

Challenging paradigms: integrating Critical Feminist Service-Learning into Higher Education Physical Activity and Sport programs

Desafiando paradigmas: integrando el Aprendizaje-Servicio Crítico Feminista en programas de Actividad Física y Deporte en Educación Superior

*Nuria Cuenca-Soto, *María Luisa Santos-Pastor, **Oscar Chiva-Bartoll, *Luis Fernando Martínez-Muñoz
*Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (España), **Universitat Jaume I (España)

Abstract. Over the past decades, public policies have aimed to promote gender equality and a gender perspective in educational and research settings. However, Higher Education shows significant deficiencies in gender-related training in its curricula. This article aims to define the pedagogical model called Critical Feminist Service-Learning, presenting a series of keys that allow feminist theories to be applied in real-life contexts within the framework of Physical Activity and Sports. This model facilitates educational advancements through transformative approaches that prioritize gender equity and social justice. Focused on the teaching of Physical Activity and Sports, it explores the confluence of various feminist philosophies and theories in Service-Learning, aligning with the principles of feminist pedagogies. While recognizing the successes of this Service-Learning approach, a call is made for a text that consolidates and synthesizes this perspective, proposing a clear general model as described here. In contrast to the prevailing model, the traditional charity-oriented Service-Learning that predominates in educational institutions, Critical Feminist Service-Learning includes all participants as beneficiaries. It critiques hierarchical society, recognizes underrepresented groups and voices, moving away from structures that reinforce social orders and structural oppression. The advocated pedagogical model here offers a practical solution to promote gender equality and social justice in educational and research environments, specifically in the context of Physical Activity and Sports, promoting the use of transformative pedagogies in Higher Education.

Keywords: Service-Learning, critical feminist, physical activity, sport, physical education, gender perspective, feminism.

Resumen. En las últimas décadas, las políticas públicas han tenido como objetivo promover la igualdad de género y la perspectiva de género en los ámbitos educativos y de investigación. Sin embargo, la Educación Superior presenta en sus planes formativos fuertes carencias en materia de género. Este artículo tiene como objetivo definir el modelo pedagógico denominado Aprendizaje-Servicio Crítico Feminista, presentando una serie de claves que permitan conducir las teorías feministas que lo nutren a contextos de la vida real en el marco de la Actividad Física y el Deporte. Este modelo facilita avances educativos a través de enfoques transformadores que priorizan la equidad de género y la justicia social. Centrado en la enseñanza de la Actividad Física y el Deporte, explora la confluencia de diversas filosofías y teorías feministas en el Aprendizaje-Servicio, alineándose con los principios de las pedagogías feministas. Si bien se reconocen los éxitos de este enfoque de Aprendizaje-Servicio, se hace un llamado a un texto que aglutine y consolide esta perspectiva, proponiendo un modelo general como se describe aquí. En contraste con el modelo imperante, el Aprendizaje-Servicio tradicional orientado hacia fines caritativos que predomina en las instituciones educativas, el Aprendizaje-Servicio Crítico Feminista incluye como beneficiarias a todas las personas participantes. Critica una sociedad jerarquizada y reconoce a grupos y voces subrepresentados, alejándose de estructuras que refuerzan el orden social y opresión estructural. El modelo pedagógico abogado aquí ofrece una solución práctica para fomentar la igualdad de género y la justicia social en entornos educativos y de investigación, concretamente en el marco de la Actividad Física y el Deporte, promoviendo el uso de pedagogías transformadoras en la Educación Superior.

Palabras Clave: Aprendizaje-Servicio, feminismo crítico, actividad física, deporte, educación física, perspectiva de género, feminismo.

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Nuria Cuenca Soto
nuria.cuenca@uam.es

Introduction

In recent decades, there have been changes in regulations and public policies focusing on promoting gender equality in both education and research (European Commission, 2021; UNESCO, 2019). In the field of education, the focus has been on developing the potential and activism of all people, especially regarding the inclusion and active participation of girls and women in this domain, enabling them to realize their rights through high-quality universal education (UNESCO, 2019). These arguments held the promise that we would achieve the principles of effective equality and the incorporation of a gender perspective, ensuring gender-sensitive specific training (European Commission, 2021; Hannan, 2022). In this regard, Higher Education (HE) is seen as one of the foremost agents for this undertaking (Perriton et al., 2021).

However, this mission is not being fulfilled as expected, and there are significant deficiencies associated with incorporating the gender perspective in teacher training, curricula, and research activities (Kitta & Cardona-Moltó, 2022; Rosa & Clavero, 2022).

