



GEIN Educational Module

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**Designed to foster gender equality,
emotional intelligence,
and ethical conduct in sport**



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Educational Module

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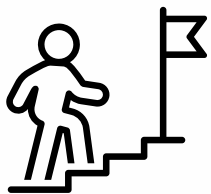
The GEIN Educational Module will be implemented within the Life Skills curriculum during the 2026–2027 academic year in two faculties: the Faculty of Movement Sciences and the Faculty of Physical Activity and Recreation. Together, these faculties enroll approximately 400 students annually (200 per faculty).

The Lessons are suitable to be applied in diverse contexts with young athletes under professional guidance.

The GEIN Educational Module is designed to foster gender equality, emotional intelligence, and ethical conduct in sport by engaging students in structured discussions and the analysis of real-life case studies.

It targets students in sports-related higher education programs, including prospective and practicing coaches as well as physical education teachers.

The primary learning objectives of the module include:



- Enhancing critical thinking regarding gender roles, interpersonal relationships, and power dynamics in sport.
- Developing conflict-resolution competencies, particularly in team and coaching contexts.
- Strengthening self-confidence and empathy, both intrapersonal and interpersonal.
- Promoting awareness of and resistance to gender stereotypes, discriminatory practices, and peer-pressure mechanisms within sporting environments.

Pedagogically, the module prioritizes interactive, discussion-based learning over purely theoretical instruction. Students are encouraged to examine complex, realistic scenarios and critically reflect on their own values, assumptions, and responses.

Each session incorporates authentic narratives from the sports domain—especially accounts highlighting the experiences of girls and women—to stimulate critical debate and deepen students' understanding of gendered dynamics in sport.

The module consists of seven sessions, each lasting two hours, during which students engage in structured discussions and present their analyses of the assigned case studies.



Lesson 1: What is this thing called gender?



Purpose: To understand the differences between sex and gender and reflect on how gender norms influence the lives and relationships of women and men

Materials: Flipchart paper, tape, and markers.

Recommended time: 90 minutes

Focus: Understanding gender as a social construct, distinct from biological sex.

Key Themes:

- Differences between sex (biological) and gender (social/cultural).
- How gender expectations shape sports participation.
- Discussion on stereotypes (e.g., “boys’ sports” vs. “girls’ sports”).
- Case studies: playground exclusion of girls from football; historical examples of women breaking barriers in sport (e.g., Roberta Gibb, Kathrine Switzer).

Goal: Encourage students to identify and challenge gender-based assumptions in sports.

The case studies mentioned here are selected by the mentors as illustrative examples from the media; however, each teacher should identify their own case studies when applying the material in different cultural contexts.

Lesson 1: What is this thing called gender?

Procedure:

1. **Preparation of Materials:** Divide a flipchart page into two columns by drawing a vertical line, or alternatively prepare two separate sheets of large paper.
2. **Labeling the Columns:** At the top of the first column, write “Woman.” At the top of the second column, write “Man.”
3. **Eliciting Associations for “Woman”:** Ask participants to generate words and phrases they associate with the concept of “being a woman.” Record all responses in the first column as they are expressed. Encourage participants to include both positive and negative characteristics, as well as social and biological attributes.
4. **Eliciting Associations for “Man”:** Repeat the process for the second column, asking participants to describe characteristics they associate with “being a man.”
5. **Review of Collected Characteristics:** Facilitate a brief review of the lists generated in both columns, inviting clarification or elaboration where necessary.
6. **Column Reversal Exercise:** Exchange the column labels (i.e., place “woman” above the list originally generated for men and vice versa). Ask participants to consider whether the characteristics listed for one gender could also be attributed to the other.
7. **Guided Discussion:** Using the questions below, guide a discussion on which characteristics participants believe are not applicable to both men and women, exploring the social, cultural, and biological assumptions underlying these distinctions. Emphasize that gender categories should not be understood as rigid or strictly dichotomous.



Lesson 1: What is this thing called gender?

