

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 7¹

Sporting Capital and ethnicity

Introduction

This Resource Sheet¹ explores how levels of Sporting Capital differ between those in the 'White' and those in the 'non White' population². It looks both at overall differences in Sporting Capital levels and how these vary by gender for people from different ethnic backgrounds. Differences in the profile of Sporting Capital domains, the building blocks of Sporting Capital are also examined and a deeper investigation is made of measures in the Social domain to explore differences between ethnic groups.

What is Sporting Capital?

Sporting Capital is analogous to the theory of Human Capital and may be defined as:

"The stock of physical, social and psychological attributes and competencies that support and motivate an individual to participate in sport and to sustain that participation over time." It is a theory that can help us to better understand and explain

sporting behaviour across individuals, communities and populations. More information about the nature of Sporting Capital and its important characteristics is provided in [Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 1](#).

What are the in the levels of Sporting Capital for people from White and non White ethnic groups?

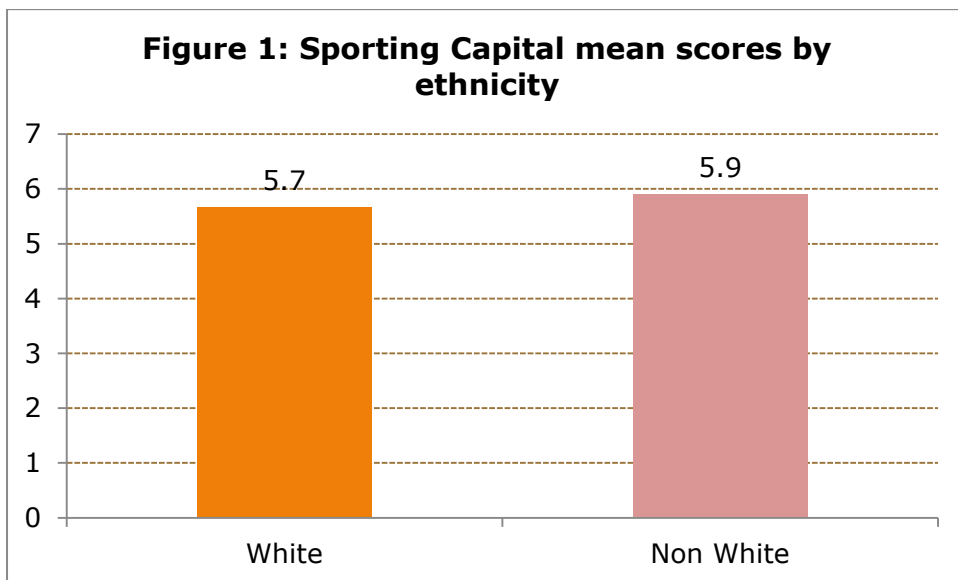
The non-White population has lower overall participation rates in sport than the White population. Although the differences are not large they have consistently been higher for the White population over the years measurement has taken place dating back to the mid 1970's. The latest Active People Survey 6 (October 2011/October 12) results show that the White adult population had a participation rate of 36.1% (at least once a week of 30 minute moderate intensity) compared to 35.5 % for those in the non-White population.

Measuring inequities in participation tell us about the outcome – but in and of itself does little to help us better understand the causes. An examination of variations in the levels of Sporting Capital between those from different ethnic backgrounds tells us something more