According to Díaz-Martínez & Dema-Moreno (2013), the gender perspective involves analyzing the surrounding reality from a critical feminist standpoint that reinforces the dedication to enacting change. Employing this perspective leads to a critical analysis of the social (political, economic, academic...) consequences stemming from power dynamics within genders. Conventionally, employing a binary approach, women have been subordinated to men, perpetuating a hierarchical structure (Serret-Bravo, 2008). Our discourse acknowledges gender as a social, historical, and cultural construct that shapes and pressures individuals to conform to what Butler (2011, p. 81), drawing upon

Luce Irigaray, aptly terms "the old dream of symmetry." It entails possessing a specific anatomy (female/woman and male/man) that relates to a binary cultural gender identity (female/feminine and male/masculine), further constrained by the imposition of compulsory heterosexuality. Moreover, this construct does not operate in isolation but intersects with other identity categories (age, race/ethnicity, social class, sex...) to exclude, marginalize, stereotype, and exert domination over individuals, particularly women, who are socially deemed different (Crenshaw, 1991). Incorporating this perspective into the educational framework would involve: (1) undertaking an in-depth and critical feminist review of curricular models, (2) proposing alternative pedagogical models, combining them with feminist and transformative pedagogies, and (3) reviewing all the curricular elements that make up the teaching–learning process (T-LP), among others (Granness & Kopf, 2019; Miske et al., 2010).

In accordance with these premises, HE has the possibility of opting for a transformative pedagogical model (Fitzpatrick & Enright, 2017) such as Critical Feminist Service-Learning (CFSL, Iverson & James, 2014). As Hauver & Iverson (2018) point out, its confluence and association with feminist principles and pedagogies make it an optimal model for adopting a gender perspective and applying critical feminist principles (Costa & Leong, 2012). It therefore has a positive impact on all the people and agents involved in these projects or training experiences (Clark-Taylor, 2017; Hinojosa-Alcalde & Soler-Prat, 2021). In contrast to the framework and presumed advantages associated with the traditional Service-Learning (SL), which this article challenges, the advocated CFSL does not have a solid theoretical–practical background. In fact, we are at an incipient stage (Freude et al., 2019; Vergés-Bosch et al., 2021), particularly in the teaching of Physical Activity and Sport (PAS, Capella-Peris et al., 2020; Chiva-Bartoll & Fernández-Rio, 2021; Maravé-Vivas et al., 2022).

The aim of this article is to define the pedagogical model known as CFSL, providing key elements that not only foster the incorporation of a gender perspective but also facilitate the practical application of the feminist theories that underpin it within the classroom and real-life contexts. Our intention is to enhance the education, training, and research related to how critical feminist models are used within an educational framework, thereby fostering environments that promote social justice and gender equity. Specifically, this study explores the integration of critical feminist theories into the pedagogical model of traditional SL. For this purpose, an in-depth review of relevant literature is conducted, aiming to endorse a set of guidelines whose outcome meets the necessary theoretical and practical requirements for implementing CFSL in the T-LP of PAS, with the potential to extrapolate to other areas.

Critical Service-Learning as a transformative pedagogy

One way of defining SL is as a structured form of

experiential education that involves student engagement in community-based activities to foster their development and learning, with reflection and reciprocity being essential components (Jacoby, 2009). This pedagogical model is known by different terms, including Service-Learning, Community-Based Service-Learning, Community Learning, Participatory Learning, or Cooperative Learning. However, some scholars within the field, have questioned the terminology used to characterize this approach. For instance, Plaxton-Moore (2021) argues that the term “Service-Learning” may carry a negative connotation, suggesting a focus on individuals primarily engaged in the learning aspect rather than those involved in the service component. Jacoby (2009) emphasizes that SL should promote activities related to activism and social engagement, learning from other people, from oneself and from the setting in which one participates. It enables one to learn and develop new perspectives on social issues, valuing diversity and building bridges based on difference. In turn, SL can help develop values, ethics, and empathy, as well as participation in the political process and contributing to social justice.

The fundamental basis of SL generically draws on various theoretical constructs (Chiva-Bartoll & Fernández-Rio, 2021) such as Dewey’s experiential learning (1938), Freire’s critical pedagogy (2015) and transformative pedagogy (Ukpokodu, 2009), which are mostly aligned with feminist pedagogies (Hauver & Iverson, 2018; Iverson & James, 2014). According to Wink’s classification (2005), SL would be categorized as a transformative pedagogy (also referred to as critical pedagogy), which connects the curriculum to students’ lives and fosters the creation of situations that can be analyzed to bring about social transformation (Fitzpatrick & Enright, 2017). Its overarching goal is to cultivate critical awareness and empower both students and professors. Additionally, it strives to promote activism and social justice (Ukpokodu, 2009).

These transformative pedagogies, rooted in liberal, critical, and democratic principles, lay the groundwork for the development of SL as an activist and transformative pedagogical model (Chiva-Bartoll & Fernández-Rio, 2021). However, assuming that this prevalent SL model in universities inherently generates positive outcomes for participants and/or the implementing institutions could be counterproductive (Clark-Taylor, 2017). Thus, it is necessary to deconstruct the existing traditional pedagogical models and cultivate alternative or transformative pedagogies (Molina-Arboleda, 2011).