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be a woman?
2. What does it mean to be a man?
3. Are men and women socialized in the same way? Why or why not?
4. Which characteristics attributed to women and men are socially valued as positive or negative?
5. What challenges might a woman face if she adopts characteristics traditionally associated with men?
6. What challenges might a man face if he adopts characteristics traditionally associated with women?
7. How do families and friends influence our beliefs about how women and men should look and behave?
8. Are boys and girls given the same toys during childhood? Why or why not?
9. How does the media (e.g., television, magazines, radio, digital platforms) influence our perceptions of gender roles and appearance norms?
10. Is there a relationship between gender and power? Please explain.
11. How do gendered expectations influence your daily life, relationships with family, and relationships with intimate partners?
12. In what ways can you challenge inequitable or restrictive expectations placed on men? In what ways can you challenge inequitable or restrictive expectations placed on women?
13. What insights have we gained from this activity, and how might these insights be applied to our own lives or relationships and in sport life?

Lesson 2:

Behavioral expectations and gendered conduct in sports



Purpose: To understand the behavioral expectations and gendered conducts in Sports

Materials: Flipchart paper, tape, and markers.

Recommended time: 90 minutes

Focus: Behavioral expectations and gendered conduct in sports

Key Themes:

1. Masculinity and femininity in sport performance

- How athleticism, aggression, grace, strength, or emotional expression are coded as “masculine” or “feminine.”

2. Social reactions to gender-nonconforming athletes

- Ways in which players are praised, criticized, or sanctioned when they behave outside traditional gender norms.

3. Interpretation of behavior in co-ed or gender-segregated sports settings

- How identical behaviors (e.g., assertiveness, physicality, emotionality) are judged differently based on the athlete’s gender.

4. Gender, legitimacy, and public criticism in elite sport

- How public discourse evaluates athletes’ “appropriateness,” “fairness,” or “authenticity,” often using gendered assumptions.

Lesson 2: Behavioral expectations and gendered conduct in sports

Case Studies

Primary Case Study: Boys vs. Girls in Handball

- Compare how similar actions (e.g., physical contact, competitiveness, emotional reactions) are interpreted differently depending on whether they are done by boys or girls.
- Analyze the language used by coaches, peers, and spectators: “aggressive,” “rough,” “over-emotional,” “not ladylike,” “hard-working,” “disciplined,” etc.
- Explore how expectations influence players’ behavior—do girls hold back to appear “appropriate”? Do boys feel pressure to act “tough”?

Alternative Case Study: 2024 Olympic Boxer Imane Khelif

- Examine the gendered criticism directed at Khelif and other women in combat sports.
- Discuss how media narratives question women's legitimacy, physicality, and “femininity,” and how this reflects broader anxieties around gender boundaries in sport.

The case studies mentioned here are selected by the mentors as illustrative examples from the media; however, each teacher should identify their own case studies when applying the material in different cultural contexts.

Procedure

Quick brainstorm: “What behaviors are considered acceptable or expected for women vs. men in sports?” Write answers on the board.

Short input: Instructor provides a brief explanation of how gender norms shape sports cultures (aggression, emotional display, leadership, tactical communication, etc.).

Case Study Group Work (30 min)

Students split into small groups. Half analyze the handball scenario. Half analyze the Imane Khelif case. Groups identify:

- Behaviors observed
- How they were interpreted
- Which interpretations are gendered
- Consequences for athletes

Presentations: Each group presents their findings.

Whole-Class Discussion: Guided by selected questions (see Section 5).

Reflection: Students write a short reflection: “How have gender expectations shaped my own experiences in sport?”

