

Dr. Inês Varela-Silva, BSc, MSc, PhD, FHEA, FHBA, FRSA

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Work History

2014 – Present. Senior Lecturer in Human Biology | [Loughborough University](#), [SSEHS](#), UK. Research, Teaching, Enterprise, and Mentoring.

2007 – 2014. Lecturer in Human Biology | [Loughborough University](#), [SSEHS](#), UK. Research, Teaching, and Enterprise.

2000 – 2006. Assistant Research Scientist | [University of Michigan-Dearborn](#), USA. Research, and Teaching.

Education and Affiliations

2020-present: Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (UK).

2016-present: Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts (UK).

2014-present: Fellow of the Human Biology Association (USA).

2010-present: Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK).

2005 – 2006. Post-doctoral fellowship in Biological Anthropology. University of Michigan, USA. Behavioural, environmental, metabolic, and intergenerational components of early-life undernutrition leading to later overweight/obesity.

2002 – 2004. PhD Human Growth and Development. University of Lisbon (Faculty of Human Kinetics), Portugal. Dissertation: *Growth and health among Cape Verdean children in Lisbon*.

1994 – 1996. MSc Management of Educational Resources. University of Lisbon (Faculty of Human Kinetics), Portugal.

1986 – 1990. BSc Physical Activity, Health and Sports. University of Lisbon (Faculty of Human Kinetics), Portugal.

Research Funding (external - successful)

- 30 July 2019 – 30 July 2020. **Co-Principal Investigator.** Royal Academy of Engineering – Frontiers of Development – Tranche 2: *Communities' languages, identities and belonging in participatory health care interventions*. (PI: Dr Sabine Little – University of Sheffield). **£11,120.**
- April 2019 – March 2022. **Co-Principal Investigator.** MRC – Medical Research Council. UK - Peru: Relationship between food, Nutrition & Health 2018. Population & Systems Medicine Board. Nutrition and obesity. *New strategies to reduce anaemia and risk of overweight and obesity through complementary feeding of infants and young children in Peru*. (PI: Dr Emily Rousham – Loughborough University). **£ 573,090.**
- June 2015. **Co-Principal Investigator.** The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. *Quantifying healthy birth, growth and development knowledge integration*. **£136,332.**

- May 2015. **Principal Investigator**. Mexican Academy of Sciences/Royal Society - Newton Fund. *Nutrition and exercise for health – setting up a laboratory at CINVESTAV, Merida, Mexico.* **£4,000.**
- November 2009. **Principal investigator**. The Wenner-Gren Foundation ICRG-93. *Nutritional status and health outcomes in a dual-burden population of Maya in Yucatan.* **\$31,890** (US dollars).
- September 2008. **Co-investigator**. Foundation for Science and Technology, Portugal. Trends and predictors in childhood obesity in Portugal. Changes from 2002 to 2008. **€198,523** (Euros).
- May 2006. **Principal investigator**. The Michigan Campus Compact Venture. *Promotion of “Body and Mind Days” in Southwest Detroit.* **\$2,500** (US dollars).
- May 2005. **Co-investigator**. Yucatan Cultural Foundation. *Short term visit to the Yucatan Peninsula - Maya communities.* **\$3,000** (US dollars).
- September 2004. **Co-investigator**. United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. *Community Outreach Partnership Center for Southwest Detroit (Subcommittee for Education).* **\$400,000** (US dollars).

Research Funding (external submitted, decision pending)

- October 2020. **Principal investigator**. MRC-Applied Global Research Health Board Outline. *Exploring the impact of bilingualism and information/technological competencies on the dual-burden of malnutrition in Yucatan, in the time of Covid19.* **£898,000.**

Research Funding (internal - successful)

- 20 November 2019 – 31 August 2020. **Principal Investigator**. Cross Calibre ODA Seedcorn 2019-20. *Establishing a cross-disciplinary and geographical Partnership to Explore the Challenges and Opportunities to Address the Double Burden of Malnutrition in Children and Adolescents in Ecuador* (**£5,000**).
- 5 November 2019 – 31 July 2020. **Principal investigator**. Institute for Advanced Studies (Loughborough University). *Festival of Ideas – Transitions.* **£30,000.**
- 14 January 2020 – 31 July 2020. **Principal Investigator**. The Enterprise Projects Group (EPG) – Loughborough University. *Cards for Health. Empowering Maya children to take action on health outcomes and be the agents of change within their homes and communities*. In partnership with [Children for Health \(Registered Charity 1153028\)](#). **£5,000.**
- December 2018. **Travel grant**. Santander Universities. Research travel to Yucatan, Mexico (19-30 January 2019). **£1,500.**
- April 2018. **Travel grant**. School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences Award. Human Biology Association Annual Meeting and at the American Association of Physical Anthropologists. **£1,050.**