In contrast to this traditional SL model, different authors point out the contributions of “Critical SL” (CSL), highlighting its emphasis on social justice (Rhoads, 1997), supports social change and public policies (Benigni-Cipolle, 2010). CSL also encourages its participants to become aware of reality, analyze their experiences, conduct actions that generate change in their context and incite other people to pursue the same transformation (Pompa, 2005). For her

part, Mitchell (2008) recognizes that CSL stands out because it pursues social change, favors a redistribution of power, and generates authentic relationships between participants. The components of CSL are presented in Figure 1.

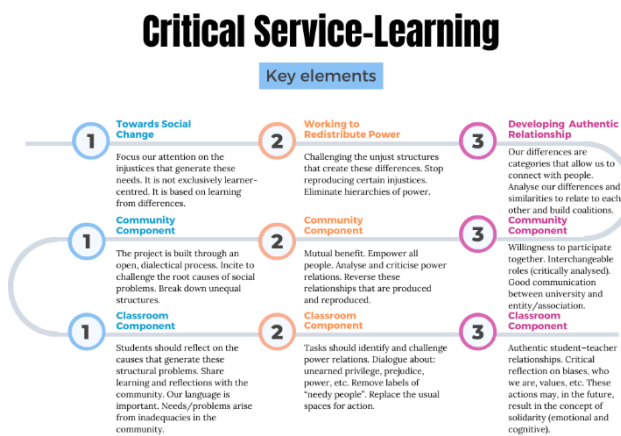


Figure 1. Key elements of Critical Service-Learning

Orienting CSL towards social change would mean focusing our attention on the injustices that generate needs, on those participating in CSL, as well as learning from the differences that characterize them. Redistributing power means challenging the structures that create these injustices. In this way, each person will have a different reality due to their gender, race, education, etc., which will serve to improve learning and stop reproducing situations of injustice. Finally, developing authentic relationships means taking advantage of differences and similarities to relate to one another, build coalitions, and strengthen interdependence.

Critical Feminist Service-Learning: the teaching-learning background

The combination of CSL with feminist theories and philosophies helps us define what CFSL entails, so we draw on Martin & Beese (2016, p. 228), who state that "SL can be a powerful pedagogical tool in a variety of contexts, but when paired with feminist pedagogy, it can transmit the power to transcend". This criterion is also vindicated in other studies (Hauver & Iverson, 2018; Iverson & James, 2014) that show the potential that CFSL can offer to PAS.

The first clear precedents of CFSL (Costa & Leong, 2012; Dugger & Neathery-Castro, 2008) explain how women's studies were the first disciplines to apply SL as a pedagogical model in their practices. Therefore, within the framework of gender and women's studies, CSL through a feminist lens seeks to comprehend how social inequalities and oppression are produced and proliferate, and to learn from this understanding how to challenge them, preventing subordination and the reproduction of a certain status quo among participants (Martin & Beese, 2016).

The theoretical basis of CFSL could include the influence of critical feminist theory, feminist, critical, experiential and liberatory pedagogies, as well as

intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991; David, 2019; Kesler-Gilbert, 2010; Martin & Beese, 2016). These theoretical foundations can bring a series of analytical resources and tools to traditional SL through the combination of their notions. In this regard, critical theory challenges assumptions and practices that oppress and discriminate, highlighting how differences and diversity obscure and marginalize people through behaviors that have been naturalized and universalized (Frost & Elichaff, 2014). Its confluence with feminism forms critical feminist theory, which seeks to problematize, criticize, and address these social forces that oppress diverse groups, with an emphasis on women and girls as they encounter specific problems due to their gender (Martin & Beese, 2016). Likewise, the intersectional perspective (Crenshaw, 1991) illustrates how certain identity categories (gender, class, race, and sexuality, among others) mark the lives of these people with the intention of showing how the consequence of their intersection (e.g., being black and a woman) leads to certain privileges or oppressions for people.

To address social justice and its intersection with CFSL, we draw upon the contributions of hooks (2000), who emphasizes the significance of developing new pedagogical forms and strategies grounded in care, gratitude, responsibility, commitment, and the amplification of underrepresented voices, advocating for the eradication of racism, classism, and sexism. According to this author, it is essential to actively challenge the existing inequalities and discriminations in classrooms, as education cannot be detached from social realities. These principles align closely with CFSL, a transformative model that offers opportunities to address and eliminate gender-based injustices and violence, while promoting gender equity and social justice within our communities.

For Korol (2007), critical feminist theory questions and reveals the partiality of certain assertions. It shows the close relationship between knowledge and power, identifies the situated nature of knowledge, and seeks to reconstruct epistemological foundations and methods that are reproduced in educational institutions and that mark people's lives and possibilities. The categories of sex, gender, expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation are identity elements that can shape or limit people's lives, especially in the educational context of PAS program (Fitzpatrick & Enright, 2017; Serra Payeras et al., 2019; Vilanova et al., 2022). From feminist and queer critical theories, there is a quest to analyze, question, and reconstruct these concepts. These philosophical and theoretical frameworks, based on authors such as Butler (1993) and Fausto-Sterling (2000), can be applied in our pedagogical practices with the aim of transcending conventional binaries. For instance, we strive to move beyond the biological sex dichotomy of male or female, recognizing the existence of individuals with differences in sexual development while also challenging socially imposed notions of masculinity/femininity and heterosexuality/homosexuality. This approach enables us

to progress towards understanding these categories as a diverse and continuous spectrum that enriches the human experience. In line with these words, Maceira-Ochoa (2007) states that feminist pedagogy places the focus of attention on the person, making their knowledge and powers part of the didactic process. It tries to eliminate their oppression through different resources, in such a way that socially accepted behaviors, norms and schemes are questioned and transgressed. According to this author, the aim of feminist pedagogy is individual and collective emancipation, as well as social transformation.