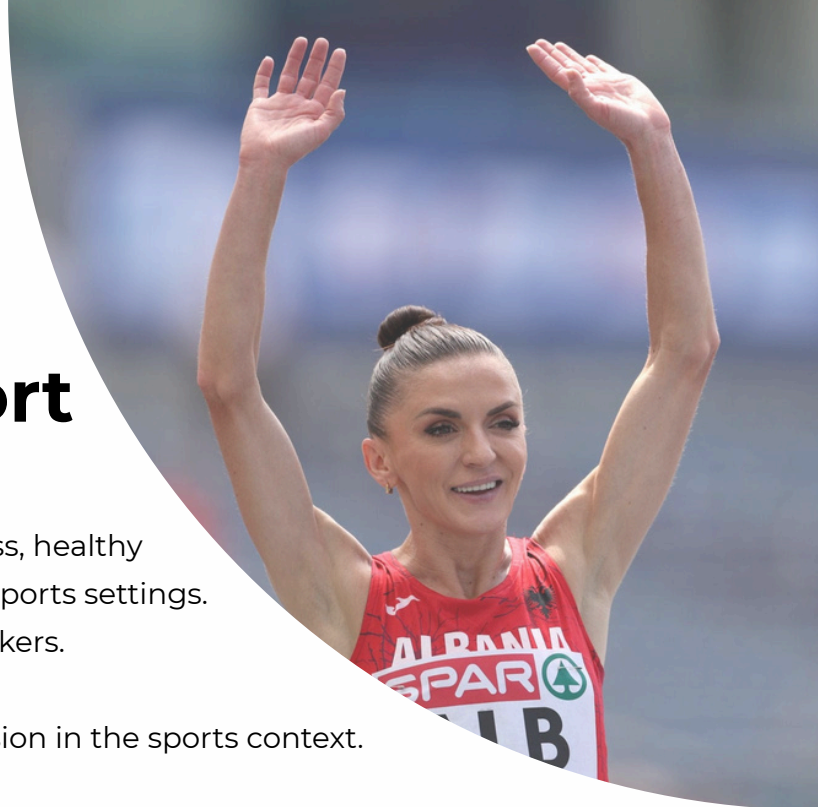
Lesson 2: Behavioral expectations and gendered conduct in sports

Discussion Questions:

1. What behaviors in sport are coded as “masculine” or “feminine”?
2. How do athletes who defy those expectations tend to be treated by coaches, teammates, officials, and spectators?
3. In the handball scenario, are boys’ and girls’ actions judged with the same standards? Why or why not?
4. How do media narratives shape our views of athletes who do not fit gender norms (e.g., Imane Khelif)?
5. What kinds of pressures do boys/men and girls/women experience to “perform” gender correctly in sports?
6. How do expectations about strength, emotional expression, or aggressiveness influence performance and participation?
7. What are the consequences—for confidence, inclusion, and career opportunities—when athletes are judged based on gendered norms?
8. How can coaches and educators create environments that do not rely on gendered assumptions?

Lesson 3:

Expressing my emotions in sport



Purpose: To develop emotional awareness, healthy expression, and emotional regulation in sports settings.

Materials: Flipchart paper, tape, and markers.

Recommended time: 90 minutes

Focus: Emotional awareness and expression in the sports context.

This lesson explores how athletes recognize, express, and manage emotions during training and competition.

It examines the cultural expectations around emotional expression—especially gendered differences—and how emotional intelligence influences performance, relationships, and well-being in sport.

Key Themes:

Identifying emotions shown in sport

How emotions such as frustration, excitement, disappointment, pride, fear, or joy are expressed during competition and training.

Gender differences in expressing emotions

How boys/men and girls/women may be encouraged—or discouraged—to show emotions (e.g., crying, anger, affection, nervousness) based on gender norms.

Emotional expression and authenticity in competition

Understanding when emotional expression supports performance and connection, and when athletes may feel pressure to hide or minimize feelings.

Case Study: Managing the emotional behavior of Maya

A struggling student-athlete who becomes overwhelmed during practice.

Includes examining how coaches and peers interpret her emotional reactions and how supportive responses can improve her participation and self-confidence.

Lesson 3: Expressing my emotions in sport

Case Studies

Primary Case Study: Maya, a Struggling Student-Athlete

Students analyze:

- What emotions Maya displays during training (e.g., frustration, sadness, embarrassment).
- How teammates and coaches interpret these emotions.
- Whether gender expectations (e.g., “girls cry more,” “athletes should be tough”) influence how her behavior is judged.
- What supportive strategies could help Maya regulate emotions and maintain motivation.

