



Master's degree thesis

IDR950 Sport Management

Promoting gender equality through community sport participation

GIRUM WOLDU SIMA

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Preface

This master thesis was written in order to fulfill the graduation requirements of the master program at University College in Molde. I was engaged in researching and writing this thesis from May 2022 to November 2022 and it is a conclusion of my master study of Molde University College.

The topic of this thesis is “Promoting gender equality through community sport participation”,

I would like to thank to Solveig Straume especially for being helpful and for her extensive support during my studies at Molde University College. I also wish to thank all that have contributed to this master thesis in any way.

My inspirational quote.

“Life's not about how hard of a hit you can give... it's about how many you can take, and still keep moving forward.” — Sylvester Stallone, Rocky Balboa.

Girum Woldu Sima,

November 2022

Summary

The thesis set out to exploratively examine whether community sport clubs integrate gender equality principles in their activities.

The IOC's 2021 framework with ten principles was adopted by the study: Inclusion, prevention of harm, non-discrimination, fairness, no presumption of advantage, evidence-based approach, primacy of health and bodily autonomy, stakeholder-centered approach, right to privacy, periodic reviews.

The research's use of the framework was to provide insight into a relatively, lowly explored area from the perspective of a community in Norway (Grunerlokka). At the end, it aided in providing answers to the researcher questions.

With the key variables, brief literature on the variables and the adopted theoretical framework highlighted and explained in the literature section, the qualitative (explorative) online survey method or approach was adopted in collecting the data. The participants were residents in Grunerlokka community, Oslo, Norway, who were members of a community sport club in the region. For easy analyses of the collected data, the survey questions were both open and closed ended, with the questions guided by the adopted framework's principles. The results revealed that community sport clubs in the region integrate good gender equality principles in their activities, suggesting that the value of NIF's policy (Joy of sport for all) is effective and sustainable. While the study's result (based on the participants' feedback) could not specifically ascertain the extent to which community sport clubs in the region integrate the gender equality principles in their activities, their activities significantly reflect good gender equality practices.

In conclusion, it was found, community sport clubs can better promote gender equality by simply and strategically adopting and integrating the gender equality principles (framework) of the IOC. While the adopted framework is thorough and recommendable, community sport clubs can as well adopt other frameworks that can promote gender equality, for example, the inclusion framework, which in itself a part of the adopted framework. Future researchers can combine different gender equality frameworks to examine their effectiveness.

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1.0 Introduction

Recently, even though most sport organizations offer many opportunities for administrative, managerial positions and even at the athletes' participation level, it is observable that women are still significantly underrepresented in both sports and non-sport organizations and positions (Shor, Van De Rijt, Miltsov, Kulkarni, & Skiena, 2015; Walker & Sartore-Baldwin, 2013). Gender inequality is a serious issue (and trending discussion) in every society, be it developed or developing (Bilan, Mishchuk, Samoliuk, & Mishchuk, 2020). Increasing gender inequalities are oftentimes regarded as one of the world's major economic and social problems (Kokocinska & Puziak, 2018). At the global scale, organizations like the United Nations (UN) are working hard with tedious efforts put on how to eradicate gender inequality. For example, the UN sustainable development goal 5, achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls is the fifth of the seventeenth sustainable development goals (SDG) of the UN (United-Nations, n.d.). The emphasis on the UN SDG goal 5 is to promote global awareness, attention, and efforts to eradicate gender inequality across all societal levels. One of the indicators of gender equality (SDG goal 5) is "Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex" (United-Nations, n.d.). With this, one will ponder whether there are frameworks in place in the context of sports that organization could adopt in promoting, enforcing, and monitoring equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex? The International Olympics Committee's (IOC) framework on fairness, inclusion, and nondiscrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual variations is one legal framework that sport organizations irrespective of their size can adopt (IOC, 2021b) – the framework that the study will adopt.

Despite the global attention and effort to eradicate gender inequality (the UN's SDG 5), it is worth stressing that the eradication of gender inequality is almost impossible (Bilan, Mishchuk, Samoliuk, & Mishchuk, 2020). Gender equality issues are also evidence in sports. In fact, in sports, new and challenging gender equality issues keep arising (Katsarova, 2019)

In Norway, where the study is conducted, The Norwegian Sports Confederation and Olympic and Paralympic Committee, that is, in Norwegian, Norges Idrettsforbund (NIF), the highest level of sports in Norway has also reported that there is a huge gender imbalance both in the leadership, management of sports and in athletes participation, necessitating the release of several policy documents intended to help promote gender equality and gender balance involvement at all levels of sports (Idrettsforbund, 2015). One of the goals in NIF's 2011-2015 sport policy document termed 'Joy of Sport – for All' is the inclusion goal (Idrettsforbund, 2015). The key objectives of the inclusion goals are: - a) to increase the participation of the underrepresented groups, such that sports participations do not only reflect gender equality but also to mirror the diversity in the society, b) and to give everyone the welcoming feelings and to accept them as members of their preferred sport clubs, c) eliminating circumstances that prevent the participation of certain groups, d) promoting and enforcing the principle of zero tolerance of all form of harassment and discrimination regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, faith and ethnicity (Idrettsforbund, 2015).

In most European countries, for example, in most major football federations, out of about 13 million registered amateur players, only a million of them are female, a mere eight percent (Pfister, 2011). Similarly, in Norway, while the goal (of the NIF) is to ensure everyone takes part in sport equally irrespective of gender or sexual identity, in a safe sporting environment, it is worth stressing that the number of males still outnumbers that of females in many sporting activities (Aktivitetsguiden, n.d.). Like sport management scholars, several well-meaning organizations (both sport-related and non-sport related actors like the IOC, FIFA, the United Nations, and the UNICEF) have put enormous efforts geared at addressing gender equality related issues (please see Desjardins, 2021; De Soysa & Zipp, 2019; Grabmüllerova & Næss, 2022; Krech, 2020; Unicef, 2010; United-Nations, n.d.). Specifically, in Norway, females are constantly being encouraged to partake and involve in sports either as coaches, team managers, athletes – something that applies to all ages (kids, youths and adults (Aktivitetsguiden, n.d.). NIF's worry about the low number of female leaders elected within regional and national sports federations of approximately 14percent (9 out of 66), in her November 2020 Executive Board meeting raised the bar from a mere approximated 14percent to 40percent, expected to be achieved before the 1st day of May 2023 (ENGSO, 2020).

While both male and female may suffer from gender inequality, more noticeably, in sports, female suffer from it more. According to Katsarova (2019), female athletes oftentimes, do not get the same fair treatment and considerations as their male counterparts. While some of these gender related challenges come in the form of uneven pay, for example, the Danish and Nigerian female national football team low paid compared to their male counterparts; others reflect in other forms, for example, the Scottish female football team, who not just fought for better pay, but also for support and respect; just like the Irish women football team call for upgrade of facilities such as their toilet, and so on (Adams, 2021; Cepeda, 2021; Katsarova, 2019).

It is not also difficult to observe as seen in the media that the focus and efforts on promoting gender equality in sports has always been more channeled towards or hijacked by well-known professional (sporting and nonsporting) bodies such as the IOC, FIFA, United Nations, UNICEF (see Desjardins, 2021; Grabmüllerova & Næss, 2022; Unicef, 2010; De Soysa & Zipp, 2019). The focus on promoting gender equality at the community sport clubs' level has not gotten equal attention as it is with the aforementioned/well-known bodies (IOC, FIFA, United Nations, UNICEF). This is even when these community sports clubs (participations in them) is acknowledged as an effective tool for promoting gender relation and gender equity (see Jeanes, et al., 2021; Spaaij, et al., 2018). According to Doherty, Misener, & Cuskelly (2014), community sport clubs are a "type of membership association largely run by member volunteers who organize and deliver opportunities for recreational and competitive sport participation" (p. 124S). They provide to as many as possible people the opportunities to participate in sports (Australian-Government-Department-of-Health-and-Aged-Care, n.d.). By community sport clubs' activities and programs, the study refers to the recreational and competitive sporting opportunities and activities that these community sport clubs organize and get their athletes to participate in.

Exploratively, Norway is chosen as the case context area because Norway like Sweden is one of the power hubs or nations promoting gender equality (Jakobsson & Kotsadam, 2010; Gender-In-Norway, n.d.; Gender-In-Norway., n.d.). In Norway, there is a high tendency to get governmental intervention to increase gender equality (Jakobsson & Kotsadam, 2010). Just as there are numerous community sport clubs in most Norwegian communities, so is the number of their participants (mostly young boys and girls) participating in their programs

and activities growing (Green, Thurston, Vaage, & Moen, 2015; Green, Thurston, Vaage, & Roberts, 2015a). Community sport clubs are found almost in every community in Norway, as they serve as the dwelling place for people who are not professionals to participate and want to engage in organized sports (Doherty, Misener, & Cuskelly, 2014). While the impact of community sports as a socialisation tool should not be underestimated (Doidge, Keech, & Sandri, 2020), they have also become or have been adopted largely as an important tool for achieving social policy objectives (Doherty, Misener, & Cuskelly, 2014).

In summary, in spite of the wide attention and efforts put to address gender inequality in sports, research still reveals there is still a huge gender gap (inequality) in sport (please see Lagaert & Roose, 2018; Schailleé, et al., 2021), necessitating that further review or research on the issues is conducted. The study intends to examine the issue from the perspective of those with good knowledge of the issues, that is, who participate in community sport clubs' programs and activities. The engaged participants' feedbacks will be gotten with a combination of both open ended and closed ended survey questions. The IOC's 2021 updated framework (IOC framework on fairness, inclusion and nondiscrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual variations) is adopted in analyzing the data and presenting the findings.

1.1 Assumptions and objectives of the study

The Olympic Games feature numerous sports, and the International Olympics Committee (The IOC) is hailed and known as one of the chief sport organizations that is promoting gender equality in sports. In Norway, the organization that represents the IOC is the NIF. NIF has also called on sport organizations in Norway through its 2011-2015 sport policy documents to promote gender equality at all levels of sport, for example, her introduction of the 40% female gender quota from 14percent.

With the focus of the study being on participation in community sport clubs, the core objective of the study is to examine whether community sport clubs integrate gender equality principles in their activities.

The study assumes the adopted IOC's 2021 framework consisting of ten principal principles (of inclusion, prevention of harm, non-discrimination, fairness, no presumption of

advantage, evidence-based approach, primacy of health and bodily autonomy, stakeholder-centered approach, right to privacy, periodic reviews) (IOC, 2021b) need to be evidence in the activities and programs of community sport clubs if they are to be perceived as fair, gender inclusive and nondiscriminatory based on gender.

1.2 Research questions

Throughout the thesis, the following questions will be answered

Do community sport clubs integrate into their activities standard gender equality principles?

To what extent are the principles of gender equality integrated into the activities of community sport clubs?

