

Sport 21 Background Report no. 8

This is no. 8 in a series of background reports being prepared – or reproduced from other sources – during 2002/03 to inform the revision of *Sport 21*, the national strategy for sport in Scotland.

Sport and Minority Ethnic Communities:

Aiming at Social Inclusion

Summary

Research Digest no. 58

A report for **sportscotland**

by

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Published by:

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Caledonia House
South Gyle
Edinburgh EH12 9DQ
Tel: 0131 317 7200

ISBN 1 85060 376 6

Price £3

August 2000

[‘Further Information’ added August 2002]

Further Information

This is one of a series of background reports being brought together by **sportscotland's** Research Unit to provide contextual information for the revision of *Sport 21*, the national strategy for sport in Scotland. These background reports – and all **sportscotland's** research reports and summary digests – are placed on our website:

www.sportscotland.org.uk

Background reports placed on the website to date are:

- BR1 *Public attitudes towards the importance of excellence in Scottish sport.* (System Three survey of the general public for **sportscotland**)
- BR2 *Public attitudes towards the importance of sport in Scotland.* (System Three survey of the general public for **sportscotland**)
- BR3 *United Kingdom's sporting preferences.* Survey by BMRB for UK Sport. (Public attitudes to sporting excellence reproduced from UK Sport's website)
- BR4 *Attitudes to physical activity by low participants.* Scott Porter for the PATF. (Reproduced with permission from the Physical Activity Task Force website)
- BR5 [*Sport and the family.*](#) Survey by MORI for the Nestlé Family Monitor. (Attitudes of adults towards children's participation; website link)
- BR6 *Sport and local government in the new Scotland.* A Pringle & T Cruttenden. (An overview for **sportscotland** and COSLA)
- BR7 *Entrance charges and sports participation.* Fred Coalter for the PATF. (Reproduced with permission from the Physical Activity Task Force website)
- BR8 *Sport and minority ethnic communities: aiming at social inclusion. Summary.* (Summary of a report for **sportscotland** by Scott Porter)
- BR9 *Sport and people with a disability: aiming at social inclusion. Summary.* (Summary of a report for **sportscotland** by Scott Porter)

This report (BR8) summarises issues, barriers and recommendations relating to sport and ethnic minorities. The full report is available on the **sportscotland** website: [Sport and ethnic minority communities: aiming at social inclusion.](#)

A key recommendation of the report was to “establish a governing/coordinating body of sport for people from ethnic minority communities to provide a strategic planning and policy role and increase awareness of the sporting needs of people from ethnic minority communities”. This has been addressed in a further study for **sportscotland** by Scott Porter which will be added to the website in early autumn 2002.

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August 2002

Introduction

*Sport 21*¹, the national strategy for sport in Scotland, identified the need to increase the numbers participating in sport especially by those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

As little research has been done on sports participation among minority ethnic communities in Scotland, this target requires a three-stage approach:

- An exploration of the issues and barriers surrounding participation and practical guidance on how these may be overcome.
- Dissemination of the guidance to those involved in sports development for implementation as appropriate.
- Establishing a baseline and subsequently monitoring levels of participation in sport.

sportscotland commissioned Scott Porter to address the first of these stages. The study was carried out during April-July 2000 together with a similar investigation into sport and people with a disability². The investigation, summarised in this document and discussed in full in the main report³, seeks to:

- gain an understanding of the issues and barriers relating to sports participation by those from minority ethnic groups;
- provide recommendations for overcoming the barriers; and
- identify examples of good practice.

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¹ *Sport 21* was published by the Scottish Sports Council – now **sportscotland** – in 1998 following extensive consultation throughout the country. A review process to identify progress on targets and realign policies reported in August 2000.

² A summary of the work on sport and disability, also undertaken by Scott Porter, is published by **sportscotland** in tandem with this report: *Sport and people with a disability: aiming at social inclusion. Summary.* (Research digest no. 57)

³ The main report of this study covers Scott Porter's parallel investigations into sport and minority ethnic communities and sport and people with a disability and is published by **sportscotland** in autumn 2000. This includes full details of the study's methodology including types of survey and nature of the samples.