Alternative Case Examples (Optional)

- Athletes crying after competition results (wins or losses).
- Showing affection or physical closeness as team bonding.
- Emotional outbursts (anger, throwing equipment, yelling) and how these are judged differently based on gender.

The case studies mentioned here are selected by the mentors as illustrative examples from the media; however, each teacher should identify their own case studies when applying the material in different cultural contexts.

Procedure

Quick brainstorm: Prompt “*What emotions do athletes commonly experience, and how are they expected to show them?*” List responses on the board (e.g., anger, joy, fear, disappointment, pride).

Short input Instructor gives a brief explanation of:

- How emotions affect performance.
- How players learn (or are taught) to show or hide feelings.
- How gender influences social expectations about crying, affection, frustration, or confidence.

Case Study Group Work Students split into small groups. Half work on the Maya case study. Half analyze the alternative emotional-expression scenarios.

Groups identify:

- Emotions observed
- How they were interpreted
- How interpretations may be gendered
- Consequences for the athlete
- Strategies for healthy emotional regulation

Lesson 3: Expressing my emotions in sport

Discussion Questions:

1. What emotions are commonly displayed in sport, and how do athletes show them?
2. How are emotional expressions judged differently for boys/men vs. girls/women?
3. Why might an athlete hide emotions like sadness, fear, or frustration?
4. In Maya's case, how do gender expectations shape others' responses to her emotional reactions?
5. What does healthy emotional expression look like in a competitive environment?
6. How can emotional intelligence support performance, teamwork, and resilience?
7. How can coaches create an environment where all emotions are acknowledged and managed constructively?
8. What strategies help athletes regulate emotions during stressful moments?

Lesson 4:

A love story



Purpose: To understand how romantic relationships intersect with sports, and to explore their ethical, emotional, and professional implications.

Materials: Flipchart paper, tape, and markers.

Recommended time: 90 minutes

Focus: Romantic relationships in sports and their professional implications.

This lesson examines how love and partnership influence athletic performance, team dynamics, coaching relationships, and career decisions. It also explores gender expectations within relationships and how athletes navigate emotional and professional boundaries.

Key Themes:

Love and relationships in sports How romantic relationships form within sports environments—between athletes, athletes and coaches, or support staff—and how these relationships can influence performance, motivation, and team atmosphere.

Gender-based differences in balancing love, family, and career Exploring how women and men in sports face different expectations regarding partnership, career prioritization, parenthood, and emotional labor.

Case Study: Katinka Hosszú & Shane Tusup Analyzing the well-known partnership between swimmer Katinka Hosszú and her coach and former husband Shane Tusup:

- How their relationship influenced her career
- Power dynamics in coach-athlete relationships
- Emotional and ethical complexities
- Media portrayal and public expectations

Lesson 4: A love story

Case Studies

Primary Case Study: Katinka Hosszú & Shane Tusup

Students analyze:

- How their personal relationship benefited or complicated professional performance.
- The dynamics of a romantic relationship in a coach-athlete context.
- How public discourse judged their partnership.
- Gendered interpretations of ambition, control, and emotional intensity.
- What lessons can be learned about boundaries and support in high-pressure sports environments.

The case studies mentioned here are selected by the mentors as illustrative examples from the media; however, each teacher should identify their own case studies when applying the material in different cultural contexts.

Procedure

Quick brainstorm Prompt: *“What challenges and benefits can arise from being in a romantic relationship in the world of sports?”* List responses: distraction, support, stress, motivation, jealousy, media pressure, etc.

Short input Instructor provides brief input on:

- Power dynamics in coach–athlete relationships
- Impact of emotional closeness on decision-making
- Gender differences in expectations about career vs. family
- Professional boundaries and ethical considerations

Case Study Group Work Students split into groups. Half analyze the Hosszú–Tusup relationship. Half analyze another real or hypothetical sports-related love scenario.