How do/can community sport clubs (better) integrate gender equality principles in their activities?

Addressing these questions will provide insights of what participants are saying about how community sport clubs are handling issues of gender. The study believes this will provide reach insights into the issues with a follow up of possible recommendations.

1.3 Thesis structure

The thesis has six chapters. The first chapter is the chapter one that highlights the issues, problems, objectives, research question. The second chapter, the literature review and the theoretical frameworks highlights an overview, meaning and conceptual definitions and explanation of the adopted IOC's 2021 gender equality frameworks, gender equality and community sport participation. The third chapter highlights the methodologies stating how the data was collected and analyzed, including the ethical considerations. The fourth chapter briefly presents the results as retrieved from the answered surveyed. The fifth chapter which is the discussion basically relates and further highlights the results supported with some brief literature review and some recommendations. The conclusion chapter is the sixth which highlights some limitations, and also provide recommendable areas or topics that can be researched further.

2.0 Background, literature review and theoretical framework

One issue that is clearly evidence in our society is gender equality (Senne, 2016). Studying history, it is not hard to find records of women having faced with issues of equality in different endeavours such as career, relationships, education, and opportunity to participate in athletic activities (Senne, 2016). Historically and even contemporarily, within the social organization and or institution, both sexes, that is, men and women, in every society play different roles (Hannon, Soohoo, Reel, & Ratliffe, 2009). Historically, a number of international and local physical activities and competitions (sports) were designed for and by men, playing sports a purely male-dominant institution meant to not just promote traditional gender roles but also meant to advance male hegemony (Eitzen, 2005). Traditionally, while men's sport was expectedly upheld, it was later in the 19th century that women began to participate in physical activities (Collins, 2013).

This evidence of inequality in sport could be traced back to the very inception of sports even before the capitalist Victorian British society (See Collins, 2013). Traditionally, societies had many misconceptions, as they forbade women from participating in physical or sporting activities and competitions (Collins, 2013). For instance, many believed sport was for men with masculine nature but not for women with feminine attributes (Collins, 2013). Another mischievous and mistaken beliefs were the notions that women's training activities could lead to sexual temptation and desire, just as cycling could lead to non-childbearing and how competitive sporting activities could make them too masculine (Collins, 2013).

These traditional misconceptions were surrounded or related to the belief that female bodies were not equipped for physical activities meant for male (Alvariñas-Villaverde, López-Villar, Fernández-Villarino, & Alvarez-Esteban, 2017). Misconceptions that suggested that women should not win and should not be engaged in masculine sports, and that they should only play the femininity game (Paloian, 2012). These gender stereotypes forgot or were not inclined to knowing that boys' and girls' choices of sports are not the same (Klomsten, Marsh, & Skaalvik, 2005). Thus, they forced them to accept their own philosophical and biased understanding. Afterall, the concept of sexuality may even be seriously questioned (López-Albalá, 2016). Mostly, boys or the male gender prefer to participate in sports that are full of hazards, violence, danger, risk, strength, speed, challenge, endurance and team

spirit (Koivula, 2001). Put in another way, according to Schmalz & Kerstetter (2006), the male gender prefers sports that are aggressive and potentially harmful, dirty and dangerous. Women on the other hand, prefer sports that are defined by props like dancing, pompoms, coordinated movements, and other esthetic related activities (Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006). Similarly, studies conducted in Spain further revealed that while boys may prefer to be involved in extremely physical sports such as soccer, girls prefer aerobics, dance and swimming (eportes, Joven, & Alimentum, 2011; Gracia-Marco, et al., 2010). This is not to say every boy prefers physical and dangerous sports and that some girls do not participate in sports considered to be dangerous and bloody (for example, boxing, MMA, soccer, etc.).

Some of the above highlighted traditional societal perceptions and expectations of genders gave birth to the majority of gender misconceptions, misconceptions that have brought about gender equality issues in sports. For example, the shaming of women regarding their choice of clothing, body type and the focusing on their body during sport (each & Dredger, 2021) might just be one of the issues scaring many girls away from participating in sports. Also using overwording and inducing body shaming ideologies, such as showing them unfavorable and biased representations of “fat body”, and confidential and partial for “sexy and slim and flat” body type (Nevins & Brown, 2018; Ramirez, 2016). Some ideologies have presented the ideal image of a woman was that of being a domestic caregiver with the responsibility solely for childbearing and for the home, with that of a man being to bring home the bacon (Holt, 2010).

However, in 1970s, the idea of relaxing participating females in works that demand decision and educational skills was the main societal debate (Pfister, 2010). Around the 1980s through 1990s, the idea began to receive special attention and efforts toward supporting programs for women (Siggelkow, 2017). As expected, despite the discrimination against female athletes, social constraint has not curbed female athletes to exercise their right of sportsmanship. Consequently, woman began to participate in sport by larger number in ninetieth century (Gleadle 2017). Thanks to the development of educational opportunities for women that opened the gate to women’s participation in sports (Anastasovski, 2019). Education (school or college) has played an important role in motivating or encouraging women to involve and participate in sports (Anastasovski, 2019).

Today, it is no news there is a numerous movement to achieve gender equality, that is, to raise the contribution, involvement, and participation of women in the political and business leadership, a movement that is also being applied in sports. One of these in sport is those promoted proposed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), its framework on ‘fairness, inclusion, and nondiscrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual variations’ (IOC, 2021b). The researcher believes these movements, calls, and efforts to eradicate identified gender discriminations in sports involve and concern both gender (male and female) and sport organizations striving to be perceived as gender nondiscriminatory need to adopt the principles of the framework. Even though males do not suffer discrimination as much more as their female counterparts in sports (Katsarova, 2019), the fight to achieve a nondiscriminatory sporting environment concern all the stakeholders. The study assumes and believes both genders need the knowledge and awareness of gender equality (understanding of good gender equality principles in sport) to correct this anomaly. In addition, sport organizations need to ensure that their programs reflect the principles found in the frameworks promoting nondiscrimination on the basis of gender in sport.

2.1 Norwegian sports context overview

Norwegians love sports and participate in sports. Every day, under the sun, or rain and even in the snow, there is a large population of Norwegians participating in one sporting activity or the other. While cross-country skiing is Norway’s national sport, football is by far the most popular sport in Norway (Chebbi, 2022). Usually, Norwegians (from the very young to the elderly) use part of their weekend for hiking, running/walking throughout the year, and skiing is also an important life of Norwegians in winter season. Norway is one of the dominant countries when it comes to winter Olympics (Mann, 2022).

Briefly, at the very heart of the Norwegian sports, there are about twelve thousand local sport clubs (Seippel & Belbo, 2021). Within these sport clubs, about forty one percent of the members are female (with the remainder male) (Seippel & Belbo, 2021). Despite this impressive membership of female in the Norwegian sport club context, (females 41% and males 59%) females’ participation still have a significant shortfall when compared to their male counterparts. While females age range 26 years and above make up about 45%, those age range zero to five years are the least with just four percent (Seippel & Belbo, 2021).

While it is worth stressing that the main aim of the Norwegian sports policies is to make sport accessible to all, that is, ‘sports for all’ (Whitepaper, 2012), the study’s focus is not on a particular sport or sporting participations. The two pillars of the Norwegian sports policies are those related to financial support for facilities and those related to financial funding of the two-tiered sports federation (The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports) (Seippel & Belbo, 2021).

Gender discrimination stands against the Norwegian sport policies whose mantra is ‘sports for all’. Even though the number of women’s participation in sports in Norway is encouraging with 41% of the club membership (Seippel & Belbo, 2021), this figure can still be improved upon. There is significant growth in the number of female participations in sport management positions and athletics (Adriaanse, 2017). Despite this growth, women are still underrepresented as high-level decision-makers (leadership positions) in sport organizations relative to male colleagues (Andrew, Pedersen, & McEvoy, 2019). With a forty one percent of female participation in sport in Norway, it highlights that a large number of the Norwegian population are athletic. One can also draw a conclusion or even assume that the Norwegian sporting climate is not as traditionally sex segregated as it is the case with many other countries. Even so, the study believes that the current, impressive and almost even participation of women and men in sports in Norway can still be improved upon if the awareness of gender equality (principles) can be promoted at every level sports.

2.2 The IOC’s gender equality roles in sports (gender equality)

The IOC (International Olympic committees) who supervise diverse range of sports and ensure that there is a gender equality sport environment periodically disseminate framework or principles that will promote or ensure that everyone irrespective of their gender is equally represented and participated in their choice of sport fairly and without any form of gender discrimination. Its most recent gender equality framework is the ‘2021 IOC framework on fairness, inclusion and nondiscrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual variations’.

The international Olympic Committee’s (IOC) states one of its chief roles is “to encourage and support the promotion of women in sport at all levels and in all structures, with a view

to implementing the principle of equality of men and women” (IOC, Chapter 1, Rule 2, paragraph 7, 2021). The IOC also condemns discrimination in sports stressing as one of the most powerful platforms for promoting gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment, discrimination should not be evidence in sports (IOC, 2021).

One salient and noteworthy effort of the IOC to encourage equal participation and treatment in sport by both genders is their implementation or call for ‘balancing the athlete quota’ (see, IOC, Gender equality & inclusion report 2021, 2021a). In a bid to achieve this call or movement, the IOC worked closely in collaborating with International Federations (IFs) by raising the quota for female athlete from 46.6% at Rio 2016 to 48.8% in Tokyo 2020, just 1.2% even to their male counterparts (see, IOC, Gender equality & inclusion report 2021, 2021a). It is also worth noting that the Tokyo 2020, for the first time since the history of the Olympics witnessed six IFs achieved gender-equal athlete participation in Judo, Canoe, Sailing, Shooting, Rowing, and Weightlifting), in addition to other 3 disciplines in mounting biking, BMX racing, and freestyle wrestling) also bragging gender-equal athlete quotas for the very first time (see, IOC, Gender equality & inclusion report 2021, 2021a). In summary, in the Tokyo Olympics Games, out of the 33 sports, 24 sporting programmes achieved gender-equal athlete quotas (see, IOC, Gender equality & inclusion report 2021, 2021a).

Despite the success achieved by the IOC (regards the quotas) as highlighted in Tokyo 2020, evidence in our contemporary society, still shows that majority of sports organizations have failed to achieve these goals or mission set by IOC. Infact, the sporting world is still unwilling and reluctant to adopt or apply the gender quotas’ system (Adriaanse, 2017). In a consultation exercise on the strategic direction of Norwegian sports, the eleven participants agreed that representation of women in sports’ leadership positions should increase, however, they did not agree to the implementation of a forty percent gender quota (Adriaanse, 2017). Nonetheless, representation of women in Norwegian sport’s General Assembly, the apex decision-making body for sport, saw a marginal increase from eight percent to thirty nine percent between 1971 and 2007 (Adriaanse, 2017). In summary, even Norway hailed for its perceived forty percent gender quota, still feels that that percent is too radical (Skirstad, 2009), suggesting the need for further awareness in the need to promote gender equality. Ideally, males and females should be given equal amount of freedom, liberty and the right to engage, the right to play and express themselves. Even though women’s participation in sports have been increasing locally (in Norway) and internationally

(Acosta & Carpenter, 2014), women are still underrepresented in sport (at athletes' participation and in all levels of leadership (Adriaanse, 2017; Andrew, Pedersen, & McEvoy, 2019; Skirstad, 2009).