Minority Ethnic Groups: Participants and Non-participants

In exploring attitudes towards sport in minority ethnic communities, the research identified three attitudinal types termed 'Security Seekers', 'Harmony Seekers' and 'Independence Seekers'. These were based upon how strongly an individual identified with or adhered to their ethnic culture, that in turn impacted on their overall attitude to sport. Importantly, they define an individual's needs and behaviour in terms of both accessing and participating in sporting activities.

- **Security Seekers** are traditional in their approach to life, with their ethnic origin, culture and religion defining aspects of their identity. These people are more likely to have a limited personal exposure to sport and often lack confidence in accessing mainstream sporting activities. A key requirement of Security Seekers is that all sport takes into account any cultural or religious considerations.
- **Harmony Seekers** are similar to Security Seekers in that their ethnic origin and culture form an important facet of who they are. These people, however, are looking to balance this with their integration into Scottish culture. They may have had some exposure to sport, although if participating this will generally be within a segregated environment.
- **Independence Seekers** tend to lead their lives fully integrated into Scottish society and do not adhere strongly to their ethnic culture. They are more confident in accessing sport and believe that sport is and should be available to everyone. They are the most likely to be participating although not necessarily so, and if participating often do so within a mainstream environment.

Beyond these types, a framework⁴ was used with the premise that changes requiring high levels of personal involvement come about in stages, termed **precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action** and **confirmation**. Barriers were identified within each of these stages of the behavioural change process, a few unique to that stage and others overlapping other stages, but crucially at each stage people are faced with a range of barriers requiring varying strategies to overcome them. Importantly, the majority of barriers were not community-specific and, unless specified, were evident across the total sample.

Stage 1: Precontemplation

At this first stage in the process, individuals will not be participating in sport at any level. For these people sport is not even considered a possibility. Of the three attitudinal types identified above, Independence Seekers are less likely to feature in this stage.

⁴ Based on: Alan R Andreasen *Marketing social change. Changing behavior to promote health, social development and the environment*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bas, 1995.

Key Barriers at the Precontemplation Stage

Cultural/religious beliefs and expectations. For some, these beliefs are seen to exclude the possibility of participation in sport. This tends to be more of an issue for women, with some Muslim women of the view that their religion precludes them from participating (particularly within the context of the way sport is conducted within Scotland). In addition, among some married Indian women there is a belief that participation in sport is not an appropriate activity given their family and household priorities. For others, often males, there is also an expectation that education and earning an income should take priority over such activities.

For sport you need to do training outside school time, so my father thinks it would affect my school work. (Male, teenager, Chinese community)

No perceived value in sport. Some hold fairly negative views about sport and see it as a frivolous undertaking, lacking in any meaningful benefits. Particularly in the context of other aspects of life, such as earning a living or family commitments, sport is a low or non-existent priority.

Lack of awareness of others 'like me' participating. This can reinforce the belief that sport is not an appropriate or achievable activity to undertake. This lack of awareness can be in relation to other close members of the community or, at a broader level, a lack of role models.

Lack of awareness of facilities or activities available. While not actively seeking sporting options at this stage, a lack of awareness of facilities or activities available (either because they are not widely publicised or not within their everyday environment) can mean that sport has no profile in the context of their lives.

Overcoming the Barriers at Precontemplation Stage

In order to address the barriers at this precontemplation stage, there is a need for the development of strategies that aim to:

- Establish a governing/coordinating body of sport for people from minority ethnic communities. At the initial stage, its key objectives should be to:
 - provide a strategic planning/policy role; and
 - increase awareness of the sporting needs of people from minority ethnic groups.
- Communicate the benefits of sport and physical activity.
- Address concerns over perceived incompatibility of sport with cultural/religious mores.
- Raise awareness of athletes and 'ordinary' people from minority ethnic groups participating in sport.
- Increase awareness of the range of activities available locally.

Good Practice: *Sporting Equals*

Aims

To develop policies and working practices that promote racial equality by working with the governing bodies of various sports, local authorities, the National Coaching Foundation and Sport England.