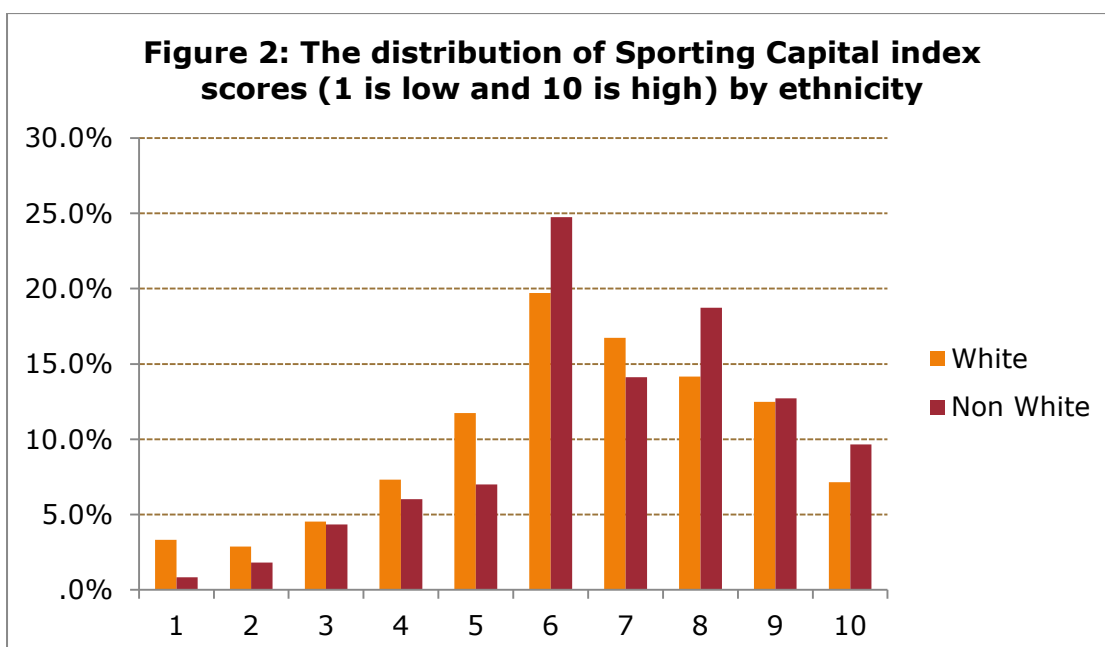
¹ This Resource Sheet was prepared by Nick Rowe with analytical support from Oliver Norden at TNS-BMRB. It was commissioned by StreetGames and published in April 2013.

² The definition of White and non White applies standard protocols used by Sport England. It is recognised that such broad classifications hide the more subtle difference we would find if we explored ethnicity in more depth. However sample sizes limit this kind of more detailed analysis.

profound about the underlying factors that lead to these inequities and the culture that shapes them. Figure 1 shows how the mean Sporting Capital score by ethnicity. Given the differences we know in participation rates the result is a surprise – with those from the non-White population having higher mean Sporting Capital scores than those from the White population.



The distribution of Sporting Capital scores shown in Figure 2 also supports this finding by showing larger proportions of the non-White population with high Sporting Capital scores and smaller proportions at the lowest levels.



These results suggest that those from a non White ethnic background although having the 'locked in potential' to participate at higher levels experience disproportionately bigger external barriers to participation than their White counterparts. [Resource Sheet 9](#) explains

how barriers and Sporting Capital interact and how increasing barriers can work to 'depress' participation rates for any given level of Sporting Capital.

Another explanation may be that the overall mean Sporting Capital levels for the non-White population are a consequence of a younger age profile for this group in the population. Figure 3 provide some evidence to support this assertion as Sporting Capital levels in the older age groups are higher for the White compared with their non-White peers.

