neighbourhood, I think before they saw us as girls who wanted to play a boy game. But now they see us as girls who have managed to succeed in this sport. In other words, the roles have changed a little bit”. (Adriana, participante, Mosquera)

However, this result should be treated with caution. It is possible that the change in community perception is not only due to the participation of girls in the programme but also to the general transformation in the mentality of the new generation in Colombia.

5.3.2 Theme 2 : Mental and physical strength

Research participants noted that rugby allowed them to develop mental and physical strength as they were not afraid of physical contact anymore. Parents emphasize that rugby gives their daughters physical strength and a sense of security as they will be able to defend themselves on the street. This is similar to Hayhurst's (2013) findings who notes that girls' participation in a martial arts programme in Uganda improved their physical ability to defend themselves against sexual harassment.

When asked what they have learned from rugby, participants emphasize the discipline and self-control that has allowed them to take control of their lives by adopting a healthy and proactive routine. Parents also note the change in attitude in some of the girls who were temperamental and aggressive before they started rugby:

“She changed, she was temperamental, she had a strong temperament and she changed with rugby, because it teaches them to have self-control, to understand that if the other one knocked me down, to understand that it is part of the game and not to fist-fight.”

(Alison, participant's mother, Mosquera).

Proudly, girls participants mentioned that rugby has taught them the perseverance to never give up, to endure the knocks, and that they have become more resilient:

“I fall down, I get up again and I think that is a bread and butter for all of us who play rugby. And it's like one of the foundations I've had in life. I feel it's something that rugby teaches you. There's not many things that teach you to stand up, fall down and stand up again.” (Luisa, participante, Mosquera)

However, it could be that the participants did not gain mental strength by playing rugby, but rather they dared to play rugby because they were already empowered women who did not care about being criticised and challenged. This assumption is supported by Prince (2019) who states that empowerment is not a static outcome but a process that evolves throughout an individual's life depending on the context. Thus, it should be taken into account that girls and women participating in SDP programmes may already be in a process of empowerment before they participate in the programme.

5.3.3 Theme 3: The importance of role model

This theme also highlights the importance of role models in promoting female rugby to represent women in a so-called "male" sport. One member of the FBP explained that it is usual in Colombia to see female athletes in male disciplines who have opened the door for other girls by winning medals and thus gaining visibility. Luisa emphasizes that female rugby began to be democratized among girls when the Colombian national women's team qualified to play in the 2016 Olympic Games. According to Julian, “[gender stereotypes] also have been decreasing because the great references of sporting success in rugby in the country are women” (the men's team has a lower international level). For Adriana, this victory is a way to show that women can do better than men in a “male” discipline:

“Here in Colombia, the ones who have stood up for Colombia in rugby have been the girls. [...] we have shown the country that we can, that we are different, that we can do the same as the men do and even better.” (Adriana, participant, Mosquera).

Moreover, most of the participants position themselves as role models within the community, where they do not hesitate to support women who experience gender discrimination in their daily lives and encourage them to develop their own discipline, leadership and confidence. This can be related to Oxford & McLachlan's research where they found that "for participants, sport becomes more than a method of assembly or recreation, it is a tool for breaking down gender stereotypes and raising community awareness of girls' and women's capabilities (2018, p. 260).

Overall, those findings echo the research of Meier (2015), Meier & Saavedra (2009) who found that the emergence of female role models within the community challenges gender normative behaviours. Similarly, Lindsey & Chapman (2017) highlight that the promotion of female athletes can highlight women's competence and challenge men's perception that sport is a male only activity. According to Meier (2015), female role models in a local context can have a strong impact on young people as they open the door to other life alternatives.

5.3.4 Theme 4: Marginalisation of participants from lower socio-economic status

During the interviews, participants from Mosquera, in the south of Bogotá (and therefore in low-income neighbourhoods) emphasised the inequalities in access to rugby compared to players from higher social classes in the north of Bogotá. Luisa reports that girls from the south sometimes have to travel two and a half to three hours to get to tournaments in the north, which can discourage them from participating. In addition, she points out that parents are resistant to letting their daughters

go far away and return late at night. She also highlights the problems of insecurity on public transport (the Transmilenio) to the north of Bogotá: *"The Transmilenio is full of thieves. It wasn't long ago that they tried to rob me"* (Luisa, participant, Mosquera). Overall, the participants from the south showed an awareness of the impact of social disparities on the participation in rugby. Adriana points out that the upper social class in Mosquera do not play rugby because rugby is seen as a social sport.