The Project

Based in the Leeds office of the Commission for Racial Equality and funded by the CRE and Sport England, Sporting Equals is working in a wide range of areas, including coaching and development, developing education and training materials, providing examples of good practice and collating research and information about minority ethnic participation in sport. In addition, Sporting Equals is currently developing the following materials: a charter for racial equality in sport, a checklist for organisations to audit their position and performance on racial equality, a standards document for sport and racial equality, and fact sheets.

Good Practice Criteria

- Helps to create an environment where racial discrimination is recognised and addressed
- Aims to establish strong working links between relevant bodies/organisations
- Provides a comprehensive programme of change
- Sets clear and measurable targets

Stage 2: Contemplation

At this second stage there is a raised awareness of sport, and people may have been made aware of the possible benefits of participating. They are starting to consider it as a potential behaviour and will be weighing up the 'costs' against the benefits of doing so. All three attitudinal types are represented in this stage.

Key Barriers at the Contemplation Stage

Fear of racial discrimination. Given people's experiences in other aspects of their lives they are reluctant to put themselves at risk of this happening. This encompasses overt racial abuse (such as physical attacks, name-calling), an underlying sense that minority ethnic groups are not welcome to participate, a lack of understanding by service providers of groups with specific cultural or religious needs, as well as being viewed as not having the ability to do a particular sport.

You'd walk in there and be the only black face – you'd think, everybody's looking at me, maybe they don't want me here.
(Female, 40+ years, African community)

Attitudes and expectations of 'significant others'. These include parents, in-laws and siblings. These people have an important role to play in shaping and influencing attitudes and behaviour. If this group does not view sport as an appropriate behaviour themselves, they may communicate a sense of disapproval or an outright refusal to let the individual participate.

My Dad was strict and he wouldn't let me do a lot of sports, mainly because of the uniform that you had to wear... I used to give a lot of sick notes rather than join in and get such a fuss made and all that.
(Female, 16-40 years, Pakistani community)

Perceived lack of ability. Given that the view of sport is often restricted to mainstream 'Scottish' sports such as football or aerobics, some individuals feel their lack of experience with these would result in either a risk of injury or a sense of self-consciousness (feelings of inadequacy). Some also feel that their physical stature does not lend itself to such activities (such as the Chinese and rugby).

There is a perception that Asians are good at cricket, and maybe hockey, but not football.
(Male, 16-40 years, Pakistani community)

Lack of confidence. This is often experienced in relation to an individual's appearance (looking different from the 'majority'), their ability to communicate in a mainstream sporting environment and their overall sporting ability.

Lack of awareness of appropriate sporting environments. 'Appropriate' may be related to a desire for a segregated environment such as Asian football, or ones that take into account religious needs such as exclusively male/female activities. Generally this barrier is experienced by Harmony Seekers and Security Seekers rather than by Independence Seekers.

Overcoming the Barriers at the Contemplation Stage

In order to address the barriers at the contemplation stage, there is a need for the development of strategies that aim to:

- Create an environment where racial discrimination is recognised and addressed.
- Educate service providers to:
 - address any negative attitudes; and
 - encourage positive consideration of integrated and equal service provision.
- Develop a range of sporting activities, both community based and integrated into existing facilities.
- Address barriers raised by significant others.

Good Practice: *Women's Learn to Swim Sessions*

Aims

To provide women in Glasgow, particularly those of minority ethnic origin, with an opportunity to attend swimming sessions.

The Project

Weekly swimming sessions are offered to Asian women every Tuesday evening from 5pm to 6.30pm at the Govanhill swimming baths in Glasgow. These are part-funded by Glasgow City Council's Culture and Leisure Services Department.

Good Practice Criteria

- Acknowledges and addresses cultural concerns of people from minority ethnic groups by providing a female only environment and female coach
- Acknowledges and addresses the need for staff who can speak Asian languages
- Emphasis on fun, enjoyment and social interaction
- Promotes integration: offered to all women

Stage 3 - Preparation

At this stage people are still not participating in sport. They are, however, beginning to value the potential benefits of taking part and have made a decision to investigate what is available. Of the three attitudinal types, Security Seekers and Harmony Seekers are more likely to be represented in this stage.