Groups identify:

- Benefits and risks of the relationship
- How gender norms shape interpretations
- Emotional and ethical concerns
- Potential consequences for sport performance
- Healthy strategies for navigating such relationships

Presentations Groups present their analyses to the class.

Whole-Class Discussion Guided using the questions below.

Reflection Students write a reflection: *“How do relationships influence personal and professional growth? What boundaries are important in environments like sports?”*

Lesson 4: A love story

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the possible advantages and disadvantages of romantic relationships within sports teams or coach-athlete settings?
2. In the Hosszú–Tusup case, how did love and coaching intertwine—and what challenges emerged?
3. How do gender expectations influence how athletes' relationships are viewed by the public?
4. What ethical boundaries should exist in coach-athlete relationships?
5. How can athletes balance romantic life with the demands of training and competition?
6. How does emotional support—or conflict—affect performance?
7. What can sports organizations do to ensure healthy, respectful professional environments?

Lesson 5:

What is violence?

Purpose: To understand different forms of violence, their impact on individuals and sports communities, and strategies for prevention and reporting.

Materials: Flipchart paper, tape, and markers.

Recommended time: 90 minutes

Focus: Understanding and addressing violence in sports.

This lesson explores various forms of violence—physical, verbal, sexual, and psychological—and how they appear in sports settings. Students examine gender-based violence, power dynamics, and ethical concerns in both personal and group contexts, including hooliganism and abusive relationships.

Key Themes:

Types of violence: physical, verbal, and sexual

Understanding how violence appears in sports environments: aggression between players, abusive coaching, harassment, bullying, and unwanted physical or sexual contact.

Gender-based violence and reporting mechanisms

Exploring how gender influences vulnerability and responses to violence, and learning how to identify safe, confidential reporting pathways.

Case Study: Ana's story – psychological manipulation and control

A scenario focusing on emotional and psychological abuse within a relationship, highlighting subtle forms of coercion, control, and intimidation.

Fan violence (hooliganism) and its ethical implications

Examining how spectators' aggression affects athletes, communities, and the reputation of sport.



Lesson 5: What is violence?

Case Studies

Primary Case Study: Ana's Story Students analyze:

- The forms of psychological violence used against Ana (control, isolation, guilt, intimidation).
- Why emotional abuse can be harder to recognize.
- How gender expectations influence victims' willingness to seek help.
- Healthy vs. unhealthy relationship behaviors.
- How teammates, coaches, or peers can offer support.

Alternative Case Examples (Optional)

- Violent fan behavior leading to unsafe environments.
- Physical aggression during competitions beyond acceptable play.
- Sexual harassment by coaches, teammates, or staff.
- Verbal abuse used to "motivate" athletes.

The case studies mentioned here are selected by the mentors as illustrative examples from the media; however, each teacher should identify their own case studies when applying the material in different cultural contexts.

Procedure

Quick brainstorm (10 minutes) Prompt: "What do we consider violence, and where do we see it in sports?" Write student responses on the board (e.g., fights, threats, harassment, coercion, harmful coaching methods).

Short input Instructor gives a brief explanation of:

- Categories of violence (physical, verbal, sexual, psychological).
- Power dynamics in sports (coach-athlete, senior-junior players, fan groups).
- Gender-based risks and societal silence around abuse.
- Why reporting can be difficult and how institutions should respond.

(procedure continues)

Lesson 5: What is violence?

Procedure continues

Case Study Group Work

Students break into small groups. Half analyze Ana's psychological manipulation scenario. Half analyze another violence-related case (e.g., hooliganism, abuse in coaching, verbal harassment). Groups identify:

- The type(s) of violence
- Early warning signs
- Impact on the victim or community
- Barriers to reporting
- Prevention and support strategies

Presentations Each group presents their conclusions.

Whole-Class Discussion Facilitated using the questions in Section 5.

Reflection Students write a short reflection:

"How can I recognize harmful behavior, and what actions can I take to support safety in sports?"