Unfortunately, the ideal expectation of treating men and women fairly and equally has not been achieved yet. For example, even in Norway with high balance in gender, a sizeable gender discrimination (harassment) in sports is still recorded as stressed in Fasting, Chroni, & Knorre (2011). Fasting, Chroni, & Knorre (2011) ponder how there are as much as twenty four percent of Norwegian female sport students (athletes) experiencing sexual harassment in sport, in a country like Norway with equality and sexual harassment laws for more than thirty years. Thus, there is still progress to be made in terms of equitable participation opportunities for girls and women thoroughly. Schailleé, Derom, Solenes, Straume, Burgess, Jones & Renfree (2021) believe even and fair inclusion of all genders will likely provide reach insight into knowledge gaps and gendered beliefs that drive the underrepresentation of women in the sporting sector. The researcher agrees with the reasonable stance of Schailleé, Derom, Solenes, Straume, Burgess, Jones & Renfree (2021).

However, the extent at which gender equality values are impacted by individual community sport clubs as reflected in most societies is not very clear. In many countries all over the world, even in developed countries like Norway, studies such as Massao & Fasting (2014) reveal women are still being marginalized in sporting and physical activities in general. Massao & Fasting (2014) found that black Norwegian male and female athletes are the most exposed to diverse form of abuses or challenges due to their racial, gender and class position. This confirms that in spite of the numerous calls and efforts to eradicate gender inequality, for example, The Equality and Anti-discrimination Act (Gender-In-Norway, The Equality and Anti-discrimination Act, n.d.); UN's sustainable development goal-5, Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (United-Nations, n.d.); Gender Equal Games as proposed by the IOC in Tokyo 2021 (Pegoraro & Arndt, 2021), new and challenging gender equality issues keep arising (Gender-In-Norway, Gender Equality, n.d.). Following the 2021 Olympics Games held in Japan, with the IOC bragging that the Games were the most Gender Equal Games, Pegoraro & Arndt (2021) revealed women still lacked heavily behind in terms of opportunities in the Games than their male counterparts.

According to Fink (2015), gender discrimination in the media has played a great role on the society through hegemonic masculinity, sexism, heterosexism, or homophobia. Therefore, it is important that institutions such as the IOC, FIFA, national sporting committees, and particularly the community sport organizations, which are always accessible to the young unprofessional athletes, ensure the continuous fight against gender stereotypes and gender inequalities at all sporting levels with teachable measures. While most sport management scholars and literature have revealed gender inequality (marginalization and discrimination in sport) faced by women outweighs their male counterparts (Hanson, 2012; Jakubowska, 2018; Trolan, 2013); it is not difficult to notice that little studies or works have paid attention on discrimination and marginalization that are being experienced by men in sport (Manzi, 2019). Even though it is convenient that the fight against gender inequality in sport is necessary, it comes with huge challenges that still spring from the society and within the world of sport. This is stressed in Huggins & Randell (2007), who point that the world of sport often epitomizes most gender stereotypes and they are perceived to be adamant to make any meaningful gender reform. When it comes to sport media coverage, women receive lower coverage and are oftentimes subjected to derogatory and sexist language both in the media and the communities (Huggins & Randell, 2007). Explicitly, women witness many barriers hindering their participation in sports, something that has prevented them from benefiting from the many benefits from playing or participating and engaging in physical activities (Huggins & Randell, 2007).

2.3 The IOC's gender equality principles or framework

The study intends to adopt the framework in analyzing how a community sport clubs deals with gender issues. The principles are discussed briefly hereunder:

The first principles are the inclusion principle which suggests that people irrespective of their gender identity, their gender expression or sexual variations should be allowed to be involved in their preferred choice of sport without prejudice (IOC, 2021b). This principle also stresses that sporting organizations should also put in place measures that will make the sporting environments and facilities accessible to everyone irrespective of their gender identities (IOC, 2021b). The second principle is the principle of prevention of harm, which stresses that safety is paramount or should be prioritized. So, when establishing the

eligibility criteria, the mental, physical and psychological well-being of the participants must be put first in drafting the eligibility criteria (IOC, 2021b). The principle also asserts that sporting organizations ought to not only just identify but to also prevent every direct and indirect impacts on participants' health and well-being which may arise from implementation, design, or other interpretation of the criteria for eligibility (IOC, 2021b). The third principle is non-discrimination, which states the criteria for eligibility ought to be set and implemented fairly such that it does not systematically exclude participants from featuring based upon their gender identity, sex variations or physical appearance (IOC, 2021b). Provided that athletes meet the criteria for eligibility which are consistent as explained in principle four, sport participants should be allowed to compete in sports or events they best align based on their self-determined or identified gender (IOC, 2021b). The fourth principle is fairness, and one of its resounding points asserts sport organizations who are mandated to set the eligibility criteria for men and women for a given competition, sport, or event should do so bearing in mind that there should be a provided reliance or confidence that on no account should an athlete have unfair and disproportionate advantage (IOC, 2021b). It also mandates sport organizations to prevent participants from attributing a gender identity different from the one they consistently use, in a bid to participating a competition in a specific category (IOC, 2021b). The fifth principle is evidence-based approach mandates that for any restrictions resulting from eligibility criteria, they should be based on thorough peer review research that will reveal consistency, unfairity, disproportionateness of competitive advantage in terms of performance, or an unpreventable risk to the other athletes' physical safety (IOC, 2021b). It should also be based on demographic data collected which is stable in gender and athletic engagement with the set group which the criteria for eligibility are set to regulate (IOC, 2021b). The second part of this principle states instances where eligibility criteria should prevent athletes from competing or entering a given competition; stressing that such athletes should be free from joining or participating in other disciplines, sports, or events, hence they are eligible, which must be in the same gender category (IOC, 2021b). The sixth principle is no presumption of advantage, and states that on no account should an athlete be precluded or excluded from competition on an exclusive ground not verified or perceived to be unfair competitive advantage based on their sexual features such as sex variations, appearance, or transgender status (IOC, 2021b). Athletes should not have unfair or disproportionate competitive advantage except on the ground of clear evidence (IOC, 2021b). The seventh principle is health and bodily autonomy, that states participants should not be forced by sport organizations to go under any

unnecessary medical procedures or treatment to be eligible or to meet the eligibility criteria (IOC, 2021b). The eighth principle is stakeholder-centered approach and it asserts when drafting, evaluating and updating criteria for eligibility to participate, sporting organizations should consult with a wide range of athletes that may be adversely affected in a bid to prevent issues or harms (IOC, 2021b). The decisions taken by sport organizations affecting participants' ability to participate should be based on the basic standards, procedural fairness, with impartiality and neutrality (IOC, 2021b). The ninth principle is right to privacy, and it stresses that while the decision making processes on eligibility by sport organizations should be transparent, they should ensure that the privacy of those whose restrictions may affect are protected or preserved (IOC, 2021b). The information to be preserved includes all identifiable information of individuals processed in the scope of the eligibility decisions expected to be treated in a way that would be considered right with applicable laws and standards (IOC, 2021b). Individuals' health information or conditions are also expected to be handled in compliance with the expected privacy laws and should be adopted for the intended purposes made known to the athlete when the data or information is retrieved (IOC, 2021b). The last principle is periodic reviews, and it states that there should be a predictable periodic review of the eligibility criteria in order to reflect and accommodate any relevant ethical, legal, human rights, scientific, and medical developments, and also that the review should take into consideration of the feedbacks of the concerned stakeholders (IOC, 2021b). These principles will be used in analyzing the data in the result section.

2.4 Participation in community sport and its importance

In Norway, majority of those who participate in community sport clubs are mostly young people. Despite the efforts of the NIF through its policies to promote gender equality in sport, and community sport clubs' efforts to attract as many persons as possible to participate in sports, there is still gender imbalance and evidence of gender inequality in Norwegian sports. The rate of community-based sports' participation by males' doubles that of female (Eime, Charity, Harvey, & Westerbeek, 2021). In Oslo, Norway, females' participation in these sport clubs is significantly lower compared to their male counterparts of age sixteen to eighteen years (Strandbu, Bakken, & Sletten, 2019). Despite that Norway prides itself in the world as a leading gender equality nation, females' participation in football by females that

is known to be the most popular sport amongst females is still significantly lower than participation of boys or the males (Strandbu, Bakken, & Sletten, 2019).

Fortunately, many young Norwegians grew up in an economic and social context of relative equality between the sexes and very high living standard (Green, Thurston, Vaage, & Roberts, 2015). Norway are particularly known for their high levels of sports participation and well as their sports club membership and young Norwegians are presented with the perfect example and quality of sports (Green, Thurston, Vaage, & Roberts, 2015).

In Norway, through NIF, everyone is given that equal opportunity to participate in all kind of sports based on their needs and wishes. And community sport clubs make this goal national sporting goal actualisable. As a type of membership association, community sport organizations are largely managed by members who are volunteers, that organize and present avenues for recreational and competitive sport participation (Doherty, Misener, & Cuskelly, 2014). Community sport organizations provide as much as possible people the avenues to participate in sports (Australian-Government-Department-of-Health-and-Aged-Care, n.d.). As an educational tool, sports have been identified as one of the most valuable educational tools used for the promotion of social inclusion (Nogueira, Molinero, Salguero, Lucidi, & Márquez, 2018). Yet, sports are generally encountered with embattling number of threats, for example, athletes, mostly the young being exposed instead of being protected against all forms of abuse, violence, intolerance and or discrimination (Nogueira, Molinero, Salguero, Lucidi, & Márquez, 2018). Participation in community sport is effective a tool for promoting gender relation and gender equity (see Jeanes, et al., 2021; Spaaij, et al., 2018). As a tool, community sport clubs increase participation in sports at local levels for both genders, increase social inclusion, which also promotes gender equality and empowerment (see, Hozhabri, Sobry, & Ramzaninejad, 2022).

With community sport organizations being not just non-profit but very pivotal and voluntary, they provide the avenues for active participation, social interaction, engagement and societal cohesion (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Even though participation in sport has been declining or stagnant globally in recent years (Vail, 2007), community sport participation seems to possess the attribute to revive and strengthen sport participation. The core goal of community sport organizations is to provide series of opportunities for different people irrespective of their ages and gender, to engage and participate in physical and sporting activities (Allison, 2001). They are expected to support and provide individuals

with individual and social benefits, for example, the development of youths and societal cohesion (Donnelly & Kidd, 2003).