Given this underlying foundation, it is possible to visualize the theoretical framework that makes up CFSL, particularly the various feminist theories and philosophies that support it. In this context, Hauver & Iverson (2018) and Iverson & James (2014) aim to explore the benefits of applying a feminist perspective to community engagement, social action, and, consequently, to CFSL. These authors, starting with the definition of feminism, establish a robust framework that can serve as the basis for building our CFSL proposals. They provide a conceptual framework for understanding what community engagement approaches involve, such as: (1) Liberal Feminism, (2) Radical Feminism, (3) Multicultural Feminism, (4) Post-structural Feminism and (5) Cyberfeminism (Iverson and Hauver, 2014, pp. 10-27). Additionally, Hauver & Iverson (2018, pp. 97-118) demonstrate how various feminist pedagogies are integrated into this model. These include Liberal Feminist Pedagogy, Radical Feminist Pedagogy, Multicultural Pedagogy, and Post-structural Feminist Pedagogy. The exploration begins with a definition of feminist pedagogies. This conceptual and practical framework is integrated into our CFSL proposals within the AFD framework. Furthermore, we connect the principles of feminist pedagogies with those of the CSL approach, advancing toward the model advocated in this paper (CFSL, Frost & Elichao, 2014; Iverson & James, 2014). These principles are: 1) transforming teacher–student relations into non-hierarchical relationships; 2) creating community in the classroom and context, reflecting on the privileges and powers that exist; 3) assessing the validity of personal experiences for building knowledge; 4) empowering people and providing them with agency, using their knowledge to generate acts of solidarity to achieve social justice; and 5) challenging different traditional points of views and pedagogies (Crabtree et al., 2009; Webb et al., 2007). These principles could form the backbone of CFSL and are the ones that underpin our proposals in PAS.

Precedents of Critical Feminist Service-Learning: approaches that elicit support for it

The purpose of this section is to clarify the key elements of CFSL according to different studies. For its elaboration, an in-depth review was conducted throughout 2022 in various databases: Web of Science,

Scopus, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, Redib, and Dialnet.

The search strategy was based on the combination of key terms, such as "Critical Feminist Service Learning" OR "Service Learning" AND "Feminist" OR "Feminism" OR "Gender". Inclusion criteria were established, comprising: (1) the identification of relevant articles, chapters, or doctoral theses; (2) the availability of publications in English or Spanish; (3) unrestricted access to the selected documents; and (4) a focus on the Feminist Service-Learning approach in any research area. This search methodology enabled us to gather valuable information from previous works related to the topic addressed in this article, thus providing a solid foundation for the construction of the conceptual framework and the configuration of potential keys for a CFSL project, as detailed subsequently.

In the initial analysis, it is evident that the majority of the authors challenge the use of the term SL (Costa & Leong, 2012) and their criticism is that this terminology exacerbates SL's leaning towards a traditional charitable model, which reproduces hegemonic practices and is either exclusively learner-centered or is used as a methodology that serves and sorts out other people (Bojar, 2002; Clark-Taylor, 2017; Mitchell, 2008; Plaxton-Moore, 2021).

Despite this, CFSL is the focus of research in different disciplines such as gender and women's studies (Clark-Taylor, 2017; Martin & Beese, 2016; Williams & Ferber, 2008), sociology (Kesler-Gilbert, 2010; Freude et al., 2019; Vergés-Bosch et al., 2021), information and communication technologies (Marr, 2014; Villacampa-Morales et al., 2020), biology and health sciences (Brigidi & Birosta, 2020; Maicas et al., 2020), psychology (Quiroga-Garza, 2013), Early Childhood and Elementary Education teacher training (Jiménez-Millán et al., 2020; Plaxton-Moore, 2021; Téllez-Infantes et al., 2014) and PAS and Physical Education (PE) teacher education (Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021; Hinojosa-Alcalde & Soler-Prat, 2021), highlighting its training potential in different fields and contexts of action.

Specifically, this article focuses on SL in PAS (Chiva-Bartoll & Fernández-Río 2021), the results of which provide evidence of its transformative and activist potential for improving social justice and gender equity (Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2022; Santos-Pastor et al., 2020). However, research and outcomes under critical feminist connotations are still at an incipient stage (Clark-Taylor, 2017; Williams and Ferber, 2008), hence this lack of information (Chiva-Bartoll et al., 2021; Hinojosa-Alcalde & Soler-Prat, 2021). However, it can be affirmed that there is a body of research that supports and defends the potential of CFSL, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 shows studies on feminist SL, by author. It reflects the various arguments that these studies put forward regarding the contribution of CFSL. The analysis of all these aspects gives rise to a potential line of work on CFSL that highlights the importance of promoting it in HE.