Key Barriers at the Preparation Stage

Difficulty in accessing information. This is generally only an issue in mainstream environments. It relates to a lack of confidence in accessing information particularly where English is not the first language, a lack of knowledge of where to access information, and generally inaccessible information channels or formats (for example, not available in the individual's first language). Where facilities are available in the local community, information in their first language is more likely to exist.

Racial discrimination. This occurs on a number of levels, including a general reluctance by information providers to give help or information (for example, a lack of knowledge of specific cultural or religious needs) plus more overt discrimination (such as negative comments or an unwelcoming atmosphere in a mainstream environment).

Lack of appropriate facilities or activities. At this information-seeking stage some people find that sport which caters for their religious or cultural needs or which allows them to participate with others from their minority ethnic community (such as segregated activities) simply does not exist. Additionally, it may not be available in an easily accessible or safe location.

People are kind of wary of areas where they think there might be racists.

(Female, 40+ years, Indian community)

Cost. This relates not just to charges for specific activities, but to the need for purchasing new sporting gear or clothes as well as travel. However, it is also used by some as a rationalisation for not doing sport: 'I can't afford it'.

Overcoming the Barriers at the Preparation Stage

In order to address the barriers at the preparation stage, there is a need for strategies that aim to:

- Provide readily accessible information on sporting activities, in order to allow for informed choices including:
 - a variety of channels and media; and
 - centralised and local access points.
- Ensure the availability of appropriate facilities:
 - providing for different levels; and
 - with different aims.
- Ensure that information materials contain positive and appropriate images in relation to participation in sport by minority ethnic groups.

Good Practice: *Blackburn Asian Women's Project*

Aims

To facilitate the participation of Asian women into sport and active recreation.

The Project

Established in 1989, the Blackburn Asian Women's project is a three-way partnership between Blackburn Borough Council, Lancashire County Council Youth Service and Sport England. Regular activity sessions have been established and include swimming, keep fit, multi-sports and outdoor activities.

Good Practice Criteria

- Full-time development worker appointed to spearhead project
- Participants educated about the importance of an active lifestyle
- Participants encouraged to take an active role in organisation of sports groups and develop leadership skills where appropriate
- Checklist outlining 'special' needs of Asian women to participate in sport created
- Approval and confidence of Asian community sought
- Publicity and credibility of community sought
- Acceptance of the need for targeted programming to provide for equal opportunity sought from leisure providers

Stage 4: Action

At the action stage, individuals have now started participating in sport. They are experiencing the behaviour for the first time or first few times and are therefore still at a delicate stage in the process. All three attitudinal types are represented in this stage.

Key Barriers at the Action Stage

Racial discrimination. This can have a strongly negative impact, particularly where people feel unconfident or apprehensive in relation to either service providers or the general public. Examples cited included overt racial abuse such as negative comments and being targeted physically in a football game; a lack of understanding of – or empathy with – religious needs, for example attending a women-only class to find a male lifeguard present; as well as more covert discrimination such as being stared at and rudeness.

The teachers weren't very happy and I don't think they really tried to work with the parents... It was a case of 'take it or leave it' even though at the school I went to there was a very high ethnic minority. I think a lot of the teachers felt: 'well you have to do it, everybody else is doing it, that's it'. Rather than maybe speaking with the parents, you know, getting a middle ground somewhere. (Female, 16-40 years, Pakistani community)

I joined a football club and there were a lot of racist names going on. The ref told me, 'if he says one more thing just come and tell me', but they don't do anything. (Male, teenager, Pakistani community)

Lack of confidence. This relates to an individual's appearance, their ability to communicate or their sporting ability. When participating for the first few times this can result in self-consciousness about, for example, not being able to understand directions from a sports instructor or being the only one at a swimming class wearing covering garments. Of the three attitudinal types, this is most likely to apply to Security Seekers and Harmony Seekers.

Inappropriate activities/facilities. It may only be at this stage, when an individual begins participating, that they become aware that the activities or facilities do not meet their initial expectations.

We were told that the swimming class would be girls only, but it didn't turn out that way and my Dad found out – he wasn't very happy. (Female, teenager, Pakistani community)

Cost. It may not be until this stage that an individual realises the need for and cost implications of items such as equipment, clothing or activity charges.