Youths' development can be facilitated through experiences and processes that will enable them to participate in adult-supervised activities and programs that will enable them gain social and personal skills that are transferable alongside with physical competencies (Holt, Deal, & Pankow, 2020). These social and personal skills to be learnt could be related to or could influence how they perceive gender. With these skills, both now and in the future, the youths (both males and females) can develop the competencies to not just participate in (sporting and nonsporting) programs but they will be able to contribute to the society (Holt, Deal, & Smyth, 2016). One outstanding beauty of community sport programs which is different from those highlighted in Donnelly & Kidd (2003); Holt, Deal, & Pankow (2020) and in Holt, Deal, & Smyth (2016), is that community sport clubs invite and welcome different people and ages (Allison, 2001) and not like professional sports with high level of professionalism and seriousness which could boost the chances of discrimination, for example pay disparity between athletes. In community sport participation lies the space in which women (and men) can readdress the concepts of masculinity and femininity, a platform where they can stand against the stereotypes that present women as weak and not superior; and to disclose what they are able to achieve to their society (Huggins & Randell, 2007).

2.5 General concepts of gender

According to Roper (2014), gender theory is the study of masculinity and femininity as sets of mutually created characteristics by which men and women are defined in society. Even though the terms "sex" and "gender" have different meaning, these two terms are frequently used interchangeably (see, Melk, et al., 2019). Literally, sex defines the biological differences which are identified by external genitalia, reproductive organs, and so on (Newman, 2021). Sex is defined to refer to physical differences between people that are female, male, or intersex, assigned to them at birth based on characteristics such as physiological, and their genitalia and chromosome composition; on the other hand, gender, is all about how a person is identified (Newman, 2021). According to Newman (2021),

gender, unlike natal sex does not consist of binary forms (that is, male and female). Instead, the spectrum of gender is very broad (Newman, 2021). One may identify within or outside the broad spectrum of gender at any point entirely (Newman, 2021). This suggests that people (for example, transgender, nonbinary, or gender-neutral) may identify with genders that are completely different from that of their natal sex or choose not to be associated with none at all (Newman, 2021). Another dimension of gender is the social constructs or norms of gender roles, that is, the influence of sex stereotypes and gender roles (see Chalabaev, Sarrazin, Fontayne, Boiché, & Clément-Guillotin, 2013).

The social constructs of gender are socially constructed roles, attributes and behaviours that a given society considers appropriate for males and females (Newman, 2021). In a nutshell, the two words or terms, sex and gender are interchangeably linked in which sex as a term is defined a person's gender features depending on the societal specifications and expectations of gender roles (Haynes, 2014). And gender usually is defined by what a society thought to determine as “masculine” or “feminine” (Coakley, 2014).

According to Langnes and Fasting (2017), gender makes two complementary but unequal sets of individuals, which gives constructed meaning that shape ordinary behaviour for female and male. They also argued that gender is regularly renegotiated which is not static, meaning gender does not only define the positions of men and women through social interaction (Langnes and Fasting, 2017). Gender, according to Martin (2003) is understood in organizations as an "institutionalized and generally recognized" practice, and is nevertheless very dynamic. This dynamic nature of gender makes it very important to understand gender performance in organizations. The invisibility or common sense of these gender structures often overlap with the way they maintain and challenge practices at all levels of an organization (Claringbould and Knoppers (2012). Gender can also be described as a “performance” and therefore, each sex needs to “perform” her/his gender identity (Butler 1990). This “performance” contains the way of playing, speaking, dressing, and talking, etc. (Butler 1990). People or a society dictates the “performance” for each sex class and person, and thus, if the gender of an individual doesn't match societal norms of “performance” they will be excluded from the societal classifications (Butler 1990).

In most societies (particularly, developing and third world countries), ideally, the male babies will be known and expected as masculine while female babies will be categorized as

feminine. Even though this is not the exact practice in the developed countries, some still stereotype or falsely believe that male and/or masculine are better than female/and feminine. Several studies, for example, Frank, Baron-Cohen, & Ganzel, (2015) have debunked the complete truism of this claim. For example, research has proven that women are more advanced than their male counterparts in some endeavours such as in pragmatic language comprehension and Theory of Mind (ToM), which are both cognitive component of empathy (Frank, Baron-Cohen, & Ganzel, 2015). Unfortunately, the masculine category, control the bigger portion of resources and power in almost all hierarchy level in most societies (Coakley 2014). Although, in Norway, where the study is conducted, known to be the power hub of gender equality, there is a mixed reaction as the masculine category controls the private sector and while the feminine controls public sector (Statistisk-Sentralbyra, 2017).

However, the feminist movement (also known as the women's liberation movement, the women's movement, or simply feminism) refers to a series of political campaigns for reform on a variety of issues that affect women's quality of life (Burkett, 2022).

One of these issues, for example, is with the definition of gender as a "performance". With gender defined as a "performance", thus, either male or female should "perform" his/her gender identity (Butler, 1990). If "performance" includes the way a male or female plays, talks, dresses and so on, why is it that the society reject gender that does not match the societal norms even their own family (see Butler, 1990)? In contrast to sex, both men and women may have more than one gender identities. For example, athletic parents may have very non-athletic kids that are unique and completely different from them (Klein, 2010). Although, in relation to the concepts of sports, the beliefs about male hegemony and sexual binary (male and female) are dominant; these assumptions have made sporting to be based on pure sex segregation (Braumüller, Menzel, & Hartmann-Tews, 2020). Because of these two assumptions of male hegemony and sexual binary, people who do not fit into these assumptions or who reject or refuse to fit into these sex categories are oftentimes hindered from participating in (particularly organized) sports (Braumüller, Menzel, & Hartmann-Tews, 2020).

Despite substantial advancement of diversity in organizations, as well as laws for equal opportunities for females and males, it must be noted that women remain mostly in the minority in decision-making positions. So, this thought refers to glass ceiling to the phenomenon that constitutes vertical discrimination within organization against females

(Cohen, Dalton, Holder-Webb, & McMillan, 2020). Also, this term refers to the fact that in organizations, there is a limit to how far a person can progress in the hierarchy, this hierarchy limit is hidden. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2013) also argue that glass ceiling consists of organizations setting leadership position requirements to suit better for male and worse for female. Meanwhile, in most organizations, male is the majority in power to dictate the concept of “working day” where female have to follow these rules (Robinson 2005). Female will not have enough power unless the number of females increases in the organization by at least one-third of the leadership, to act against biased behaviors or rules in the organization (Hardin & Whiteside, 2012).

On the flip side, in organizations, males advanced the position of themselves in order to safeguard their power (Surujlal & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2015). Even though female participation in sport is growing, studies show clearly that, females still face unseen obstacles when it comes to top position in the organization (Pai & Vaidya, 2009). According to Oakley (2000), the reason for shortages of females in senior management position can be divided into two groups: which are corporate practices and behavioral and cultural explanation. Oakley (2000) went on to state that the former obstacle is easier to change as they are made by corporate practices whereas, the latter originates in culture and societal behaviour, which makes the problem more complicated (Oakley, 2000).

Leadership positions in various sports towards female support and careers are mainly controversial (with numerous barriers) in the organization (Rincón Diez, González, & Barrero, 2017). But despite that, studies have shown that women are as effective as their male counterparts in performing leadership task (Hoyt, 2012). These controversies have limited the number of female top positions in management. Studies have also found that evidence of discrimination in the workplace setting tend to discourage the entrance of women in sports (Harris, Grappendorf, Aicher, & Veraldo, 2015). One of the ways to tackle this underrepresentation of women in sport leadership is for both males and females to be entrusted as managers in forefront of leadership (Burton, 2015).

The human community has suffered irreparable damage in the real absence of women in various areas, and it has been trying for two decades to address this shortcoming. Since women’s sports is discussed all over the world nowadays, it is important to also reconsider sports management. Despite its successful implementation in the western world, this is not

the case in developing countries. Despite some successes in industrialized countries, unfortunately in many developing countries this is not the case (for example, in Malawi), where a limited number of women hold positions in decision making bodies (see, Goslin, & Kluka, 2014). Gender equality has a positive organizational result for both men and women (Spoor & Hoye, 2014). For example, when women perceive that a sport organization supports them and have good intention for them, it will propel them to stay, (leading to high staff retention) (Spoor and Hoye, 2014). Generally, individuals (male and female) in a gender equally oriented sport organization tend to demonstrate commitment and tendency to stay in the entity as opposed to those that do not follow gender equality principles and have obvious gender gaps (see, Kefi-Chatzichamperi & Kamberidou, 2021). In a nutshell, gender balance can have a positive impact on organizational outcomes, while individuals are more likely to stay in the organization (Spoor & Hoye, 2014).

3.0 Research methodologies

In this section, the study states the methods adopted in addressing the highlighted research questions:

Do community sport clubs integrate into their activities standard gender equality principles?

To what extent are the principles of gender equality integrated into the activities of community sport clubs?

How do/can community sport clubs (better) integrate gender equality principles in their activities?

To address these questions, the study adopts the (qualitative) online survey method. This method will help analyze the data. The online survey questions consist of both open and closed ended questions coined around (guided by) the adopted ten gender equality principles (Inclusion, Prevention of harm, Non-discrimination, Fairness, No presumption of advantage Evidence-based approach, Primacy of health and bodily autonomy, Stakeholder-centered approach, right to privacy, Periodic reviews).

The study is conducted in Oslo, Norway, with a focus on community sport clubs' participants within the Grünerløkka community, arguably, one of the most populated municipalities in Oslo, Norway. Grünerløkka is chosen because it has numerous (community) sport clubs (Yelp, n.d.), and as a congested area in Oslo, it is expected to have participants who either participate or are participating in at least one form of community sport activities. Grunerlokka, is a warm and lively district in Oslo, known as 'the bustling atmosphere in Oslo's former workers' district,' due to its catchy shopping streets, exciting eateries and cozy cafes (VisitOslo, n.d.). In the streets of Grünerløkka, prams and skateboards are evenly available making it a good idea to explore the district on foot (VisitOslo, n.d.). With Grünerløkka chosen as the case, study area, the aim is to get the perspective of community sport participants within Grünerløkka community and not from the perspective of the community sport clubs or their management. The perspectives of the participants (Grünerløkka residents) should highlight the extent to which community sport clubs within the region integrate gender equality principles in their activities.

3.1 Participants' demography

Participants participation: From the 44 participants, 52% of them actively and consistently participate in one form of community sport club' activities (either as an athlete, and volunteer, coach, etc.), and while the remaining 48% participated inconsistently. This suggests that all participants who participated understand the concepts of gender equality at community sport clubs' levels and have the prerequisite knowledge about participation in community sport clubs.