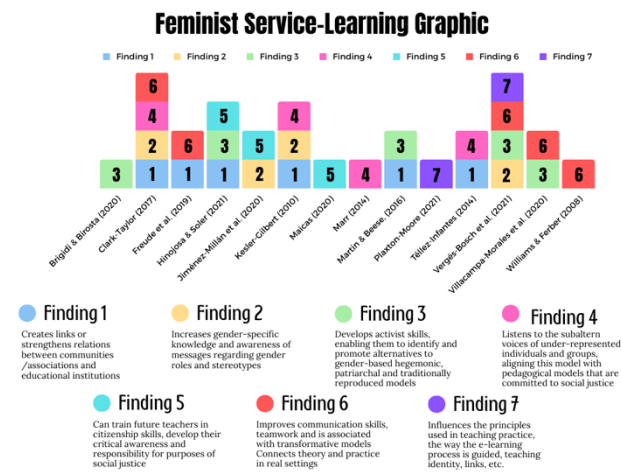


Figure 2. Feminist Service-Learning Research

Basic characteristics of Critical Feminist Service-Learning

The need to recognize CFSL as a methodology for introducing feminist theories brings us closer to the aim of this article: investigating the practical implications that different models of feminist SL have outlined in their previous works. The intention is to present the factors that we suggest are considered when designing a proposal of this nature, so that it can be used within projects in PAS or other areas.

Firstly, alignment of SL with the principles of feminist pedagogy (Costa & Leong, 2012; Hauver & Iverson, 2018), which should be considered from the very beginning of the proposal. Following these principles, Kesler-Gilbert (2010) urges us to ask questions linked to: (1) the construction of knowledge (whether it is supported by a single rationale or based on different fundamental ideas), (2) our position and identity with regard to social structures (whether they are critically analyzed), (3) the negotiation of power relations and responsibilities (in a project, in the classroom, working with other collectives, etc.).

This approach is supported by Hauver & Iverson (2018), who take these ideas further and include reflections on: (1) the establishment of power relations and the discourse of institutions (from which perspective –charitable, welfare or peer-to-peer– we approach collectives or whether, for example, the institution favors or rejects certain behaviors), (2) how (actions and strategies) we introduce awareness-raising in our projects with a gender focus (readings, debates, life stories, role playing, etc.), (3) the advancement of feminist social change, supporting this CFSL model in shaping our projects (building skills and agency for those involved), and (4) shaping our projects in such a way that they are characterized by personal responsibility, understanding and trust. Projects must ensure continuity over time, rather than being a one-off action. Reciprocal learning is essential, it involves avoiding an exclusive focus on students by defining objectives, achievements, and primary roles for all participating groups.

Along the same lines, Plaxton-Moore (2021) sets out

the critical feminist principles that guide teachers who are committed to this model, namely: 1) *analyzing the power of intersectionality* in order to realize how the experiences, relationships, academic practices, etc. between partners, professors, students or institutional dynamics shape our position; 2) *disrupting the status quo*, challenging dominant norms and systems that often limit our actions; 3) *respect for the community*, valuing different ways of understanding and knowing, engaging with pluralism, with other people or communities, etc., criticizing the narrow-mindedness that occurs in different institutions and perpetuates oppression and domination, 4) *mentoring*, referring to the people who inspired professors in their professional careers and how, through mentoring in projects, they can inspire students and/or participants.

Secondly, students should be prepared to collaborate with other people rather than spending their time volunteering for other people (Seethaler, 2014). Costa & Leong (2012) challenged the traditional view of SL and how it perpetuated the perception of individuals participating in service actions as people in need, and traditionally referred to them as recipients. They also rejected how it upheld compliance with certain behavioral norms associated with gender, race, class, etc.

For her part, Wiechman-Maybach (1996, p.232) puts forward an alternative model of SL, which includes modifying the nomenclature under which “service providers/recipients” are known. Instead, they are now referred to as “partners in service or community partners,” which can be translated as the people who collaborate in service activities. Similarly, the design of objectives, conditions, assessment, reflection, etc., are not only linked to the learners but also to their community partners.

Similarly, feminist SL models make it possible to link real-world concerns and connections with the curriculum (Hill, 2002), so it is extremely important to consider the context in which these experiences take place, their institutionalization and to avoid perpetuating inequitable structures (Balliet & Heffernan, 2000). Sources of power and control must also be recognized. For example, the use of language and of phrases and labels, which end up naturalizing and reproducing hegemonic practices (Deeley, 2014).

In this context, Webb et al. (2007) articulate compelling perspectives on the responsibilities and functions of professors overseeing such experiences. Without imposing specific ideologies, the authors delve into power dynamics, exploring the authority bestowed upon these educators by institutions. They advocate for the cultivation of empowering and activist environments, the strategic design of activities facilitating participants' identity formation, and the utilization of personal experiences to navigate challenges. The professors encourage introspection among students, prompting them to question their roles and empowering them to define their individual identities.