Stage 5: Confirmation

At the confirmation stage, people will be actively participating on a regular basis. Sport has been integrated into their lifestyle – as such, the value and benefits of sport have been verified. All three attitudinal types are represented in this stage. While the majority of barriers have been overcome, some do still exist.

Key Barriers at the Confirmation Stage

Racial discrimination. This can persist as a barrier throughout. However, it is more likely to be overt racial abuse that poses the greatest threat at this stage, given that an individual's level of confidence is likely to have increased over time. As such, more covert negative attitudes and behaviour are likely to have less impact. Additionally, if such discrimination has prevailed over a significant period of time some people may have reached a point whereby they simply do not want to (or cannot) endure it any longer.

I was able to blank it out to a certain extent, but it did sometimes get to me.

(Male, 16-40 years, Pakistani community)

Cultural beliefs/expectations. These may appear again at this stage, relating to a belief that once a certain age or lifestage is reached other priorities should take precedence, with sports involvement no longer considered appropriate. For example, marriage may signal a shift in focus to household or family issues and consequent pressure to stop doing any sport. This is most likely to apply to Security Seekers and Harmony Seekers.

We didn't really have much choice. I mean, you were kind of training to become a housewife and mother and things like that... When you got married you couldn't do what you like, you were restricted even more because you had all this extended family – the mother-in-law, etc.

(Female, 40+ years, Indian community)

Discontinuation of facilities or activities. This is an external barrier where the individual has no control. It may include the discontinuation of a specific activity or the closure of an appropriate facility.

Loss of support/encouragement. This can reflect a loss of emotional support such as someone to attend a sports activity with or of practical assistance such as getting a lift with someone to an activity. Equally if an individual does not receive confirmation from others that they are doing the 'right thing', they may start to question the appropriateness of their behaviour.

They might feel comfortable but the pressures from within the community and family are such that they feel that if they are seen doing something like swimming – and it is mixed – people will talk. So there is all of these kinds of things going on behind it all.

(Female, 40+ years, Indian community)

Lack of role models. At this stage a lack of role models tends to be more of an issue for those looking to develop further in their sporting activity, perhaps moving into a mainstream environment or higher level of competition. This can signal to the individual that the behaviour is either not appropriate or not achievable within their community.

Lack of infrastructure to support development in sport. This can apply to those seeking a different role within sport or looking to move to a higher level such as national competition. This was seen to be due to a lack of (overt) appropriate development avenues and a lack of support from official bodies as well as a lack of role models. This is most likely to apply to Independence Seekers.

Overcoming the Barriers at the Action and Confirmation Stages

In order to address the barriers at both the action and confirmation stages – the two stages where individuals are participating in sport – there is a need for strategies that aim to:

- Provide a welcoming and comfortable environment for people from minority ethnic groups to play sport.
- Involve participants in the running of activities/clubs at local level.
- Ensure facilities are within easy reach for regular participation in terms of:
 - cost; and
 - available transport.
- Ensure that those who wish can develop their skills in a competitive context or through to elite level.

Good Practice: *Charlton Athletic Race Equality Partnership*

Aims

The purpose of the Charlton Athletic Race Equality (CARE) Partnership is to use sport as an effective way of uniting people irrespective of their race, sex, disability or origin. The partnership seeks to combat racism and promote equality through an anti-racist sporting context with young people in a range of educational and leisure institutions in the London Borough of Greenwich.

The Project

Jointly led by the Charlton Athletic Football Club and Greenwich Council, the CARE Partnership was set up in 1992 and involves over thirty organisations including the Charlton Athletic Supporters Club, educational institutions, Metropolitan Police local divisions, Victim Support Greenwich and a wide range of minority ethnic organisations. Some of the initiatives they have promoted include establishing sports courses; organising events and free coaching; helping young people from ethnic minorities to obtain coaching qualifications; linking with employment opportunities and with the community; and promoting anti-racism.