Thus, the process of empowerment of each participant is influenced by other factors such as her social class and location and may contribute to reinforce or challenge gender inequalities. In Mosquera participants from lower socio-economic status are marginalised by the distance they have to travel to attend games in the north. Recognising and addressing intersectional power relations is therefore essential to understanding the complex realities of girls' lives and how participation in SDP programmes affects their lives.

5.4 Findings for SDP program in Bahia Solano (Ciudad Mutis, Chambacú, El Valle)

5.4.1 Theme 1: Parents let their daughter play

During my stay in Colombia I often met people who did not know what rugby was or confused it with American football. Besides, not all regions of Colombia have the same recognition of rugby. In Bahia Solano rugby was totally unknown except for a few foreign tourists who sometimes came with a ball. When I was carrying the rugby balls to training, people frequently stopped me in the street to ask me what sport I was teaching. Unlike Mosquera where many parents were concerned that rugby was a violent, brutal activity, I never witnessed community members reluctant to let their daughters play rugby. This is partly due to the lack of knowledge about this new sport and thus the absence of the stigma about rugby. In addition, Claudia points out that sport is generally not so gendered in the community as girls prefer to play football and micro-soccer, which are traditionally seen as 'male' activities. It was therefore easier to convince parents to let their daughters play rugby in a community where the sport was totally unknown. Thus, participants did not experience discrimination from their social circles or the community for accessing rugby, as the sport was unknown and therefore not stigmatised by the participants and their parents.

In her research in Colombia, Oxford (2019) warns of the reluctance of some communities to welcome women into 'male-only spaces'. She argues that football and all contact sports in Colombia are gendered and unwelcoming to girls. Yet the results of the case study of Bahia Solano nuance this assumption. While it is true that football in Colombia is a male-dominated sport with little room for the inclusion of women, I would argue that this is not the case for all contact sports. Football has long been seen as a patriotic symbol of Colombian culture and socially reserved for men. In the case of rugby, the sport has recently been introduced to Colombia, and most people have little or no knowledge of it. In other words, rugby was introduced to men and women at the same time, giving

women the opportunity to settle in before rugby was categorised solely as a male sport. These findings echo Zipp et al's (2019) research on girls' and women's empowerment in Vietnam and Laos through the SDP using rugby. The authors point out that despite the strong patriarchal structures of the communities, rugby appealed to many female participants. They argue that because rugby is a relatively unknown sport, there is no gender bias compared to football and other popular sports traditionally seen as male activities.

5.4.2 Theme 2: The culture of drug trafficking affects participants' agency

This section explores the role of drug trafficking in Bahia Solano in maintaining unequal gender relations. In the case of Bahia Solano, stereotypical gender relations are strongly rooted in the drug context, as women are socially and economically dependent on men. Since the activities generating the most income are related to traditionally male activities of drugs and fishing, the money is concentrated in the hands of men. According to Leo, *“this puts women in a situation of vulnerability, of exploitation, because what the discourse teaches them is that in order to access money they have to do it through men”* (Leo, community member).

During my stay in the community, I noticed the normalization of drug trade, seen as an easy and desirable way of life by some participants. During an exercise where the younger participants were asked to draw on a piece of paper what would make them happy, some drew themselves surfing, or on top of a mountain, but most drew a boat with several large engines. Gerardo from the FBP explained:

“Why would he need 250 engines in a boat that is just to carry people from place A to place B? You don't need a speedboat for doing this. But if you're trafficking something else and doing something, which is not very legal, you need a speedboat. [...] So why is this? Because if you live in a town with no possibilities of growth, and then you see the easy money, which are what these people are making when you go into the paramilitary. You think that they're living a good life because they have money.” (Gerardo, member of FBP)

Claudia highlighted the same drug-related issue in Chambacú, one of the communities where we train:

“Do you know what some children do? Over there is the port where the boats arrive. And what do they do? They go to look after the boats. And they get paid, let's say, 5000, 6000

*pesos*⁹. So these children, when they start receiving money, will prefer to get up at 7 in the morning to take care of a boat than to come to school". (Claudia, community member)

Thus, despite access to a safe space to experience healthy socialisation, participants' agencies are affected by the normalisation of drug trafficking. Hayhurst indicates that placing responsibility for change solely on girls means that structural inequalities such as power imbalances and gender divisions of labour that affect girls' agency have been overlooked. This result highlights the limitation of the CA in explaining how and why gender inequalities are created. The model only allows us to recognise them without addressing the cause.