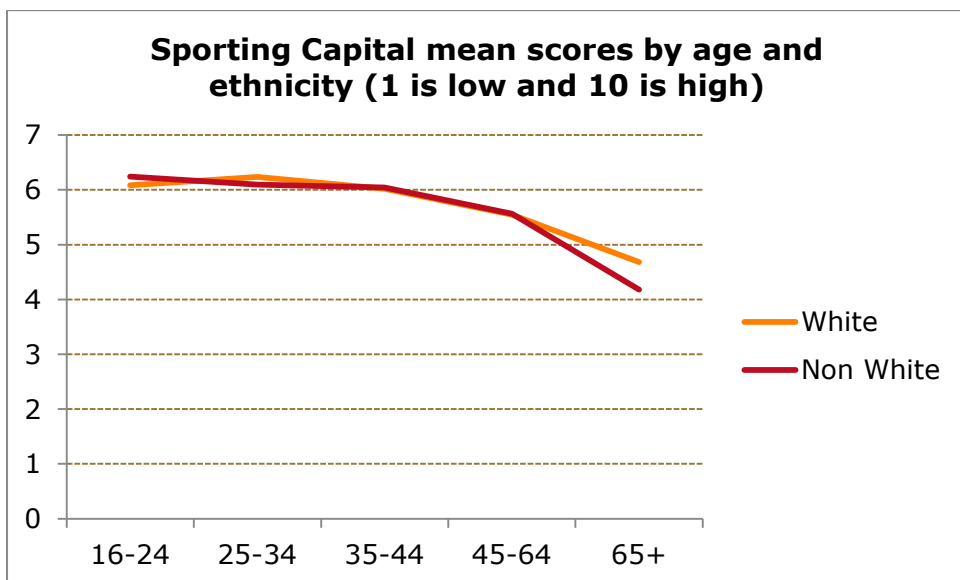
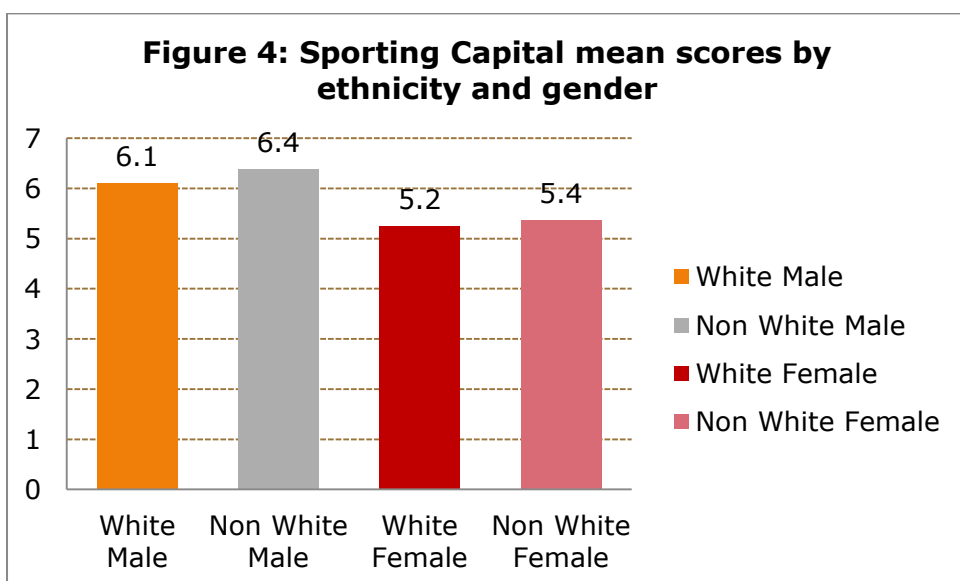


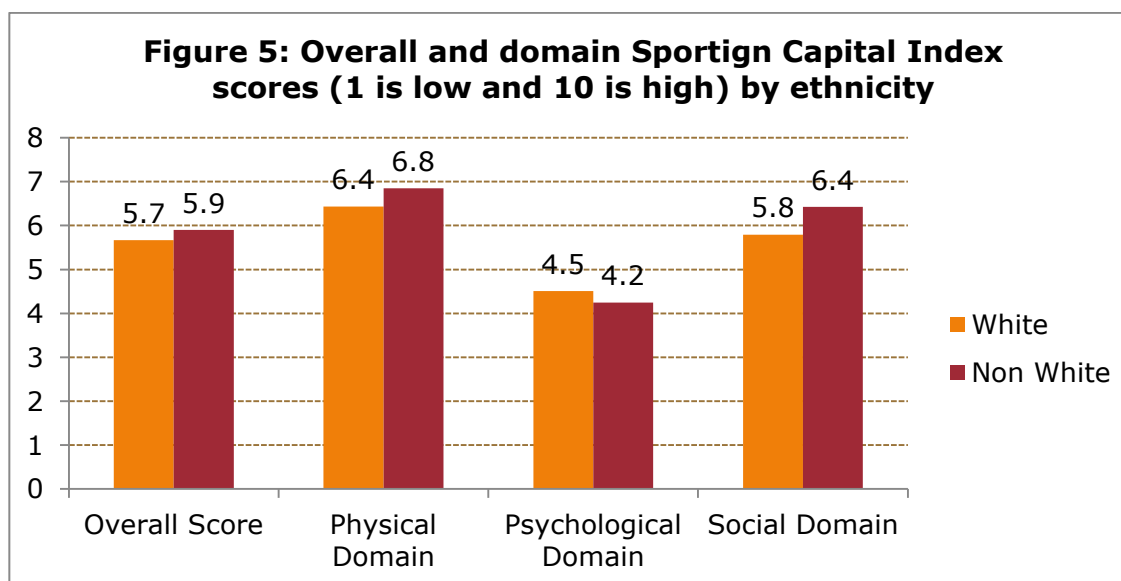
Figure 4 shows that the mean Sporting Capital scores are higher for the non-White population for both men and women although the gap between the genders remain relatively constant at about one Index point