Publications – Research Papers (last 5 years)

- Azcorra H, **Varela-Silva MI**, Dickinson F (2020). Birth weight and body composition in 6-8 years old Maya children. *American Journal of Human Biology* (in press).
- Azcorra H, Bogin B, Dickinson F, **Varela-Silva MI** (2020). Maternal grandmothers' proximity and children's growth and body composition are not related in urban Maya families from Yucatan" *Human Nature*. (In press).
- Keestra S, Bentley G, Núñez-de la Mora A, Houghton L, Wilson H, Vazquez-Vazquez A, Cooper G, Dickinson F, Bogin B, Griffiths P, **Varela-Silva, MI** (2020). The timing of adrenarche in Maya girls in Merida, Mexico. *American Journal of Human Biology* (<https://doi.org/10.1002/ajhb.23465>)
- Sanchez-Escobedo S, Azcorra H, Bogin B, Hoogesteyn A, Sámano Reyna, **Varela-Silva MI**, Dickinson F (2020). Birth weight, birth order, and age at first food introduction influence child growth and body composition in 6 to 8-year-old Maya children: the importance of the first 1000 days of life. *American Journal of Human Biology*. (Published on Early View on 27 Jan 2020). SNIP: 0.91; SJR: 0.736.
- Azcorra H, Cauich-Viñas P, Rodriguez L, Datta Banik S, **Varela-Silva MI**, Dickinson F (2019). Overweight and obesity among urban Maya mother-child dyads from Yucatan, Mexico. *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*. (Submitted on 16 Dec 2018. Revised on 16 Jan 2019, accepted 19 March 2019). SNIP:0.83; SJR: 0.768.
- Vazquez-Gomez A, Avila-Escalante MI, Azcorra H, **Varela-Silva, MI**, Dickinson F. (2019) Body proportionality and adiposity are not related in 6 to 8-year-old Yucatec Maya children. *American Journal of Human Biology*. (Submitted on 4 Sep 2018. Revised on 7 Feb 2019 and accepted for publication following minor corrections). SNIP: 0.91; SJR: 0.736.
- Azcorra H, Datta Banik S, Bogin B, **Varela-Silva MI**, Dickinson F (2019). Caesarean birth and adiposity parameters in 6-to 8-year-old urban Maya children from two cities of Yucatan, Mexico. *American Journal of Human Biology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajhb.23217>. Submitted on 18 Apr 2018, Revised on 10 Dec 2018, Accepted on 29 Dec 2018, Published online 1 Feb 2019. SNIP: 0.91; SJR: 0.736.
- Dickinson F, Azcorra H, Datta Banik S, Valentín G, Bogin B, and **Varela-Silva MI** (2018) ¿Hijo de tigre, pintito? Algunos efectos intergeneracionales sobre la talla y el peso en niños mayas yucatecos. *Entrediversidades* enero-junio:189-208.
- Söğüt M, Altunsoy K, **Varela-Silva MI** (2018). Associations between anthropometric indicators of adiposity and body fat percentage in normal weight young adults. *Anthropological Review*, 81(2), 174-181. <https://doi.org/10.2478/anre-2018-0015> (Submitted on 12 Mar 2018, Revised on May 14 2018, Accepted on May 16 2018, Published online on 3 Jul 2018). SNIP: 0.439, SJR: 0.282.
- Azcorra H, Rodriguez L, Datta Banik S, Bogin B, Dickinson F, **Varela-Silva MI** (2017). Living conditions and change in age of menarche in adult Maya mothers and daughters from Yucatan, Mexico. *American Journal of Human Biology*. Published online on Early View on 27 November 2018.
- Andre A, Padez C, Rosado-Marques V, Griffiths P, and **Varela-Silva MI** (2016). Growing up in Portugal: Cape Verdean ancestry children exhibit low overweight and obesity compared with Portuguese in urban Lisbon. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002193201600069>