Similarly, the actions to be undertaken in these projects

are not exclusive of the role that professors and students play. Communities and partners are also essential elements. According to Tryon & Stoecker (2008), a minority of studies focus on the impact of projects on communities and partnerships. Therefore, efforts should focus on basic premises such as developing long-term projects, communication and the relationships that are established (community–university) and cultural competences and project management and assessment. These parameters should incorporate jointly agreed-upon standards that are mutually beneficial.

Within this framework, several studies (Eretzian-Smirles, 2011; Hinojosa-Alcalde & Soler-Prat, 2021; Vergés-Bosch et al., 2021) focus on the way the content of these projects is treated. Within the context of teaching PAS, this would involve making students reflect on gender roles, body image, personal identity, violence against women or listening to under-represented minorities. Another aspect is the treatment of different elements of the T-LP (contents, objectives, assessment, spaces, materials, etc.), which should be proposed from a critical feminist perspective. They emphasize that, regardless of the background of these projects, they must be analyzed and arranged under this approach. Otherwise, it could create a substantial gap in the impact of the projects (Clark-Taylor, 2017).

To conclude this section, we put forward the premises offered by Chiva-Bartoll & Fernández-Río (2021, pp.9-10), who present negotiable guidelines for developing critical SL projects: 1) they generate a connection with the curriculum; 2) they foster meaningful learning and real experiences; 3) they offer a high-quality program activities and listen to the voices of the community; 4) they show mutual association–university–student relationships; 5) they involve deep reflection; and 6) they act to empower their participants.

Key aspects of Critical Feminist Service-Learning in physical activity and sport

In this section, we outline key elements that could form a critical feminist approach in the field of PAS. In the current context of PAS, we are far from having egalitarian, non-sexist, critical, feminist spaces or adequate training associated with gender or feminist studies (Matus-Castillo et al., 2023). Since the 1990s, PAS has been the subject of numerous studies addressing gender-related concerns, as it represents a space where not only physical abilities are engaged, challenged, and questioned, but also the prevailing gender norms that are produced, reproduced, and sometimes, challenged (Bäckström, 2013; Chepyator-Thomson & Ennis, 1997). In this regard, PAS becomes an environment that rewards or punishes students, based on their bodies, genders, sexualities, ethnicities, religions, and other identity categories, placing them in marginalized or privileged positions (Öhman et al., 2014). This environment results from their alienation, exclusion, the predominance of competitive and aggressive activities, the

preponderance and overvaluation of attributes considered masculine (aggressive, tough, strong, heterosexual, skilled) at the expense of those considered feminine (cooperation, care, thinness, risk-taking disposition, weakness), the shame associated with the display of their bodies, the relationships that develop in these spaces, and, among other factors, the hegemony of prevailing models of teaching and sports content (Azzarito & Ketzew, 2010; Pringle, 2010).

Pursuing this line of thought, PAS is presented as an ideal scenario for adopting critical feminist approaches that are indispensable for offering high-quality universal education that develops the activism and potential of all people (UNESCO, 2019). It is proposed since, despite the efforts of various authors, PAS continues to be a place of marginalization and exclusion because of gender (Fitzpatrick, 2010; 2018). Professors have limited or no training from a gender or feminist perspective, and in their practices, hegemonic models, content, or behaviors continue to prevail, resulting in negative experiences of the PE space, particularly for girls and boys who do not adhere to hegemonic femininity or masculinity (Atkinson & Kehler, 2010).

For example, Fissette & Walton (2014) and Oliver & Kirk (2014) attempt to transform the oppressive practices experienced by girls in PE. These studies indicate, on one hand, the revaluation of values associated with femininity and, on the other hand, that not all girls conform to and are satisfied with transgressing the gender roles they are supposed to adopt (Hill, 2015; Walseth et al., 2017). Other studies address sexual orientation, noting that transmission or generative models in this area may also marginalize expressions of gender and sexuality (Fitzpatrick, 2010; McGlashan, 2013). Campbell et al. (2018) and Tischler & McCaughy (2011) claim that there are new constructs of what is seen as masculinity in the T-LP in PAS, as boys also experience this oppression. There is even a current line of research focusing on the experiences of oppression faced by trans people within this framework (Ferguson & Russel, 2023; Voss et al., 2023).

However, there is still a prevalence of certain ideologies or ways of acting (Fernández-Balboa & Muros, 2006), stereotyped role models (Hortigüela-Alcalá & Hernando-Garijo, 2018) and dominant discourses (Fernández-Balboa & Muros, 2006) because of gender. These acts focus on producing and reproducing gender norms, especially those linked to concepts of masculinity and femininity, rather than altering them (Fitzpatrick & Enright, 2017; Pérez-Enseñat & Moya-Mata, 2020; Sánchez-Álvarez et al., 2020).