Good Practice Criteria

- Creates an environment where racial discrimination is recognised and addressed
- Ensures sporting activities offered reflect the needs of the participants
- Encourages integration
- Makes activities accessible (by providing free entry or subsidising entrance fees)
- Empowers people to continue to experience the benefits of involvement in sporting activities as players, coaches and employees of sports organisations
- Provides adequate support
- Adheres to the principles it promotes: for example, sports staff reflect the ethnic population makeup of the community and 'traditional' ethnic sporting activities are included
- Uses advertising to communicate messages

Monitoring Participation Levels

Scottish Executive is currently consulting on the feasibility of conducting a national survey of minority ethnic communities. This would be the ideal – and only available – source of baseline information on levels of participation in sport by those from ethnic minorities. A small number of sports questions should be included to establish the key facts and allow comparisons with the Scottish population as a whole. Assuming the proposed survey were repeated, longitudinal information would identify changes in participation rates over time.

Key Recommendations

At policy level:

- The raising of awareness of racial inequality in sport, and the subsequent addressing of this issue.
- The creation of a body, at a strategic level, with a specific remit for sport for minority ethnic communities.
- Key organisations (**sportscotland**, Scottish Executive, local authorities, Commission for Racial Equality, governing bodies of sport) to define and publicise objectives and work in partnership towards achieving them.

Within this, the creation of a context where sport has relevance and value for people from minority ethnic communities, through the following:

- The development of a policy and communications strategy that is actively and consciously inclusive.
- The development of a mass media campaign, with community-specific health education benefits, portraying people from minority ethnic groups as part of the wider community.
- The promotion of role models, both at elite and grassroots level, utilising appropriate and relevant media easily accessed by the target groups.

Fundamental to this will be the provision of ‘information for all’:

- Using central and localised access points.
- Targeted to the information needs of specific groups rather than the community as a whole.
- Providing access through a variety of channels and media to facilitate informed choices.

There is a need for a broad range of accessible and appropriate provision:

- Addressing specific needs, such as exclusively female or male environments.

- Segregated (ie, limited to an ethnic group) and/or exclusive (ie, single sex) environments to facilitate increased confidence levels.
- The enabling of movement from segregated to mainstream environments at individually-defined speed and only where appropriate.
- Transport and pricing policies that do not exclude the target group.

The education and training of all involved in the provision of sport is fundamental to the success of increasing participation levels:

- Undertaken at both policy and at service provision levels.
- Allowing for the delivery of instruction in different environments, both integrated and segregated, competitive and non-competitive.
- Providing a clear infrastructure towards elite attainment.
- Supporting the development of strategies that enable entry into professional areas of coaching and leisure management.

Conclusions

There were relatively few community-specific barriers preventing people of minority ethnic communities from participating in sport. With some important exceptions, the issues raised in relation to non-participation were evident across the total sample.

While the cultural or religious beliefs of these communities can impact on an individual's attitude towards sport, there was no evidence that they overtly disallow participation in sport at any level.

As such, there are only a few circumstances where the needs of minority ethnic communities differ from those of the majority of the population. Where there are differences, this generally relates to the carrying out of the activity in terms such as dress requirements and the appropriateness of the facilities.

At the core of the issue, and creating by far the largest barrier, is an experience or fear of racial discrimination. Racial discrimination is not just about physical or verbal abuse but also includes institutional racism⁵.

⁵ The Chairman of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry defined institutional racism as: "The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people." (*The Stephen Lawrence inquiry. Report of an inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny*, para 6.34. Cm4262 London: Stationery Office, 1999.)

Approaches to Social Inclusion

Scottish sport is increasingly committed to the principle of equity: the equality of opportunity for all to participate and to develop in the sports of their choice.

Providers of opportunities for sports participation – including local authorities, clubs, governing bodies, commercial sports organisations – have an important role to play in overcoming the barriers to achieving equity. As the above summary indicates, these include practical issues (such as respecting dress requirements or providing exclusive activities for women from some ethnic communities) as well as the creation and development of appropriate and non-discriminatory environments. This can only be achieved through the implementation and enforcement of inclusive policies at all levels. The case study examples with the recommendations in this study provide a broad range of approaches that can be adopted by national and local bodies alike and implemented as appropriate to meet the needs of local communities.