Gender participation and age: From the survey feedback, as shown in Figure 1, the gender of the participants (male and female) is even or constitute of 50% each. Although, all data collected were not sensitive or personal, the engaged participants are all above the age of 18. So, all participants were above the 18-year-old set threshold as seen in Figure 1 below.

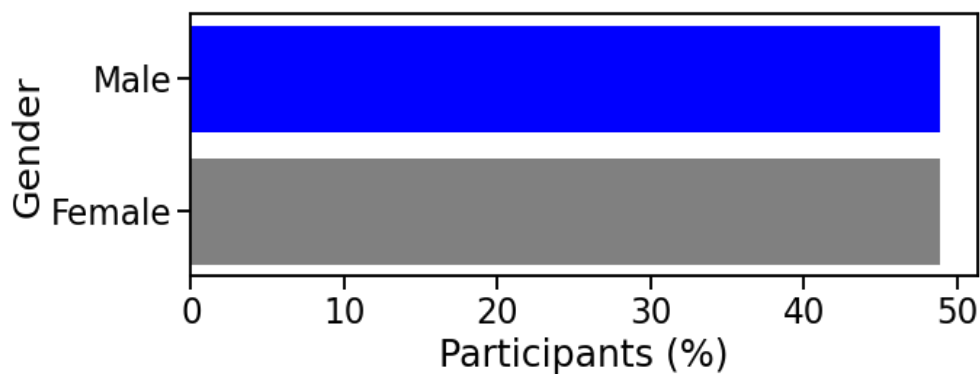


Figure 1: Gender distribution of respondents

The idea of getting an even gender balance or distribution might just help in analyzing the results in unbiased way, meaning we have equal chance to get balanced ideas/or thoughts.

3.2 Qualitative and case study research methods

Case study: The idea of treating Gr unerl kka as a case is because the case study method is useful as it helps to explore and understand complex issues (Zainal, 2007). The case study is often viewed as a robust research technique or method especially “when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required” (Zainal, 2007). The study assumes since gender equality issue is complex, limiting the research to only a community sport club will not be sufficient, the reason it looks at it from the perspective of participants within the region of Gr unerl kka. The qualitative research method is adopted because it emphasizes “on the processes and meanings that are not examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency” (Garcia & Quek, 1997). In addition, qualitative techniques emerge from phenomenology and interpretive paradigms that emphasize on constructive approaches when the objectivity or reality is not very clear (Garcia & Quek, 1997). The qualitative method is adopted because the participations’ perception of the ways their favorite community sport Clubs integrate gender equality principles into their activities is subjective, and opinion driven.

3.3 Data collection tools and process

An online qualitative survey (questions) was developed and distributed to female and male respondents in Grunerlokka regions or community sport clubs communities, with both open ended and closed ended line of options (questions). The survey questions were divided into two sections. The first part was a survey with statements for the respondents to agree or disagree (closed ended), and in the second part, the respondents were asked to provide their experience (opinion as experienced) regards how community sport clubs’ programs integrate gender equality principles into their activities. From their feedback, the results will be presented and meaningful recommendations or solutions for improvement will be given. The survey was designed with simple use of English word with little or no form of ambiguity and such that it did not request the participants to provide sensitive data. In the survey, simple set of questions for each one of the ten gender equality principles were set. The questions were coined in such a way that they would provide reach and substantial insights into how the participants perceive the community sport clubs’ activities integrate good

gender equality principles. The survey is inspired by the work Grabmüllerová (2022) who examines if sports social media contents promote the IOC's gender equality ambitions. So, in a similar manner, the survey questions were designed in such a way that it would reveal if the gender equality principles of the IOC are integrated into community sport clubs' activities. See appendix A.

3.4 Data collection

The researcher embarked on a thorough and tedious exercise, going all out verbally talking to passersby, people within Grunerlokka environment, telling them about the research, its goals and asking for their participation. This exercise took three days to accomplish. Several passersby were engaged, with several turndowns and a marginal turns up. At the end, the researcher managed to get 97 persons who cooperated. cooperation here refers to those who managed to listen, who gave their phone numbers that were linked to their WhatsApp application, those who promised verbally to participate in the survey. Why WhatsApp? Recent studies, for example, Mavhandu-Mudzusi, et al. (2022) have taunted and adopted WhatsApp as an effective qualitative data collection method, particularly in descriptive phenomenological studies. The survey questions form (URL link) was distributed via WhatsApp to the 97 potential participants who the researcher had earlier engaged. Out of the 97 of them, only 44 persons showed willingness and responded to the questions in a complete manner. To establish a detailed questionnaire form, different resources such as those highlighted in the literatures, online articles or other sources in general like engaging persons in small talks were reviewed and used. Chiefly used in forming the questions are the ten principles highlighted in the adopted gender equality framework of the IOC. The data was analyzed by the researcher. Having developed the survey questions and template, a free tool, online form on <https://nettskjema.no/> (Nettskjema, n.d.) was used to develop the question and to make them electronically able to be disseminated and accessed via the URL link. This link was sent to the WhatsApp contacts of the 97 potential participants that provided their contacts and consents. the data (answered outcomes) was retrieved from <https://nettskjema.no/> and with the use of MS Excel the researcher analyzed the data, by classifying and presenting the results into each one of the identified themes (the adopted gender equality principles). The data was analyzed, and the results were presented and

discussed accordingly. The results sections are made clearer in some case with illustrative quotes from the survey.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The research also met the ethical consideration set by the (NSD) Norsk senter for forskningsdata, who stresses that collection and processing of personal data must be reported (NSD, n.d.), and consent to engage or use the data as supplied by the participants were met since they all gave their approval (even though there was no use of their confidentiality as the study did not make use of any sensitive data). Although, with 44 valid answers (answered surveyed participants), this thesis has considered diverse respondents (97) to be participated and engaged in the survey questions to ensure the data collection robustness. Again, for the sake of confidentiality, the data was collected such that all those who participated were assured of their anonymity, satisfying that the study is anonymous. In addition, participants who are under eighteen years of age were not included in the research. The researcher excluded under aged as the inclusion of underaged might slow down the process of data collection since parental consents may be required to have them involved in the data collection process.

4.0 Results

In this Chapter, the findings, that is, the participant's feedbacks are presented in simple themes with short narratives, narratives that would aid in discussing the findings, and drawing suggestions and conclusion.

The results provide answers to the following research questions:

- Do community sport clubs integrate into their activities standard gender equality principles?
- To what extent are the principles of gender equality integrated into the activities of community sport clubs?
- How do/can community sport clubs (better) integrate gender equality principles in their activities?

Before presenting the findings core findings that arose from the research questions, the study found that all of the participants participate in community sport clubs' activities (sport) and are aware of the possibility of gender inequality (in sport). Even though majority of them maintained uniformly that they have not directly suffered from their participation in community sport clubs' activities on the basis of gender, together, they think females are more likely to suffer on the basis of gender than their male counterparts in sports.

-Do community sport clubs integrate into their activities standard gender equality principles?

The participants' feedback reveals that the activities of community sport clubs within the region reflects good gender equality principles. It is convincingly found that community sport clubs in the region have integrated the gender equality principles into their activities. The results reveal that all ten gender principles of inclusion, prevention of harm, non-discrimination, fairness, no presumption of advantage, evidence-based approach, primacy of health and bodily autonomy, stakeholder-centered approach, right to privacy, and periodic reviews are reflected or integrated in the activities of the community sport clubs.

- To what extent are the principles of gender equality integrated into the activities of community sport clubs?

It is only found or evidenced that community sport clubs in the region integrate into their activities the principles of gender equality, as disclosed by majority of the participants. The results or study is unable to state or ascertain very specifically the extents that community sport clubs in the region integrate these principles. But going by the participants' feedback, the activities of community sport clubs in the region significantly reflect the integration of the principles.

-How do/can community sport clubs (better) integrate gender equality principles in their activities?

Inclusion

From the results, community sport clubs in the region have successfully integrated into their activities the principle of inclusion. Majority of the participants reveal that their community sport clubs in the region are inclusive, as both existing and potential members or participants can easily join or access their activities and be accepted. One of the participants interestingly disclosed: 'their (eligibility criteria or) demand is easy to meet, just as their activities are coordinated in such a way that participating in them leaves you as an athlete feeling free, accepted and included'. In a nutshell, participants credit the community sport clubs in the region ability to be able to coordinate their activities to be inclusive and welcoming enough for all irrespective of gender.

Prevention of harm

For the activities of community sport clubs to be perceived as one that promote good gender equality principle, the safety of those who participate in them must be assured. The results reveal that community sport clubs in the region pay attention to the safety and well being of their athletes. The participants maintain community sport clubs in the region pay attention to both the physical and psychological/mental wellbeing of those who participate in their activities. In addition, asked how community sport clubs identify and avoid likely hazards on their members' wellbeing, majority highlight there is a first-aids system on the standby, other asserts they are always being reminded verbally on the need to participate in the safest

of ways, and while some opine that they have people in the clubs they can confidentially talk to and to share experience and issues with.

Non-discrimination

The result shows that majority of the participants report that although the evidence of being discriminated within the community sport clubs in Grunerlokka is low, they have neither experienced or have had someone close to them being discriminated on the bases of his or her gender identity or physical appearance. Few of the respondents (2%) acknowledged to have experienced discriminated (including someone they know), adding boldly the gender discrimination cases came from the instructors but more from fellow athletes. The result from a good number of participants shows that most community sport clubs have a process or structure or a routine where they verbally communicate to their athletes (new entrants) that they are against any form of discriminations, while they advise all and sundry to stay off all acts of discrimination.

Fairness

From the data, all the participants responded affirmatively that they do not think that community sport clubs within the region is unfair and that they do not openly disappropriate competitive advantage preferentially to some athletes over another based on their gender. Although, two respondents think that some community sport clubs may be unfair even, and that though this may not be very obvious, they did not say that they had been treated unfairly as a result of their gender.

Fairness in sport is important and as a key element of gender equality, community sport clubs pursuing to promote gender equality with their activities should Endeavor to be fair regards its gender eligibility criteria.

No presumption of advantage

The feedback of the respondents negates being denied participating with a category without prior information of their gender identity, status or physical appearance. In the word of a respondent: No. Nothing like that. The reason is that upon joining the community sport club,

my data and details including age, gender type, etc. Were taken. So, with this information, participation, or denial to participate is on the bases of the information given, which cannot be considered as not verified. Majority of the participant reveal community sport clubs do not presume to allow one to participate or not to participate without relying on the information supplied by the said athletes – suggesting that majority of the community sport clubs have genuine eligibility criteria that is non-discriminatory on the basis of one' gender.

