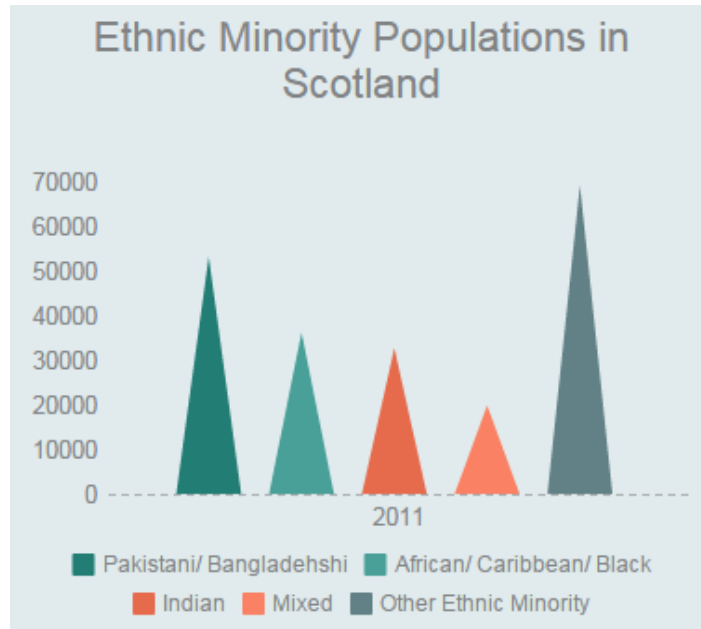


Race and sport

What are the important issues?

The majority of Scotland's population is white, with 96 per cent identifying as white within the 2011 Census. Four per cent of the population identifies with a minority ethnic group. This is over 210,000 people in Scotland. Scotland's ethnic minority population is growing, having increased from just two per cent in 2001 to four per cent in 2011.



There is limited data about sports participation among ethnic minority people in Scotland. Because the size of ethnic minority populations in Scotland is small, this makes it hard to undertake robust analysis of participation in sport by ethnic group.

There is, however, some evidence of inequalities. Pakistani adults are least likely to participate in sport (30% compared to an average of 49%)¹. Recent research² also shows that while most ethnic groups in Scotland report better health than the 'white Scottish' ethnic group, older Pakistani (and Indian and Bangladeshi) women reported poor health, considerably worse than the older men within these groups.

There are no other ethnic groups which display significantly different levels of sports participation.

¹ Active Scotland Outcomes: Indicator Equality Analysis, Scottish Government, 2015

² Which ethnic groups have the poorest health? Scottish Government, 2015

What do we know about the problem?

Barriers to participation

There is a range of research on the issues affecting ethnic minority people's involvement in sports. There is a clear intersection with religion, and many of the issues may be very similar to those explored within the separate religion and belief learning note.

1. Racism

Racism can be a barrier to participation in sports³. This can be because people have experienced discrimination in other aspects of their lives, including at school, at work or in the general public arena and expect that it might also occur within a sporting context. However, qualitative research has found evidence of racism, which had caused some participants to stop taking part in sport.

Recent incidents of racist abuse in the UK, often connected to football, have highlighted the fact that racism is a continuing problem. Social media has become both a tool for the spread of racist and abusive content within the sporting environment, and a potential means of combating such behaviour⁴.

2. Time and family life

The amount of free time available to people from some ethnic groups can be a barrier. The Sports Participation and Ethnicity in England 1999/2000 survey⁵ found that over 40 per cent of Indian, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Black African women reported that home and family responsibilities prevented them from participating in some form of physical exercise. Work, school, childcare and other domestic duties are often stated as reasons preventing ethnic minority women from having sufficient leisure time to participate⁶.

The attitudes of ethnic minority parents towards their children's involvement in sporting activity has also been raised as one of the key reasons for low participation in sport⁷. Research has shown that parents of ethnic minority origin do not always recognise the value or worth of their children participating in sporting activities, when compared with academic achievement.

³ Sport and Ethnic Minority Communities: Aiming at Social Inclusion, Scott Porter Research and Marketing Ltd, For **sportscotland**, May 2001

⁴ House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee, Racism in Football, Second Report of Session 2012-2013, Volume 1, September 2012

⁵ Sports Participation and ethnicity in England, National Survey, 1999/2000, Rowe, N and Champion, R, as quoted in Exploring ethnicity and sports participation in Burton-on-Trent and Stoke-on-Trent, Dr Jamie Cleland, April 2009

⁶ Sport and Social Exclusion, Collins, M and Kay, T, 2003, as quoted in Exploring ethnicity and sports participation in Burton-on-Trent and Stoke-on-Trent, Dr Jamie Cleland, April 2009

⁷ Carroll, Bob and Hollinshead, G (1993) 'Ethnicity and conflict in physical education.' British Educational Research Journal, 19(1),59-76.

3. Image

Research around ethnic minority participation in sports⁸ found that self-image played a crucial role. Some research participants had stopped sports activity due to increased internal negative feelings of being seen by other women when getting changed and by men when exercising or attending a particular location. Research^{9,10} also found that different cultures have different ideals of image, which can affect how people – particularly women – feel about sports participation.