- **Varela-Silva MI**, Bogin B, Galvez Sobral JA, Dickinson F, Monserrat-Revilla S, and the Healthy Birth, Growth, and Development - Knowledge Integration (HBGDki) initiative (2016). Deep data science to prevent and treat growth faltering in Maya children. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Advance Online Publication. DOI: 10.1038/ejcn.2016.63
- **Varela-Silva MI**, Santinho C (2016). Human Biology of Poverty. *Annals of Human Biology*, 43 (2), 99-101.
- Azcorra H, Rodriguez L, **Varela-Silva MI**, Datta Banik S, Dickinson F (2015). Intergenerational changes in knee height among Maya mothers and their adult daughters from Merida, Mexico. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 27 (6), 792-797. First published online: 19 JUN 2015. DOI: 10.1002/ajhb.22752
- Azcorra H, Dickinson F, Bogin B, Rodriguez L, **Varela-Silva MI** (2015). Intergenerational influences on the growth of Maya children: The effect of living conditions experienced by mothers and maternal grandmothers during their childhood. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 27 (4), 494-500. DOI: 10.1002/ajhb.22675

Publications – Book Chapters and Encyclopaedia Entries

- **Varela-Silva MI**, Sanchez S, Dickinson F, Bogin B, Azcorra H (2020). Growth stunting in the Yucatan Peninsula. Chapter 4. In *Environment and Health in the Yucatan Peninsula. A Human Ecology Perspective* (Federico Dickinson and Hugo Azcorra Eds). Springer Books.
- Bogin B, Azcorra H, Ávila-Escalante ML, Castillo-Burguete MT, **Varela-Silva MI**, Dickinson F (2020). Globalization and Children's Diets: The Case of Yucatan, Mexico. Chapter 3. In *Environment and Health in the Yucatan Peninsula. A Human Ecology Perspective* (Federico Dickinson and Hugo Azcorra Eds). Springer Books.
- Azcorra H, Bogin B, **Varela-Silva MI**, Dickinson F (2020). The Urban Maya from Yucatan: Dealing with the Biological Burden of the Past and a Degenerative Present. Chapter 5. In *Environment and Health in the Yucatan Peninsula. A Human Ecology Perspective* (Federico Dickinson and Hugo Azcorra Eds). Springer Books.
- Bogin B, Dickinson F, Azcorra H, Balam D, Richardson S, Castillo-Burguete MT, **Varela-Silva MI** (2018). Nutritional Ecology. In *International Encyclopedia of Anthropology* (in production).
- Bogin B, **Varela-Silva MI** (2015). The Maya Project: A mirror of human growth in biocultural perspective. In Sikdar, M (ed). *Human Growth. The Mirror of the Society*. Publishing Corporation, Delhi.

PhD Examinations

- 2020.07.16. External Examiner. Christian Ngandu (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa). **"Association between socioeconomic status with birth outcomes and infant under nutrition in the first two years of life. Case studies in South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo"**. Supervisors: Dr Shane Norris and Dr Rihlat Said Mohamed.
- 2018.05.14. External Examiner. Stephanie Bispo (University of Southampton, Faculty of Social, Human and Mathematical Sciences, Department of Social Statistics and Demography). **"Exploring the links between women's work and child nutritional**

status in rapidly developing economies: the cases of Brazil and India". Internal examiner: Prof Sabu Padmadas. Supervisor: Dr Amos Channon.

- 2017.03.23. External Examiner. Amir Emadian (University of Birmingham, School of Sport, Exercise, and Rehabilitation Sciences). **"A mixed-methods examination of the dietary and physical activity characteristics of overweight and obese South Asian men living in the UK"**. Internal examiner: Dr Tania Griffin. Supervisor: Professor Janice Thomson.
- 2017.03.01. External Examiner. Rasha Alfawaz (University of Leeds, School of Medicine). **"Exploring the relationship between metabolic syndrome and sleep amongst adults in the UK"**. Internal examiner: Professor Mark Gilthorpe. Supervisor: Dr George Ellison.
- 2017.01.27. Internal Examiner. Clarice Lim. **"Parental influences on Adolescents' Physical Activity: a Singaporean Perspective"**. External examiner: Dr Andrew Atkin, University of East Anglia, UK. Supervisor: Dr Lauren Sherar
- 2016.09.29. Internal Examiner. Ishrat Islam. **"The effects of a community-led physical activity intervention on physical performance of Bangladeshi women"**. External examiner: Prof Janice Thomson, Birmingham University, UK. Supervisors: Professor Barry Bogin and Dr Fehmidah Munir.
- 2015.12.15. Internal Examiner. Maedah Mansoubi, **"Sedentary behaviour and physical activity on adults: measurement and behaviour change"**. External Examiner: Prof John Buckley, University of Chester. Supervisor: Dr Stacy Clemes
- 2013.12.11. External Examiner. Conrad Brimacombe (University of Sheffield), **"Growth and development on the Genus Pan"**. Internal Examiner: Dr Umberto Allbarela. Supervisor: Dr Kevin Kuykendall.
- 2011.06.30. Internal Examiner. Joelma Almeida. **"Parental investment in growth and development: Cape Verdean migrants in a Portuguese poor neighbourhood"**. External Examiner: Prof Jonathan Wells, Institutional Research Information Service, UCL, UK. Supervisor: Professor Barry Bogin.