5.5 Summary of the chapter

This chapter examined the themes that emerged from the data analysis of the Mosquera programme and from the Bahia Solano programme in relation to previous research on SDP and gender and within the framework of the Capabilities. The themes highlighted the different dimensions of individual empowerment and how these are developed by the girls during the programme. In both case studies, results showed that access to a safe space offered participants the opportunity to experience non-stereotypical gender relations on the pitch based on respect and equity. Moreover, participants emphasised or demonstrated a sense of self-confidence in their own ability. In Mosquera participants noted that rugby allowed them to develop mental and physical strength as they were not afraid of physical contact anymore. However, they faced gender stereotypes within the community when they first started playing rugby and the reluctance of mothers to let them participate. The participants' choice to play rugby despite gender stereotypes could be explained by the concept of adaptive preferences. But it may also be that they dared to play rugby because they were already empowered women who did not care to be criticized and challenged. In Bahia Solano, it was easier to convince parents to let their daughters participate in rugby since the sport was not known and therefore not stigmatised. Findings from Mosquera show that the participants position themselves as role models within the community, where they do not hesitate to support women who experience gender discrimination in their daily lives. However, participants from lower socio-economic status are marginalised by the distance they have to travel to attend games in the north. Finally, Thus, findings in Bahia Solano reveal that despite access to a safe space to experience healthy socialisation, participants' agencies are affected by the normalisation of drug trafficking.

⁹ Equivalent to 1,35\$ - 1,62\$

6. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to understand how Colombian women experienced their participation in rugby within an SDP organization and to find out how the community's perception of women is challenged by girls playing rugby. The results show that access to a safe space offered participants the opportunity to experience non-stereotypical gender relations on the pitch based on respect and equity. This finding confirms that a stimulating and supportive environment where children can experience a break from everyday reality gives participants the opportunity to gain new perspectives on their role in society (Oxford, 2019). Furthermore, the participants position themselves as role models within the community, where they do not hesitate to support women who experience gender discrimination in their daily lives. This finding highlights Oxford & McLachlan's research where they found that "for participants, sport becomes more than a method of assembly or recreation, it is a tool for breaking down gender stereotypes and raising community awareness of girls' and women's capabilities (2018, p. 260). Within the framework of the CA, this research highlights that SDP programs provide resources to participants which give them the opportunities to develop or improve certain capabilities such as auto-efficacy; physical strength. However, this research highlights that participants' opportunities to develop capabilities are also restrained by the local context. At the social level, participants in Mosquera faced gender stereotypes within the community when they first started playing rugby and the reluctance of mothers to let them participate. This finding relates to recent research focusing on the mechanisms that hinder the social inclusion of young women and girls in public spaces (Prince, 2019). At the personal level, participants from lower socio-economic status were marginalised as they lived in suburbs on the outskirts of Bogota where most rugby tournaments are taking place. At the environmental level, participants' agencies are affected by the normalisation of drug trafficking in Bahia Solano. Despite access to a safe space to experience new forms of socialisation, participants are seen to the drug trade as an easy and desirable way of life, which may affect their opportunities to develop values-based capabilities. This finding supports Hayhurst's (2013) research which stresses the importance of taking into account power imbalances and gender divisions of labour that may affect girls' agency. In the case of Bahia Solano, stereotypical gender relations are strongly rooted in the drug context, as women are socially and economically dependent on men. In this research, it should be noted that CA does not allow for the gendered division of labour and power relations. The model does not explain how and why gender inequalities are created. Finally, it is not clear from the results of this research whether the community's perception of girls and their abilities is challenged by their participation in rugby. Although some participants point out that the perception of some community members has changed slightly when people have come to attend a session or match, it is likely this change is affected by other external factors such as the moderate macho mentality of the new generation in Colombia.

There are some limitations to this study which influence the conception, interpretation and transferability of the results and should be mentioned. First, it should be reiterated that although attempts were made to mitigate the influence of my personal bias, it is difficult to prevent my social position from impacting the interactions I had with the participants. In addition, the context of this research is based on two programmes only in one organisation and the time spent in Mosquera was very limited. Besides, the context of drug trafficking in Bahia Solano did not allow me to interview participants directly in safe conditions. It is also important to note that the benefits of the SDP programme cannot be generalised to all participants.