Thus, the promotion of feminist pedagogies within this framework becomes necessary, as they bring us closer to the creation of these key elements. To identify these elements, we take as precedents the studies identified, which show the aspects or criteria on which this critical feminist model has an impact and/or reformulates. Therefore, our aim (Why, Figure 3) is to achieve educational goals in gender-related topics, to observe and

interpret the relations between people and possible sexist biases in education from a gender-sensitive viewpoint, to increase the competences of students and teaching staff in this area and to offer a fair and egalitarian options in PAS.

The representation of this goal (How?) consists of implementing this critical feminist model under the principles that characterize it (Hauver & Iverson, 2018; Plaxton-Moore, 2021). Its influence is evident in all individuals and entities participating in these projects, altering the roles they have traditionally played. Thus, the students take on a leading role from the very beginning of the project, intervening in all its phases, reflecting on the role they play and using their previous experiences to relate to each other as partners (Seethaler, 2014; Webb et al., 2007). The Professor/Teacher offers real experiences and meaningful learning, proposes rather than imposing, fosters horizontal relationships, reflects on the authority granted and increases their gender knowledge (Plaxton-Moore, 2021; Webb et al., 2007). The people from the Organizations/Associations become partners in service, the conditions of the service are designed from the outset by both parties, meaning that everyone learns, collaborates, proposes, and arranges it together (Tryon & Stoecker, 2008; Wiechman-Maybach, 1996). In CFSL context, particular attention is placed on addressing the needs of marginalized groups who experience vulnerability due to gender roles, gender stereotypes, and gender identities or sexual orientations. These groups include especially women (women facing social exclusion, women in situations of incarceration, homeless women), and other identities that are significantly impacted by these dynamics.

In turn, all the elements that make up the project and the components of the T-LP (reflection, roles, assessment, language, etc.) are analyzed and adapted under these critical-feminist premises (Eretzian-Smirles, 2011; Hinojosa-Alcalde & Soler-Prat, 2021; Vergés-Bosch et al., 2021). Elements such as recognition, achievement and monitoring of the program focus on the growth and empowerment of both parties (students and women we work with) and recognizing the activity conducted by its participants. Reflection, an essential element, is based on a systematic process that allows everyone to participate, analyze the origin, causes and actions to redress injustices, analyze the hierarchies that exist in institutions and examine relationships and prejudices.

Regarding the approach taken by the components: (1) Assessment, has a participative and formative nature and is designed to achieve the participants' objectives. The (2) Goal and (3) Contents are defined for organizations and participants, make it possible to increase training in this field and are achievable by all agents. (4) Inclusive and non-sexist language is used. The (5) Material and (6) Spaces are also arranged under this concept, making it possible to assess who occupies central spaces, where we conduct our practices and what impact it has, what strategies we use for distributing materials, etc. And finally, emphasis is placed on the (7) Roles and (8) Relationships that are established

in the project, trying to ensure that everyone plays a major and specific role, establishing horizontal relationships (collaborating *with* other people), etc. As a summary, Figure 3 shows the most important aspects of the components of a CFSL project on which we could reflect and use these guidelines.

Critical Feminist Service-Learning Keys

Why?	How?	Who is involved?	Students	Professors Teachers	Organizations -Associations
Reckoning with Systems + Meet Educational Goals Transformative options	CFSL Project on PASS + Critical Pedagogy Using Feminist Pedagogy Principles	All People & Agents Spaces of freedom & Empowerment	Involved in the entire project Reflects on their role + identity and experiences	Meaningful Learning Authentic Relationships + Doesn't impose	Naming: Partners in service Are involved in the terms and conditions
Reflection	Recognitions & Achievements	Program Monitoring	Teaching & Learning Components:	1. Assessment	2. Goals
Systematic process Origin, reasons & measures to address weakness	Reinforce mutual recognition Progress for both partners	Focused on Empowerment and Development Assesses continuity over time	Analysed and used under Critical Feminist Perspective	Designed for all participants Formative Assessment	Defined for all participants Clear and achievable
3. Contents	4. Language	5. Workspace	6. Materials	7. Roles	8. Relationship
Increase knowledge on gender issues Content free of gender bias	Inclusive language Addressing issues concerning the use	Where do we develop our practices? What are our strategies?	Who takes them first? What strategies do I have for the distribution?	Creation and design to be adopted All have a relevant role to play	What kind of relationships are established? Do our biases change?