4. Support and coaching

Evidence from across the UK shows that only one per cent of qualified coaches are from an ethnic minority. Research by Sporting Equals¹¹ found that there was significant interest in coaching from ethnic minority people, but there were barriers, such as information, marketing and visibility of role models.

Rachel Yankey, Ghanaian Coach

Rachel is of Ghanaian descent and has made 115 appearances for the England Women's national football team and recently won the FA Cup, League Cup and Women's Super League with Arsenal ladies. She also works as a coach in schools, teaching football to children.

"I think it's important to be a role model both by being a professional footballer and also inspiring others through my work as a coach. I believe that sport helps communities build bridges and develop integration."

Rachel felt there was a strong need for female only courses as a lot of females don't feel comfortable in male orientated environments, particularly those girls from different culture or faith backgrounds. She also felt there was a need to promote the benefits of coaching and sport as a potential career option.

"Often BME communities don't realise the wider benefits of coaching and the importance of empathy when recruiting coaches who can relate to and inspire young people and eventually become role models."¹²

⁸ Connecting Ethnicity, Gender and Physicality: Muslim Pakistani Women, Physical Activity and health, Wray, 2002

⁹ Carroll, R., Ali, N and Azam. N. (2002) 'Promoting Physical Activity in South Asian Women Through 'Exercise on Prescription''. Health Technology Assessment. 6 (8): 1-99.

¹⁰ Connecting Ethnicity, Gender and Physicality: Muslim Pakistani Women, Physical Activity and health, Wray, 2002

¹¹ INSIGHT, BME Coaching in Sport, Sporting Equals, December 2011

¹² Rachel Yankey, quoted in BME Coaching in Sport, Sporting Equals, December 2011

What can we do about it?

1. **Work with ethnic minority groups and organisations**

Working with trusted organisations which have strong links with ethnic minority communities is an important way of encouraging people into sport – as participants, employees and volunteers. You should try to work with and involve communities in planning, organising and delivering sporting activity. Take advice from people involved in ethnic minority organisations about how to ensure that links are made at all stages of the pathway, from casual participation into regular involvement.

2. **Training and awareness raising**

Make sure that those planning and delivering sport understand the experiences and barriers faced by ethnic minority people in sports participation. This can be through training and awareness raising, often usefully delivered by ethnic minority organisations. Proactively working to recruit and train staff, volunteers or coaches from ethnic minority communities can help to enhance the skills within your workforce and develop positive role models.

3. **Celebrate and promote positive role models**

Research has shown that celebrating successes of ethnic minority participants in sporting events can have a positive impact on involvement¹³. Ethnic minority coaches and volunteers can also play an important role in encouraging participation and building relationships.

4. **Tackle racism**

Make sure your organisation or group has a clear policy and procedure on tackling racism, which is enforced. Promote this policy clearly, so that everyone knows about it. Even if you believe that racism is not a problem in your sport, others may have different experiences, and stating that you have a clear policy and procedure can help tackle fear of racism, which is also a significant barrier.

¹³ Carroll, Bob and Hollinshead, G (1993) 'Ethnicity and conflict in physical education.' British Educational Research Journal, 19(1),59-76.

What is already happening?

Example

The Scottish Ethnic Minority Sports Association (SEMSA) was established in 1990 in Glasgow. Since then, it has created and provided culturally sensitive sporting opportunities. There are weekly programmes of activities including football, women's football, kabaddi, cricket, badminton, and swimming.

SEMSA has worked in partnership with Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Life, Celtic and Rangers Football Clubs to host the UK Asian Football Championships in Glasgow. This event has been running for 15 years and helps to raise the profile of Asian people in football at all levels of the game.¹⁴

Example

The Scottish Football Association's football equity project was set up in 2012, in partnership with BEMIS Scotland. It aims to ensure more people from diverse communities have the chance to participate, develop and achieve their potential within Scottish football. The SFA recognised that young ethnic minority women were not actively engaged in football. The team ran a survey and consultations to understand the potential barriers to participation. Girls from ethnic minority backgrounds highlighted cultural and religious reasons – such as needing to play in gender segregated teams, and away from the view of men. As part of the initiative, a female only participation centre was launched. The initiative also provides a pathway for girls who want to develop further, either as players or as coaches. Having ethnic minority female role models as coaches has been a key success factor, particularly in developing relationships with parents.

Example

In Newham, Asian women were engaged in a 'Fit as a Fiddle' programme initially through a cookery course. They were then invited to participate in Nordic Walking. Engaging the group in healthy eating and cooking first was important to building trust, and helped to encourage higher levels of participation. One of the women received training as a walk leader, and also acted as a translator. This role was developed gradually, as initially the walk leader would not have had the confidence to take on this role. However, she is now able to lead a small group, and Nordic walking has been one of the most popular activities.¹⁵

¹⁴ <http://www.semsa.org.uk>

¹⁵ Fit as a Fiddle: Engaging faith and BME communities in activities for wellbeing (2013)

Find out more.....

Useful sources for finding out more include:

- specific research focused on ethnic minority people's involvement in sport, commissioned by **sportscotland** in 2001 – which included useful examples <http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/Documents/Resources/SportandMinorityEthnicCommunitiesAimingatSocialInclusion.pdf>;
- the documents referenced throughout this Learning Note – as footnotes; and
- the full research report on equality in sport, produced for **sportscotland** in 2015.