In general, the results of this thesis can be used to improve the BPF intervention in these two communities. Within the programme in Bahia Solano, it might be relevant to establish a partnership similar to the SDP programme studied by Hayhurst in Uganda. In this programme, women can buy menstrual products to facilitate girls' access to sports programmes which allow them to have control over their economic decisions. On the other hand, I think it is important to highlight the impact of the relationship between the foundation and its donor. The foundation and the donor have defined the goal of impacting 500 children in the Choco region through the SDP programmes. This main indicator focuses on the number of participants engaged in the programmes. However, as this research highlights, access to the rugby field does not lead to the automatic empowerment of the participants.

Finally, this research considered the notion of masculinity and femininity as constructed in the local contexts studied. Most of the lesbian and bisexual participants stated that they had never been discriminated against because of their sexuality and that they even saw the rugby field as a place where they could freely assert their identity. However, they pointed out that it is probably more difficult for a gay man to be included in a rugby team, as he has to conform to certain norms of masculinity. Thus, it would be interesting for future research to focus on the challenges that men adopting 'feminine' behaviours may face in spaces promoting hegemonic heteronormative masculinity.

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Appendix

INTERVIEW GUIDE

ORAL INFORMED CONSENT (inspired from a sample from Oxford University)

· **Introduction:** Hello [again], my name is Marie. I'm a master's student in International Development and I'm currently doing research for a thesis about Sport and Development.

Can I tell you more about the study? *[Await confirmation]*.

· **Project details and aims:** In my study, I want to investigate Rugby, which is a recently introduced sport in Colombia, and the impact of rugby on Colombian society and [particularly on the lives of the women who play rugby]. I'm interested in interviewing rugby players, coaches, parents, organizers to get different points of view.

If you choose to be a part of this project, here is what will happen:

· **Interviews/surveys/ tasks description:** I will have a conversation with you where I will ask a range of questions about your experience as [a rugby player/coach/parents] within your community, the rugby club in which you're [playing/teaching/managing], the history of rugby.

· **Data sharing/access/confidentiality:** The answers you give will form the basis of my master thesis and I will be the only one to have access to this interview.

· **Data storage:** I will store your information safely and confidently and won't keep the data after finishing my research.

· **Anonymity/pseudonyms/identifiable data:** In any publications, a fake name will be used (i.e. a pseudonym), unless you don't mind me using your name and that you're sure that it is safe for you.

· **Rights:** You don't have to agree to take part; you can ask me any questions you want before or throughout; you can also withdraw at any stage without giving a reason.

· **Audio/video recording/photos/notes/keeping contact details:** With your permission, I would like to make an audio recording of our discussion to make sure I'm getting an accurate record of your thoughts.

· **Complaints/concerns procedure:** If you have any complaints or concerns please feel free to contact me in the first instance through my Whatsapp number.

· **Questions/concerns?** Do you have any questions?

Let the participant have sufficient time to think about whether s/he wants to take part

SET OF QUESTIONS (for male and female rugby player)

YELLOW: question for male player only

BLUE: question for female player only

Italic: notes for the researcher

Bold: name of the section

1. Starting the interview: General questions about the participants

- Where did you grow up, which city? (*urban vs rural*)
- Now, in which barrio do you live in Bogota/Medellin?
- How would you describe your barrio? (*safe/insecure, poor/rich, student area*)
- With whom do you currently live? (*partner, roommate, parents, alone...*)
- Are you married?
- Do you have any siblings (*if yes, how many?*)
- What is your main occupation? (*studies, job*)
- What is your actual level of education?
- How old are you?
- Do you have origins other than Colombian?
- Have you always lived in Colombia? (*si no, in which country?*)
- How would you define your socio-economic situation? (*Strata division 1 to 6*)
- Do you define yourself as belonging to a particular ethnic group? (*Afro, indigenous, mestizo [White european/indigenous], mulato [Afro/white european], zambo [indigenous/afro]*)
- Do you define yourself as a religious person(catholic...)?
- How would you define your sexual identity? (*hetero/homo/bisexual, queer, trans...*)
- Besides rugby, do you have any other hobbies (sport, art...?)