Evidence-based approach

It is found that community sport clubs have a systematic eligibility criterion, criteria that is based on the information supplied by the athletes or his or her guidance, meaning that no one is restricted from participating without the backing of data. Majority of the respondents confirm that community sport clubs include the athletes in their research and decision regards their eligibility to participate (and in other areas of concern to them). And as it is known, Norway is a freedom of expression country, athletes who are refused participation can easily (question and contest) enquire from the community sport clubs or its managers or instructors why he or she is denied participation.

Primacy of health and bodily autonomy

With one of the principles of the adopted gender equality being primacy of health and bodily autonomy, the result shows that about 98 percent of the participants assert neither them nor anyone they knew had been pressured to undergo a surgical information in order to participate. One of them added it is just the normal call from the instructors stressing on the need for athletes to stay fit and be in shape through safe and genuine sporting activities and involvement in sports. A participant said that being pushed too hard to stay to stay fit is being perceived as being pressured to go against her wish and that she disliked being drilled to stay fit for that reason. The result also reveals instructors usually educate, guide and give them useful tips on how to stay in shape and fit by the right training, and participating safely such that they would not cause harm on their body.

Stakeholder-centered approach

The result from the participants shows a mix reaction to this theme (principle). 50% of them say their community sport clubs have clear written eligibility criteria to participate that is applicable to all genders. The other 50% say that their community sport club does not have a clear written eligibility criteria to participate, stressing that this is mostly communicated verbally. Also from the result, majority of the respondents can not say if community sport clubs within the region do periodically review their eligibility criteria to participate, just as some think they notify their members or athletes of necessary development and changes and to get their contributions since the decision to be taken will mostly affect them. There is a feedback process in place for athletes communicate freely with the club and vice versa to accommodate concerns and grievances.

Right to privacy

As one of the gender principles, right to privacy, participants' feedbacks show that community sport clubs usually ask from the athletes the permission to collect and use their information. Although, the participants can not say if the community sport clubs adopt globally acceptable standard or principle, participants highlight they their consents had never been abused, nor had their consents to collect and use data been requested from neglected, nor their data or information used other than those (such as their name, phone number or email and social media accounts) that they had expressly given during their enrolment to the community sport club. From the feedback of the participants, it clearly shows that the community sport clubs within the region adopt the standard right to privacy rules for both genders. No participants sight instances where their privacy right was abused, meaning that confidential and personal information are preserved.

Periodic reviews

The result reveals about 15 % of the participants are unable to categorically say or ascertain if community sport clubs within the region systematically and periodically review its eligibility criteria to participate on the base of gender. Majority of them is affirmative their community sport clubs conduct periodic reviews of their eligibility criteria that take into consideration of all participants.

5.0 Discussion and recommendations

The discussion starts off with the participants' gender and age. Although not the key consideration of the study, there is no denial that both the gender and age of the participants (who participated in the survey) have the potential to influence the outcomes or results of the study. For example, as seen in the method chapter, the gender distribution of the 44 participants (participants who actually participated) who participated in the survey are even (50% male and 50% female), with all of them being approximately above the age of 18 years. All the participants participate in at least a community sport activity.

Regards the age of the participants, even though community sport clubs activities are mostly participated by young teens (athletes and volunteers, etc. say age 5-14, 14-24, etc.), the study only considered participants age 18 and above in order to avoid having to seek parental consents which may consume more time. This is in compliance with the safe data collection rule, as collection of data of kids requires parental consents (Cuskelly, 2008; Eime, Harvey, Charity, & Payne, 2016). Concerning the participation of both genders, having both genders participating evenly could send a big message to potential athletes and volunteers aiming to join a community sport clubs (due to peer pressure). A community sport club that could attract male and female stakeholders equally might succeed in presenting itself as very gender equally and inclusive than one who could only attract only male or just females volunteer, manager, coaches, etc. In Lamprecht, Fischer & Stamm (2011) and Schlesinger, Egli & Nagel (2013), it was clearly revealed that there is unequal (distribution of) number of volunteers (male and women) in sports. Lamprecht, Fischer & Stamm (2011) strongly link the reason of this unequal gender distribution of volunteers to women still being underrepresented in sports clubs. Community sport clubs need to ensure that their structures, and activities demonstrate that they are nondiscriminatory on the basis of gender and that they attract and welcome all irrespective of their identifiable gender.

Do community sport clubs integrate into their activities standard gender equality principles?

As seen in the result, interestingly, community sport clubs in the region integrate in their activities the gender equality principles. This is not surprising. Participation in community sport clubs has been hailed to help combat gender inequality; and even then, it is worth stressing gender equality issues and lack of full inclusivity is still perceived in some community sport clubs today (see, Bailey, 2005; 2008; Frost, Lightbody & Halabi, 2013; Maxwell, Foley, Taylor, & Burton, 2013). Community sport clubs like most organizations need to be strategic and systematic when tackling issues of general concerns such as gender equality. The study recommends adopting a widely accepted framework like that of the IOC (IOC, 2021b) is a wise path in the effort for sport organizations that want to be known for their ability to attract and retain all and sundry irrespective of their gender identity

To what extent are the principles of gender equality integrated into the activities of community sport clubs?

As seen in the result section, the participants only asserted that the community sport clubs through their activities reflect or demonstrates they gender equally driven, but we can ascertain certainly how the extent at which they their activities reflect the gender equality principle say specifically. Put in another way, although, as the results reveal, the activities of most community sport club in the region shows that they adopt most of the principles in the IOC framework. However, there is little evidence showing they adopt the framework systematically or that they are aware that the framework even exists in the first place. Again, this is not surprising as it is no news there is a huge knowledge gap or capacity issue or resources issues in many community or grassroots sport clubs (Elendu & Ogujiofor, 2012; Origi & Deya, 2019). Majority of managers or people in most of these community sport clubs are volunteers who may not be with prerequisite to apply or adopt these principles of gender and a wide enterprise level. As it is known, among the issues facing community and grass roots sports are those related to human capital shortage, the reason many community sport clubs adopt the services of volunteers (Elendu & Ogujiofor, 2012). But the reality is these volunteers most times lack the prerequisite knowledge and probably not aware of the principles of gender equalities, nondiscrimination and inclusion. There is the constant need

to train them and educate them to be fully equipped with the prerequisite knowledge, understanding robust gender equality principles within the field of sports so as to promote good gender equality practices through participation in sport. So, the call for volunteers into these sporting space by most sports administrators, should be supported by adequate training and education.

How do/can community sport clubs (better) integrate gender equality principles in their activities?

Aside the IOC framework of gender equality, inclusiveness and nondiscrimination, other frameworks gender equality and nondiscrimination and participation within the community sport clubs sector are available. One of the frameworks that community sport clubs could effectively use to facilitate and inhibit women more into community sport club setting is the social inclusion framework (Maxwell, Foley, Taylor, & Burton, 2013). This social inclusion framework in community sport clubs (Bailey, 2005; 2008; Maxwell, Foley, Taylor, & Burton, 2013) have different range of practices that could be considered as being totally inclusive. As observed, this social inclusion framework is one that most scholars stress on or focus on when talking about gender equality, inclusivity and nondiscrimination in community sport. The researcher is not aware of a study that have looked at or highlighted the possibility of community sport clubs to adopt the IOC's framework of inclusiveness, nondiscrimination, and gender equality. This is even after the IOC stress that smaller sport clubs can adopt the framework in their effort to promote equal gender participation and nondiscrimination in sports.

Why should community sport clubs adopt a robust framework? Adopting a robust framework to facility gender equality and equal participation, nondiscrimination and total inclusiveness in community sports participation is beneficial to all, and not only the obviously marginalized set of individuals. For example, in Maxwell, Foley, Taylor, & Burton (2013), it was found that practices that contributed to social inclusion for the marginalized set of women also resulted in inclusion for the nonmarginalized. Irrespective of the framework to be adopted to promote equal participation in sports, the researcher suggests it should be looked at from multiple perspectives, thoroughly analysing the

significance of the practices or principles to not just include and avoid discrimination of the marginalized but also the unmarginalized.

Discussions across the principles (resultative themes):

Inclusion

The participants feedback reveals the community sport clubs' activities reflect that they include and welcome all to participate irrespective of their gender identity. Inclusion being one of the core gender equality principles is in itself a broad term. A community sport clubs might think it is very inclusively driven, but in reality, it is not to all persons. Inclusion has different dimensions. One dimension of inclusion is with a focus on people with disabilities, to ensure that their participation is secured (Kiuppis, 2018). While most community sport clubs when talking about inclusion, or inclusive participations only pay attention to the gender side, they disregard or do not make or provide facilities for people with disability. Although inequality or discrimination on the basis of bodily appearance is not the focus, the body of women or girls is paid more attention to than their male counterpart. If you attract or stage community sport clubs programs for instance, for women, and disregard women with disability by not organizing a program for them, you cannot successfully convince everyone that you have kept the principle of inclusion. As the researcher has observed, many community sport clubs when talking about inclusion, pay little or no attention to women who are disabled, or who have other sexual identities. But then and again, as highlighted earlier, these community sport clubs lack the resources or capacity to fully deliver values to all set of persons (Misener & Doherty, 2009). One would expect that having athletes with disability would require getting volunteers who are willing to attend to these special needs athletes. Unfortunately, knowing that most of these community sport clubs rely on volunteers, it is extremely difficult to find the types of volunteers they need (Misener & Doherty, 2009). Notwithstanding, it would be encouraging to see these community sport clubs sourcing for more resources, managing their existing resources and facilities in a bid to include all and to ensure their activities reflect wide range inclusion that does not discriminate.

Also, another key dimension to the principle of inclusion is athletes' involvement or influence in decision making, for example, children should have rights in sports to influence

decisions that affect them (NIF, 2015). Children who participate in community sport clubs should have the right to express their opinions, and more importantly, their opinions should be considered. The structure and activities of a community sport clubs should make it possible for kids or athletes irrespective of their gender identities be able to influence decisions that affect them. In Norway, as mandated by Norges Idrettsforbund, every child who participates in (community) sporting activities should be given the opportunity to participate in planning sessions and should be able to execute their own ideas in sports activities with their sporting coaches and parents (NIF, 2015). Just as scholars have called for community sport clubs to build on their capacity to increase female participation in their activities (Hanlon, Millar, Doherty, & Craike, 2022), community sport clubs should Endeavor to expand their effort to be perceived as fully inclusive.