Discussion Questions:

1. What forms of violence are most common in sports settings, and why?
2. How does gender influence vulnerability to violence or society's response to it?
3. In Ana's situation, what makes psychological violence difficult to identify or escape?
4. Why might victims hesitate to report abuse, and what systems should be in place to support them?
5. What responsibilities do coaches, teammates, and institutions have in preventing violence?
6. How does fan violence (hooliganism) affect the ethics and image of sport?
7. How can we create safer environments for athletes of all genders?

Lesson 6: A live fool or a dead hero – male honor



Purpose: To examine how the concept of honor influences male behavior in sports, particularly around aggression, pride, and risk-taking.

Materials: Flipchart paper, tape, and markers.

Recommended time: 90 minutes

Focus: The concept of honor and its impact on behavior, especially among men in sports.

This lesson explores traditional and modern ideas of “male honor,” how these expectations shape behavior in competitive environments, and why athletes or fans may respond strongly to perceived disrespect. Students analyze the connection between honor, aggression, and identity in sports culture.

Key Themes:

Traditional and modern views on honor

Comparing historic expectations of male bravery, toughness, and reputation with contemporary ideas around respect, integrity, and emotional regulation.

Honor-related aggression and risk-taking

How perceived challenges to masculinity or pride can provoke aggressive reactions, unsafe behavior, or retaliatory actions on or off the field.

Case study: football fan deception and reactions

Exploring a scenario in which fans are misled or provoked, examining emotional responses, crowd behavior, and the social value placed on loyalty and “standing up for one’s team.”

Famous cases of insult and retaliation (e.g., Zidane’s head-butt)

Analyzing how insults tied to identity, family, or pride can trigger extreme actions, and how public discourse interprets these behaviors.

Lesson 6: A live fool or a dead hero – male honor

Case Studies

Primary Case Study: Football Fan Deception and Reactions

Students analyze:

- How the deception occurred and why it provoked strong responses.
- What emotions (shame, anger, betrayal, embarrassment) were involved.
- How ideas of honor and loyalty shaped fans' reactions.
- Whether reactions were reasonable, ethical, or dangerous.
- How group identity amplifies emotional responses.

Alternative Case Examples (Optional)

- Zidane's 2006 World Cup head-butt and global debates on pride vs. professionalism.
- On-field fights resulting from insults or provocation.
- Male athletes taking unnecessary risks to "prove" toughness.
- Cultural expectations of men "defending their honor" in competition.

The case studies mentioned here are selected by the mentors as illustrative examples from the media; however, each teacher should identify their own case studies when applying the material in different cultural contexts.

Procedure

Quick brainstorm Prompt: "What does honor mean today, and how is it shown or defended in sport?"

Record responses such as bravery, reputation, loyalty, respect, standing up for oneself, refusing to back down.

Short input Instructor provides a brief explanation of:

- How honor has historically been linked to masculinity.
- The emotional implications of humiliation, disrespect, and provocation.
- How social groups reinforce expectations of toughness and retaliation.
- When appeals to honor become harmful or unethical in sports.

(procedure continues)

Lesson 6: A live fool or a dead hero – male honor

Procedure continues

Case Study Group Work

Students split into small groups. Half analyze the football fan deception case. Half analyze a famous honor-related incident (e.g., Zidane's reaction, a rivalry fight, or a risky play fueled by pride).

Groups identify:

- What triggered the event
- How honor was interpreted
- Who was expected to “defend” themselves
- Short- and long-term consequences
- Alternative responses grounded in emotional intelligence and ethics

Presentations Groups present their work to the class.

Whole-Class Discussion Guided by the questions below.

Reflection Students write a short reflection:

“How do expectations of masculinity influence reactions to conflict or disrespect in sports?”

Discussion Questions:

1. What does “honor” mean to athletes, fans, and sports cultures today?
2. Why might men feel pressured to defend their honor through aggression or retaliation?
3. In the football fan case, what emotions drove the reactions, and why?
4. How does the Zidane incident illustrate the intersection of pride, provocation, and ethics?
5. Are honor-based reactions ever justified? Where is the line between integrity and harmful aggression?
6. How do group dynamics (teams, fanbases, friends) shape ideas of male honor?
7. What healthier models of masculinity could replace harmful honor-based expectations?