2. Participant's perception of rugby

- As a child, were you encouraged by your family to do sports in general, which type? (*if yes/no, why?*)
- Was it your personal choice to play rugby? (*if no, can you tell me why it was not and how did you end up playing?*)
- If yes, why did you choose to play rugby?
- How did your family/friends/colleagues react to you playing rugby? (*Did anyone oppose/criticize your decision, if yes, why?*)
- How did you hear/learn about rugby? (*Where? How? In what context? in school, friends, media.*)
- According to you, how is rugby perceived in Colombia?
- Can you describe to me how rugby came to take root in Bogota/Medellin?

3. Participant's experience of the rugby field

- Since when are you playing rugby?
- Did you have to stop at any point? (*if yes, for which reasons?*)
- Do you have a specific role in the team/club? (*if yes, which one?*)
- In general, how many girls and how many boys participate regularly in training?
- (*if lower number of women*) why do you think that there are fewer women playing rugby than men?

- *(if lower number of women)* How do you feel to play on a pitch where the majority of the players are men?
- Where do you usually train for rugby? How far is the field from where you live? How would you describe the neighborhood? *(safe/insecure, violent/peaceful, isolated/animated...)*
- Usually at what time training start and finish? After the training are you coming back home alone? Have you ever felt insecure coming to the training or going back to where you live? *(if yes, can you tell me about a specific situation where it happened and describe it to me?)*
- What type of structures do you have access to? *(proper pitch with poles, changing rooms, shower rooms, lamp post around the field...)* *(If the participant has no access to it, why?)*
- Have you ever felt uncomfortable, embarrassed, or unsafe during a training session? *(if yes, can you tell me about a specific situation where it happened and describe it to me? Can you think of another time where it happened?)*
- Can you describe how you feel like your male teammates/coach treat you on the pitch? *(no difference between male and female players or careful/ protective /dominant..)*
- Do you feel that there is a difference between how you are treated on the rugby field and outside in daily life? *(if yes/no, why?)*
- How did you feel when the first women players were introduced into your team?
- Can you describe how do you perceive your female teammates in the pitch? *(no difference between male and female players or softer..)*
- And outside of the pitch, how do you perceive them in daily life? *(if any difference, which ones and why?)*
- Do you have the choice to participate in the decisions of the club/organization? *(if no, why? If yes, can you describe me a situation where it happened?)*

4. Participant's perception of the community in which they live

- In general, how do you think the community/people around you perceive girls playing rugby? And how about girls/women of your age?
- Did you feel at any moment that the community's perception of women playing rugby was changing? *(if not, why do you think it's not changing?/ if yes, is it related to any specific event? How is it changing?)*
- Have you ever been criticized, rejected, mocked, or shamed for playing rugby? *(if yes, can you tell me about a specific situation where it happened and describe it to me? / If yes, how did you respond to it?)*
- Have you ever witnessed/heard criticism or mockery of women playing rugby? *(if yes, which types and how did you react? Why do think they are being criticized?)*
- According to you, what qualities/ behaviors do you think a good rugby player should have?
- Do you think these are qualities that are accepted and valued by the Colombian society when you are a woman? *(If yes/ no, why?)*
- What do you think about equality between men and women in Colombia? Do they have the same opportunities, rights, lifestyle...?
- Can you tell me about a specific situation where it felt unequal and describe it to me?
- According to you, can rugby be used to tackle this gender inequality? *(if yes, how?)*

5. Participants' perception of gender from an intersectional perspective

- How do you think rugby affects the masculinity of male players? (*is machismo behaviour exacerbated/canalized/is not changed?*)
- How do you think homosexuality/queer/trans people are perceived in Colombia?
- What do you think about homosexuality on the rugby pitch in Colombian teams?
- According to you, how are treated homosexual women compared to heterosexual women players on the pitch? (*is there a difference in treatment? if yes, can you describe a situation where it happened?*)
- What do you think about male homosexuality? (*is it more, less or equally accepted on the field? if there is a difference, why?*)
- Are there any players from different countries or ethnic backgrounds on your team? (*if so, how are they treated on the rugby pitch?*)
- In your opinion, is there a difference between the rugby played in Bogotá and the one from Medellín? (*regarding people's perception of rugby, the number of people playing, the impact on the community, the funds available...?*) *And if so, why?*
- Do you think that your life differs from a girl that is not playing rugby? (if yes, how?)

To close the interview

- Can you describe to me a moment where rugby has made a difference in your daily life? (*traveling for a championship, feeling valued...*)
- Do you have any questions for me?

Thank the person for its participation, I learned a lot...