Prevention of harm

This principle suggests that community sport clubs' activities to all, irrespective of their genders, should be as safe as possible. Athletes' safety is paramount. With most community sport clubs mostly occupied with kids, care should be taken into consideration of the male and female body types and structures. Community sport clubs need to be in the know that boys by nature are physically built by nature to be stronger than girls, and as thus, they tend to like participating in rough, physically demanding, risky and violent sports or tasks than women (Young, White, & McTeer, 1994). But since community sport clubs promote participation in sports for all, effort should be taken by these community sport clubs in ensuring that both boys and girls participate in sport as safely as possible. The concept of playing sport in an intensely confrontational way or manner (Young, White, & McTeer, 1994) should not be their goal. Their goal is to make it as fun as possible and sporty as possible for better fitness and socialization. Thus, community sport clubs in their efforts to encourage equal participation should put the safety and wellbeing of their athletes (both boys and girls) into great consideration. Since injury is inevitable in sports, community sport clubs should have good first aid system and should look after their athletes if they are considered as being gender equal, inclusive and nondiscriminatory. No parent will be happy if his or her child comes back home life threatening injury all in the name of participation in sport. So in this case, safety first and primary, participation, staying fit and socializing is secondary. Even though the respondents stress the activities of community sport clubs reflect

this principle, community sport clubs are recommended to devote more efforts to demonstrating this principle.

Athletes' wellbeing is broad, while physical wellbeing is on the one side, mental and psychological wellbeing is another part to be considered (Macdougall, O'Halloran, Sherry, & Shields, 2016). While physical wellbeing can be easily addressed, though inevitable, one that has gotten most scholars talking is that of the mental or psychological wellbeing. Kids are still growing and developing, and as such, great care should be taken in ensuring that the environment of community sport clubs does not harm their emotional, mental, or psychological health. Although, community sport clubs or participation in community sport clubs' programs has been hailed to helping the mental health of adolescents (Hurley, Swann, Allen, Okely, & Vella, 2017), it would not be suppressing to see an environment that affects their mental wellbeing adversely. That is why care should be taken in the utterances of both their fellow athletes and coaches. Unacceptable or unwelcoming comments about their thoughts, looks, bodies, etc. should be avoided, this is because many could be bewitched by simple words (see, Lindsay, Pitt, & Thomas, 2014).

Non-discrimination

Discrimination in sport is a pressing topic both historically and contemporarily. In Collins (2013), discrimination in sports was highlighted both in the Olympics and during the Victorian British community. Although majority of the respondents assert community sport clubs in the region of Grunerlokka are nondiscriminatory, some still point out that they had or knew some persons (mostly nonlocals) who have suffered an act of discrimination while participating in community sporting activities. This is no surprise. Not surprising because according to research in sport, there is clear evidence that blacks (nonwhites) are more likely to be subjected to discrimination in sport (Frey & Eitzen, 1991). Aside people's colour or nationality, discrimination on the basis of gender is also an issue of great concern. Unfortunately, the priority that sport organizations placed in addressing issues of exclusion and discrimination experienced by people of uncommon gender variations such as the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, questioning/queer, and sexual/gender diverse). is still very low (Denison, Bevan & Jeanes, 2021).

This may be because the sport organizations are also guilty of these vices. Discrimination is an ethical issue and can be closely linked to racism. Even if a community sport club reflects through its activities all of the IOC's framework for gender equality, fairness and equal participation, should its managers be found wanting for discrimination, they can never be perceived to be a gender equally oriented organization. In the study of Cashmore & Cleland (2011), it was found that discrimination such as racism is evidence at the executive levels of sports. Their study also reports that some sport clubs' owners or board members deliberately discriminate, just as some sporting systems are suspected to have some form of institutional racism, that disregard blacks' (and probably, other people not white) capacity continually. To this end, community sport clubs' managers and volunteers are called to be as fair as possible and to be as un-racial as possible and nondiscriminatory as possible. The highlighted issues point that there is a form of resistance to stop discrimination in sport since discrimination also arise from those who are meant to address it. Sport management scholars are therefore charged with the responsibility of addressing the issue of resistance to end discrimination and to drive a change by simply and continuously conducting research with a focus of identifying the issues and proposing practical approaches to eradicate harmful discriminatory behaviors (Denison, Bevan & Jeanes, 2021). We are in a global world. So, it is not nice that nonlocals should be discriminated against within the sporting environment. All hands should be on deck in ensuring that this evil is brought to an end. Although, most sport clubs from the experience of the researcher try as much as possible to communicate that they are not discriminatory by word of mouth and by document.

Fairness

Fairness is not same as equality even though they are sometimes misconstrued as same (Legg, Wells, Newland, & Tanner, 2017). When asked the open-ended and closed-ended question about the level of fairness inherent in the community sport clubs and their activities in the region, the participants, all concurred that the activities reflect that they are fair. Looking through recent literature, the issue about fairness is trending around transgendered athletes (for example, see, Gleaves & Lehrbach, 2016; Parker, Hands, & Rose, 2022). This clearly suggest that in sports, people of sexual variations are still faced with stiffed inclusion challenge. Fairness is an ethical idea or concept (Gleaves & Lehrbach, 2016; Pawlenka, 2005). As an ethical idea or concept, community sport club is under the obligation to be fair

to all athletes, as this is vital to their overall stakeholders' perception. Community sport organization should be fair in every aspect of their operation.

According to Legg, Wells, Newland, & Tanner (2017), the term fairness, like equity should be broadly defined, adding that lack of fairness within or by a sport organization is more of detractor. Everyone within scope of the sport organization needs to be aware of the issue of fairness. There should be a campaign to educate people of the issue, recommendable. This way, it would be easier to stay in track when things are not going in the right direction. For the activities or programs of community sport clubs to reflect inclusion, gender equality, and nondiscrimination, the principle of fairness ought to be reflected as well.

No presumption of advantage

This principle to achieving inclusion stresses that kids or athletes should not be denied the right to participate. If at all they would be denied say as a result of their gender identity, status or appearance, it must be logically based on the data they provided of themselves. For example, an athlete who joined a community sport club as a boy, who has been participating in a male category, but one day chooses to participate with females, may likely be denied because the information the community sport club has present him as a male and not a female. Thus, in this case, it would be unfair to feature him with another category. Admittedly, this is a problem for most sport organizations, the reason scholars are still puzzling on how best to accommodate these set of individuals without trampling on their right to participate in sport (see, Buzuvis, 2021; Cunningham, Buzuvis & Mosier, 2018; Genel, 2017).

From the result, it seems most community sport clubs have not featured how to deal with these issues, as it seems participation in a category base on one's gender identity is heavily relying on the information the athlete provided at the inception of his or joining the club. Again, since most persons who participate in community sport clubs in the region are kids, it could be that the community sport clubs are not faced with this information. But like in the USA, where laws and policies are being put in place by the government to see how people with uncommon gender identifies can be accommodated to participate (Buzuvis, 2021), probably, Norway will, if they have not in some areas already.

Evidence-based approach

As one of the principles proposed by the IOC for sporting organizations striving to be perceived as gender equally, nondiscriminatory, inclusive and fair, community sport clubs need to adopt an evidence-based approach in their approach.

All sport organizations need to conduct research, as with through research can they be able to ascertain areas where they need to make adjustment, improvement or amendment. Given the never-ending call for women to participate in sports and the increasing call for sport organizations or the sporting world to be discrimination free, conducting research and making decisions driven by research a necessity. There are a number of areas that research is need. For example, Emmonds, Heyward & Jones (2019) stress practitioners in sports are aiming to apply evidence informed framework to optimizing the performance and well-being of the athletes.

Research could also influence other principal areas or principles such how to improve on inclusion, how to preserve athletes' privacy, and so on. Community sport clubs should allow their practices to evidence informed or driven, and one way to derive this is to rely on information or knowledge on existing and relevant literature (Emmonds, Heyward & Jones, 2019). Although literature even on elite female athletes is limited (Emmonds, Heyward & Jones, 2019), research on how to include female athletes and volunteers in community sport settings would probably be scarcer. But notwithstanding, community sport clubs should Endeavor to be driven more by research and getting updated by industry trends and not making decisions based on judgements. This scarcity or gaps in research will ultimately limit the ability to adopt evidence or research-based approach. According to Emmonds, Heyward & Jones (2019), "until a comparable applied sport science research evidence base is established in female athletes, evidence-informed approaches will remain a challenge for those working in female sport" (p. 1). It will be recommendable that community sport clubs combine the information or data they have, that is those supplied by their athletes with those gotten from the literature or research on how to be as inclusive and nondiscriminatory as possible in encouraging participation. With good research, they will be able to deal with the current issues of different gender variations and on how to get them to fairly participate in sports without being discriminated against. Asking questions and getting feedbacks from the stakeholders could be another source of primary data collection for their utility.

Primacy of health and bodily autonomy

This principle forbids athletes being forced or pushed to go for any surgical, bodily transformation. Although, majority of the respondents' feedback that community sport clubs in the region are not found wanting of this, this is an interesting topic given the current use and growing concern of advanced technology and surgical (use of biological drug consumption) to improve athletes performance (see, Hogle, 2005; Howe, 2011; Magdalinski, 2009).

Although, while kids participating in community sport clubs' activities are not expected to be involved in these controversies, it is worth stressing that there is a serious argument as to if performance enhancement technologies and other body transformation should be acceptable or not acceptable. On the general note, in sport, the use of certain performance-enhancing drugs (PED) is banned (Loland, 2018), suggesting some are not banned. Although some key players in the field of sport, for example, the president of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Antonio Samaranch, in 1998 opined that athletes should be allowed to use non-harmful performance enhancing drugs (Savulescu, Foddy & Clayton, 2004).

Irrespective of these controversies, kids or persons who participate in community sport should not be forced into taking performance induced drugs or going for any form of bodily transformation. They should not be shamed into thinking that their body needs some finetuning or adjustment. Those who are above the age of 18 who choose to undergo the improvement process on their own should as well not be challenged or bothered. For example, we can see males transforming to females and vice versa, and some choosing to be identified to a gender. These should not stop them from participating in their preferred community sports. Although, admittedly, this is a new problem in sport. Several studies have worried and thought about how they can be accommodated in sport (see, Cunningham, Buzuvis & Mosier, 2018; Genel, 2017). Already, some countries are already putting in place laws and policies to spice up their participation (Buzuvis, 2021). The goal is community sport club should not discriminate on the basis of this gender variation and should not propel people into it either. Natural participation and staying fit mantra and for socialization's sake should be the message to kids, though.

Stakeholder-centered approach

This is one of the principles for achieving gender equally oriented sport organizations as proposed by the IOC. From data, asked if community sport clubs within the region consider largely the interests of the stakeholders while making decisions that could impact them, the respondents have mixed reaction. Community sport clubs need to adopt a shareholder centered perspective while making decisions. A community sport club will be considered to be stakeholder-centered in their decision making if they take into serious consideration the interests of their stakeholders (the kids, volunteers, etc.) while making decisions that might affect or concern their stakeholders (Gordon, 2021). The management of community sport club in their effort to promote participation in their activities that are not based on gender discrimination must put the stakeholders in the center. Oftentimes, some organizations are seen to overlook the satisfaction of their customers (stakeholders as a group) when evaluating their performance (McDonald & Sherry, 2010). How can any organization claim it is inclusive and nondiscriminatory if its efforts are not channeled towards satisfying the customers? The athletes, kids, their parents, even volunteers will never perceive a community sport club as promoting inclusion, gender equality and nondiscrimination if the activities or structure of the community sport club does not reflect that they are shareholder-centrally driven.