Lesson 7:

What would I like to do with my life?

How am I influenced by others?



Purpose: To encourage self-awareness about personal goals and to understand how external influences shape identity, ambitions, and decision-making.

Materials: Flipchart paper, tape, and markers.

Recommended time: 90 minutes

Focus: Self-awareness, identity, and external influences on personal goals.

This lesson explores how gender expectations, social influences, and cultural norms shape the way students imagine their futures. It encourages students to reflect on their dreams and ambitions, and to recognize pressures or barriers—both internal and external—that may affect their choices.

Key Themes:

Female archetypes and modern equivalents

Exploring traditional cultural expectations of femininity (e.g., nurturer, homemaker, self-sacrificing) and comparing them with contemporary roles (e.g., athlete, leader, entrepreneur).

Reflection on how gender expectations shape life and career choices

How stereotypes influence what students believe they “should” or “should not” pursue—including academic interests, sports, careers, and life roles.

Influence of family, peers, and social media on ambitions

Looking at how approval, pressure, comparison, and exposure to online content impact self-confidence, goals, and identity development.

Case Study: Suzana’s struggle for family support

Examining a girl whose family discourages her from pursuing sport, exploring how cultural expectations and gender norms influence her opportunities and sense of autonomy.

Lesson 7: What would I like to do with my life?

How am I influenced by others?

Case Studies

Primary Case Study: Suzana, a Girl Who Wants to Pursue Sport

Students analyze:

- What Suzana wants for her life and career.
- How her family responds and why.
- How gender expectations (e.g., “sport is not for girls,” or “family duties first”) influence her situation.
- How peers, coaches, or teachers might respond differently.
- Supportive strategies that could empower Suzana to make self-directed decisions.

The case studies mentioned here are selected by the mentors as illustrative examples from the media; however, each teacher should identify their own case studies when applying the material in different cultural contexts.

Procedure

Quick brainstorm Prompt: *“What influences the choices we make about our future?”*

Students list ideas such as family expectations, talent, culture, fear, confidence, gender roles, opportunities, and media.

Short input Instructor briefly explains:

- How identity develops during adolescence.
- How gender norms influence what students feel encouraged or discouraged to do.
- What external pressures (family, peer groups, social media) can support or limit ambition.

(procedure continues)

Lesson 7: What would I like to do with my life?

How am I influenced by others?

Procedure continues

Case Study Group Work

Students split into small groups. Half work on the Suzana case study. Half examine an alternative scenario (social media influence, peer pressure, or family expectations). Groups identify:

- The main external influences affecting the character
- Which influences are gendered?
- How the character reacts
- Positive and negative consequences
- Strategies that support self-direction and confidence

Presentations Groups present their findings to the class.

Whole-Class Discussion Guided by selected discussion questions (see Section 5).

Reflection Students write a short reflection: *“What do I want from my future, and who influences my decisions?”*

Optional: Students identify which influences they want to keep, and which they want to challenge or resist.

Discussion Questions:

1. What factors shape our goals and ambitions the most—family, society, media, or personal interests?
2. How do gender expectations influence what boys/men and girls/women believe they can or should pursue?
3. In Suzana’s case, what pressures does she experience, and how do they affect her choices?
4. Which external influences do you find supportive? Which ones feel limiting?
5. How can students balance respect for family expectations with personal dreams?
6. How does social media shape your view of success, beauty, or the “right” path in life?
7. What does it mean to make a self-directed decision?
8. How can coaches, teachers, and peers help students build confidence in their own choices?

The module was designed in project GEIN, Female Sport Leaders Promoting Gender Independent Physical Activity, 101133827— ERASMUS-SPORT-2023-CB, with colleagues at UCLL, University College Leuven Limburg, from Belgium.

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