Memberships and Fellowships

- **2017-2020**: Member of the Executive Committee of the Society for the Study of Human Biology (UK).
- **2018-present**: Professional membership: Society for the Study of Human Biology (UK).
- **2018-2019**: Professional membership: Royal Society of Biology (UK).
- **2010-2018**: Professional membership: Auxological Society (Germany).
- **2007-present**: Professional membership - Society for the Study of Human Biology (UK).
- **2005-present**: Professional membership - American Association of Physical Anthropologists (USA).

PhD Supervisions

2015-2020

- Susan Ako, MPhil/PhD. The role of gender in primary health care in Nigeria (co-supervised by Dr Emily Rousham).

2013-2020

- Hankook Kim, MPhil/PhD. Fat patterning and body proportions among children and parents: effects of socioeconomic status, living conditions and energy expenditure (co-supervised by Dr Emily Petherick). Proposal Number: R14-P102.
- Emmanuel Assasie, MPhil/PhD. Physical inactivity, lifestyle behaviours, nutritional transition and the onset of hypertension and type-2 diabetes among Ghanaian young adults (co-supervised by Prof Paula Griffiths).

2012-2017

- Ana Lúcia André, MPhil/PhD. Intergenerational and metabolic factors affecting the health of Cape Verdean migrant families in Lisbon, Portugal (co-supervised by Prof Paula Griffiths).

2010-2013

- Hugo Azcorra-Perez, (PhD awarded in July 2014). Intergenerational factors that shape the nutritional status of urban Maya households in Merida, Mexico. A 3-generations' study.

2009-2012

- Ana Wilson, (PhD awarded in December 2012). Health indicators in double burdened Maya children and mothers (co-supervised by Dr Paula Griffiths).

PhD Supervisions (External/International)

2016-17

- Ana Ruiz Marina. Valoración del crecimiento y desarrollo de los escolares de entre 3 y 12 años, para la detección temprana de indicadores de programación fetal. Main supervisor Prof Esperanza Gutiérrez Redomero, Profesora Titular, Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, Madrid, Spain).

Awards and Esteem

- 2017. WINNER: Equality and Diversity Action Group (EDAG) Award 2017. Engaging in equality and diversity activities for the benefit of staff and students.
- 2016. WINNER: Extra Mile Awards 2016. SSEHS, Loughborough University.
- Marathon Award - Demonstrating a sustained and exceptional contribution to the School.
- 2015 WINNER: Extra Mile Awards 2015. SSEHS, Loughborough University. Representing Women in Science Award 2015.
- 2015. NOMINATION: Loughborough University Teaching Awards 2015 (21 May 2015). Personal Tutor of the Year.
- 2014. HIGHLY COMMENDED: Loughborough University Enterprise Awards 2014 (21 April 2014). International Impact - The Maya Project
- 2013. Science Museum, London, UK. Science expert for the “ENCODE special exhibition” (September 2012 - January 2013).
- 1998. Ministry of Navy, Portugal. (14 April 1998) Copper Medal for Philanthropy.

Conferences and Public Talks

- 06 November 2020. Innovative research methods for inclusive research in Biological Anthropology. International School of Anthropology, Mysore, India (virtual presentation).
- 04 November 2020. **Multiple burdens of malnutrition among Maya families in Yucatan and how language impacts health outcomes**. BioAnthro seminar series, Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge, UK. (virtual presentation).
- 2020.10.14. **Anti-racist pedagogies across the curriculum. Black History month at Loughborough University. virtual presentation. This provided a list of resources for self-education, teaching and activism. They take a human biology perspective to challenge the commonly held, but much criticised, notion that race is biologically 'real', and demonstrate instead how racism has biological effects causing e.g. health inequalities.**