The researcher thinks that community sport clubs should demonstrate this principle aloud. For example, issue pertaining to eligibility should be well communicated, possibility written down as a set of rules that the athletes, kids, or volunteers can always refer to. Their wellbeing should not be taken for granted. The concerned stakeholders need to see that all the community sport club have in mind is positively about them. Where changes need to be made in the facilities and the way things are being arranged or planned, the community sport clubs should rightly notify the kids, athletes, volunteers, or respectively, effect the changes for the good of their stakeholders. Where there is a complaint or conflict, they should immediately address or resolve the matter accordingly and should make it easier for dissatisfied persons to air their dissatisfaction.

Right to privacy

Gender equality goes beyond inclusion, but also includes an element 'right to privacy'. If you include all and do not discriminate, failing to preserve or secure your athletes right to privacy to present you as a sport club unworthy of being called nondiscriminatory. From the results revealed by the respondents, the community sport clubs do not abuse the right athletes right to privacy. But globally, this is an important element people do not joke with. Many athletes will run away from participating or involving in a sport club that is perceived to not keep people's privacy confidential. Right to privacy has been heavily linked or motioned to a part of human dignity (Wines & Fronmueller, 1999). The dignity of an athlete must not be trampled upon, as a important rule to non-discrimination. Both boys and girls should be given the respect of not intruding into their privacy, unless where their consents are given.

Since these community sport clubs are mostly dealing with the underaged (-18), efforts and care should be made by the managements, volunteers in charge of the community sport club' activities to get parental consents before intruding into their privacy. Community sport clubs like most schools would do could politely propose to parents to grant access to their kids' data (Jurak, et al., 2020). Parent and child permission is something community sport clubs' managers and volunteers should know and have on the tips of their fingers. There are policies in sports to protect children, and the chief factor to be considered before using photographs and videos portraying children is the need to get permission from parents and children when their pictures, sounds or videos are to be shared or revealed in public (Parasiz, Halici, & Şahin, 2021). So, community sport clubs should endeavour to apply the correct use of images, sounds, confidential details of their athletes (both underaged and those above 18). Parasiz, Halici, & Şahin (2021) even strongly recommend that all sports organizations need to create a photo (picture) and video and (sound) use approval form so as to get the consent obtained from both the child and the parent. Community sport clubs who fail to treat athletes' data confidentially cannot say that it is keeping to the principles of gender equality, inclusion and nondiscrimination.

Periodic reviews

Every future thinking organization with the stakeholders in mind should think about reviewing its structure where one exists to suit the need of the stakeholders. Although as retrieved from the respondents, who cannot say if the community sport clubs in the region of Grunnerlokka have a written down structure or eligibility criteria (on the basis of gender), or if they are systematic in adopting them. Community sport clubs are advised to have a well written process and eligibility criteria which their members or athletes can always refer to. The structure or eligibility criteria also needs to be reviewed since time changes and new changes call for necessary amendments to accommodate new developments. Where an eligibility criterion is lacking, it is expectedly difficult to be systematic in applying or adopting any criteria at all, other than to depend on personal judgement.

The uncertainty of the respondents in answering whether or not the community sport clubs review their structure periodically is an indication that there might not be any periodic review at all, unless when mandated by the higher authority to make some radical changes.

Many sport management scholars have recommended a complex system thinking approach, an approach that helps to understand sporting performance in various sporting contexts (see, Clacy, Goode, Sharman, Lovell, & Salmon, 2017; Cruickshank, Collins, & Minten, 2015; Hulme, et al., 2019; Sadjad & Mitchell, 2016). Community sport clubs can adopt the complex systems approach, using a cognitive work analysis to identifying key factors that could influence their overall performance as Hulme, et al. (2019) proposed. To be perceived as gender nondiscriminatory does not settle alone at being inclusive but having a structure and to periodically review the structure, taking into considerations of athletes' feedbacks is key. Looking at community sport clubs as a system will enable community sport clubs easily conduct overall review of their processes and activities. Scholars such Hulme & Finch (2015) and Kleiner, Hettinger, DeJoy, Huang, & Love (2015) have argued that sport organizations will benefit more greatly if they study the systems of sports as a whole and not evaluating it from its constituent parts in isolation. To this end, the review to be done by the community sport should not on the whole system and not solely on the individual parts.

6.0 Conclusion

Like every other sport organization, community sport organizations are faced with gender equality issues. The IOC through its 2021 framework have called and expected all sport organizations (community sport clubs being one of them) to ensure that their activities reflect good gender equality principles (IOC, 2021b). Adopting the principles in the IOC's 2021 framework as stressed in the study, the study addressed the following research questions:

Do community sport clubs integrate into their activities standard gender equality principles?

To what extent are the principles of gender equality integrated into the activities of community sport clubs?

How do/can community sport clubs (better) integrate gender equality principles in their activities?

With Grunerlokka, a populated municipality in Oslo, Norway chosen as the case and study area, the (exploitative) qualitative research method, with the online survey design tool was adopted in collecting the data or information from knowledgeable participants who participate in one form of community sport clubs activities. With the IOC calling on sport organizations (big or small) to ensure they integrate the gender equality principles in their activities, the study's main objective is to understand whether community sport clubs integrate good gender equality principles in their activities from the perspective of their members.

The results (feedback from the participants) revealed that community sport clubs within the Grunerlokka region do integrate good gender equality principles into their activities. And that their activities significantly (the extent) reflect all of the IOC's gender equality principles. The reason for this may be Norway's positions as a leading gender equally driven nation (high awareness and attention to gender issues). Even though it seems these community sport clubs may not be systematic in their adoption of the basic gender equality principles, strategically adopting and taking into considerations of the principles of gender will help the community sport clubs promote their gender equality goals and missions which will enable them to better attract and retain members.

Caplan & Parent (2017) stress that to solve such social, ecological and industrial problems, both genders must be considered by the decision makers and those to be affected by the decisions. To this end, community sport clubs rooting to be perceived as a gender equally driven sport organizations must be willing to install or integrate into its activities good gender equality principles.

Although the researcher is not aware of any scholarly work that has examined the activities of community sport clubs regards their adoption of the gender principles of the adopted IOC's 2021 framework and or how their activities reflect these gender equality principles, the study successfully opens that discussion and leaves the path open for other researchers to explore the topic. This is because the IOC is an important organization and has a branch in every nation.

Again, some of the limitations of the study is its adoption of the said IOC's framework. The researcher is not aware of other studies that have adopted the adopted 10 principles in the IOC framework and cannot state if the framework is inferior or produces a less robust outcomes. Other proven and effective frameworks, for example, the social inclusion framework (Bailey, 2005; 2008; Maxwell, Foley, Taylor, & Burton, 2013) could be combined with that of the IOC, which is in itself one of the principles of the IOC (inclusion). Another limitation is that the study only engages members or athletes but not the managers of community sport clubs. Future studies can conduct a large array of participants and maybe examine how the contents of community sport clubs on social media promote the inclusion of all genders.

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7.0 Appendix

Nettskjema Meny ☰

The form should be anonymous. [Show more](#)

Promoting gender equality through community sport participation

Do you reside in Grunerlokka community?

Yes

No

What gender do you identify yourself?

Male

Female

Other

Not to say

In which age range are you belonging to ?

18-25

26-35

36-45

above 65

<https://nettskjema.no/a/287462#/page/1> 1/14

Are there community sport clubs in your community?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

Are you a member of a community sport club ?

- yes
- No

If your answer is yes for the above question, how active are you ? (active member, non active member, or once participated) in community sport ?

Do you feel free to participate in the programs and activities of community sport ?

- yes
- No
- Choose not to say

In your opinion, how inclusive is your community sport club's activity when it comes to gender?

Does your community sport club assure or pay attention to the well-being of the athletes??

- Yes
- No
- I can not say

Are you aware of gender equality issues (in community sport clubs)?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

Which gender is more likely to suffer from gender discrimination?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- I do not know
- Can not say

Does your community sport club have eligibility criteria?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

What are the community sport clubs' activities you participate in/Which sports do you participate in?

Are there evidence of gender inequality in your preferred community sport clubs?

- Yes
- No
- I choose not to say

Have you or someone close to you suffer discrimination at your preferred community sport clubs on the basis of gender?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know
- I choose not to say

If your answer is yes for the above question, how did you know and how has that affected you or someone you know?

How can systematic gender inequality be curbed in community sport club?

Have you been denied participation based on unverified/stereotypical perception of competitive advantage based on your sexual identity, status or physical appearance?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

If your answer is yes for the question, kindly explain how

Does your sport club verify the genuineness of those they consider to be unfit or those with unfair advantage before excluding them base on their gender identity, status, or physical appearance?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

Can you explain how does your community sport club (eligibility criteria) ascertain and restrict certain gender category with unfair advantage to participate with a gender category

Have you or anyone you know been pressured by your community sport club to undergo unnecessary medical procedures (change of gender) just to meet their eligibility criteria?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

If your answer is yes for the above question, kindly explain how and why ?

Is there a process set by your sport club in combatting gender discrimination?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

If your answer is yes for the above question, kindly explain how and why

If your answer is NO for the above question, kindly explain why

Does your community sport club include athletes in their review or research in conducting the eligibility criteria that affect the athletes?

- yes
- No
- Can not say

If your answer is yes for the above question, kindly explain how and why

If your answer is NO for the above question, kindly explain why

Does your community sport club educate its managers and athletes to avoid medical attempt or embrace medical effort to meet their eligibility criteria (that can harm them)?

- yes
- No
- Can not say

If your answer is yes for the above question, kindly explain how and why

If your answer is NO for the above question, kindly explain why

Does your community sport club have a clear written eligibility criteria to participate that is gender driven?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

If your answer is yes for the above question, kindly explain how and why

If your answer is NO for the above question, kindly explain why

How does your community sport club identify and prevent negative impacts on its athletes' health and wellbeing?

Does your community sport club review and update its eligibility criteria based on your observation?

- Yes
- no
- Can not say

Does your sport club engage and use its members or athletes' input or views while making decisions that may affect them?

- Yes
- no
- Can not say

If your answer is yes for the above question, kindly explain how and why

If your answer is NO for the above question, kindly explain why

Does your sport club have an existing feedback mechanism to accommodate athletes concerns and grievances related to gender discrimination or eligibility?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

Does your sport organisation take the consents of its athletes prior to collecting and using their data or information?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

Is your sport club transparent in its decision-making processes regards athletes' eligibility geared at preserving their privacy, confidential health and other personal without their consents?

- yes
- No
- Can not say

Does your sport club's periodic review include the feedback of its participants?

- Yes
- No
- Can not say

Send

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7.1 Appendix