Figure 3. Key Elements of Feminist Critical Service-Learning

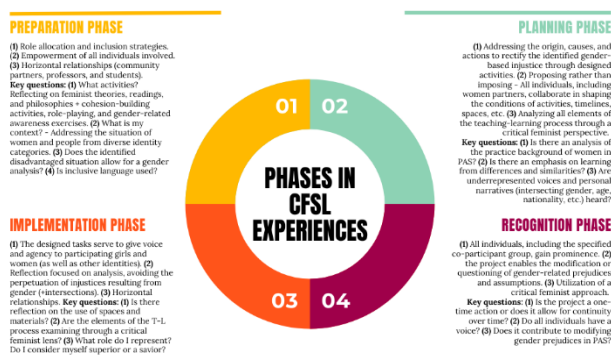


Figure 4. Critical Feminist Service-Learning in PAS program

This way, when working on CFSL projects or experiences within PAS programs, some significant elements could be considered. (A) Our purpose: (1) Integrate gender/feminist mainstreaming into the educational process, (2) use critical feminist pedagogies and philosophies, (3) promote transformative pedagogies, (4) listen to underrepresented voices in higher education, (5) and enhance gender-related skills. (B) To whom these proposals would be directed: (1) Community partners (including women and other groups affected by gender biases, stereotypes, gender performance, and identity) + organizations, (2) Students (undergraduates & pre-service teachers - adaptable to other educational contexts), (3) Professors. (C) Duration of the experiences: The project's timeline can vary from a semester-long to a year-long course, allowing for continuity over time. (D) Lastly, the key questions and measures that could be included in the phases or steps of these proposals. For this final consideration, Figure 4 is developed, which includes significant elements serving as a reference when developing

CFSL experiences in PAS. These phases are based on the proposal by Santos-Pastor et al. (2021), addressing the question: what to do or when to apply the key elements outlined above when developing CFSL experiences?

Conclusion and future research directions

The main objective of this article was to define the pedagogical model known as CFSL, providing a key element that not only fosters the incorporation of a gender perspective but also facilitates the practical application of the feminist theories that underpin it within the classroom and real-life contexts. This circumstance could advance the feminist agenda by promoting initiatives aimed at enhancing education, training, and research, linking these aspects with the utilization of pedagogical approaches, philosophies, and critical feminist theories that enable us promoting gender equality and social justice.

Our article provides evidence for the proposition that, despite its known advantages, continuing with the traditional SL, which prevails in HE, means following an approach that pursues charitable and/or welfare purposes, thus losing its true critical and transformative essence. Traditional SL can involve focusing exclusively on the students, making them a privileged class, reinforcing social hierarchies, undermining the true mission of the university, fostering structural oppression, etc. Therefore, this paper has explored the intersection between critical feminist theories in conjunction with SL and has proposed a possible theoretical–practical model of CFSL, particularly within the context of PAS.

Our findings show that the lines of research for several years have been calling for a critical approach and even go a step further by committing to feminist theories and pedagogies. CFSL benefits all the people and organizations involved, criticizes a hierarchical society of people “who save” and people who “need to be saved”, is in line with critical, feminist, and intersectional theories with the aim of recognizing under-represented groups and voices, as this model is deeply committed to social justice and gender equity. This is the discourse that CFSL adheres to within the framework of initial PAS training. The androcentric view of PAS (Granda-Vera et al., 2018) and the reproduction of hegemonic pedagogical models (Azzarito, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2018) have been rebuked by a body of research that aims to foster a T-LP that promotes social justice and is critical, feminist and closely related to transformation (Fitzpatrick & Enright, 2017).

This model has materialized into a set of key elements and questions that could be applied in the distinct phases of projects within the context of PAS (see Figures 3 and 4). In this way, projects will be redefined according to the basic criteria mentioned above (why, how, who is involved, see Figure 3). This set of criteria makes the proposal a relevant option to respond to the needs identified: (1) to move towards transformative models through CFSL, (2) to promote experiences that extend to other areas, (3) to address the lack of training of professors, students or

partners in gender or feminist perspective and theories, (4) to provide inclusive research frameworks that represent feminist research and, among others, (5) to achieve educational justice within the framework of education and research.

Regarding the challenges and limitations of the CFSL model, based on our connection with traditional SL: (1) it is worth noting that the number of identified works in our search is limited compared to the body of literature on conventional SL and CFSL. We have found only one study specifically focused on the PAS domain. (2) our findings indicate that while there is a theoretical framework supporting the described model (see Figure 2), it is characterized by partial approaches that primarily address the exposure, development, and impact of this model on its participants. However, we did not come across specific guidelines for successfully implementing these projects in diverse contexts and it is necessary to develop a text that thinks about, brings together and proposes a clear model of CFSL.

Once these projects are being implemented (1) it is crucial to ensure that the faculty delivering these projects receive gender-sensitive training; (2) the time available for project development may potentially limit its effects on participants, particularly in terms of fostering a critical consciousness concerning gender inequalities. This critical consciousness is especially relevant when working with women's collectives, as it is essential to provide them with the tools to analyze, critique, and actively contribute to improving their realities; (3) it is necessary to effectively translate gender analysis into concrete actions at all project phases, thereby raising awareness among individuals regarding the gender inequalities prevalent in our society. Moreover, it is crucial to analyze these inequalities from an intersectional standpoint.

Future studies should consider adopting a CFSL approach in their projects to explore the potential effects of gender analysis and other identity categories on all participants, including collaborating faculty, students, and community partners. This exploration should not be limited to our specific field of PAS but should extend to other areas as well. We strongly advocate for the significance of this model in PAS, as it has the capacity to challenge and modify behavioral, sexual, and gender norms (including roles and stereotypes). Additionally, it underscores the importance of promoting democratic, counter-hegemonic, social justice, and gender equality criteria within HE.

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