Do the 'building blocks' of Sporting Capital differ between the White and non-White population?

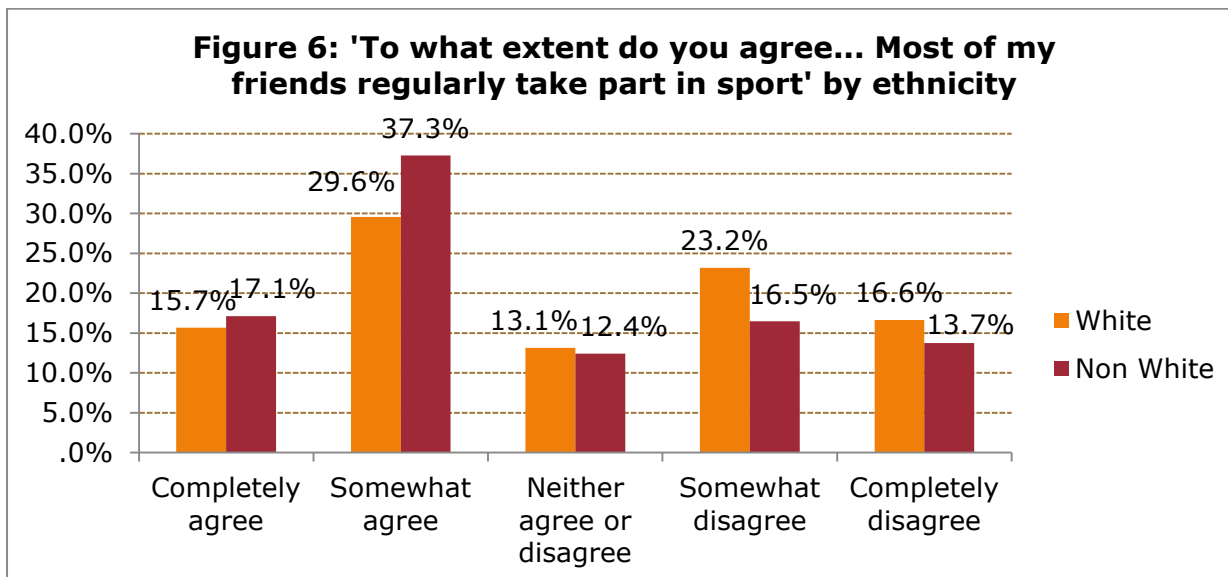
Sporting Capital is made up of three domains – the Psychological, Social and Physical. In turn these domains are measured by a series of questions that provide measures or markers that are relevant to each domain. For example in the psychological domain these questions address factors related to self efficacy in sporting situations, self confidence and identity. In the physical domain the questions seek to establish markers of peoples sporting ability relative to others of the same age and gender in a range of sport related skills and their overall physical health status. In the social domain there are questions related to social connectedness in sport ranging from how sporty other family members are to the sportiness of friendship networks and work colleagues ([see Resource Sheet 1](#)).

It would be expected that the building blocks (domains and questions items) of Sporting Capital would vary in their relative strengths and weaknesses between people from different ethnic backgrounds. Figure 5 shows that those from a non-White background have higher mean scores in both the physical and social domains than those from a White ethnic background whereas the reverse is true for the psychological domain. The differences in the social domain are the largest and it is interesting exploring these in greater depth.

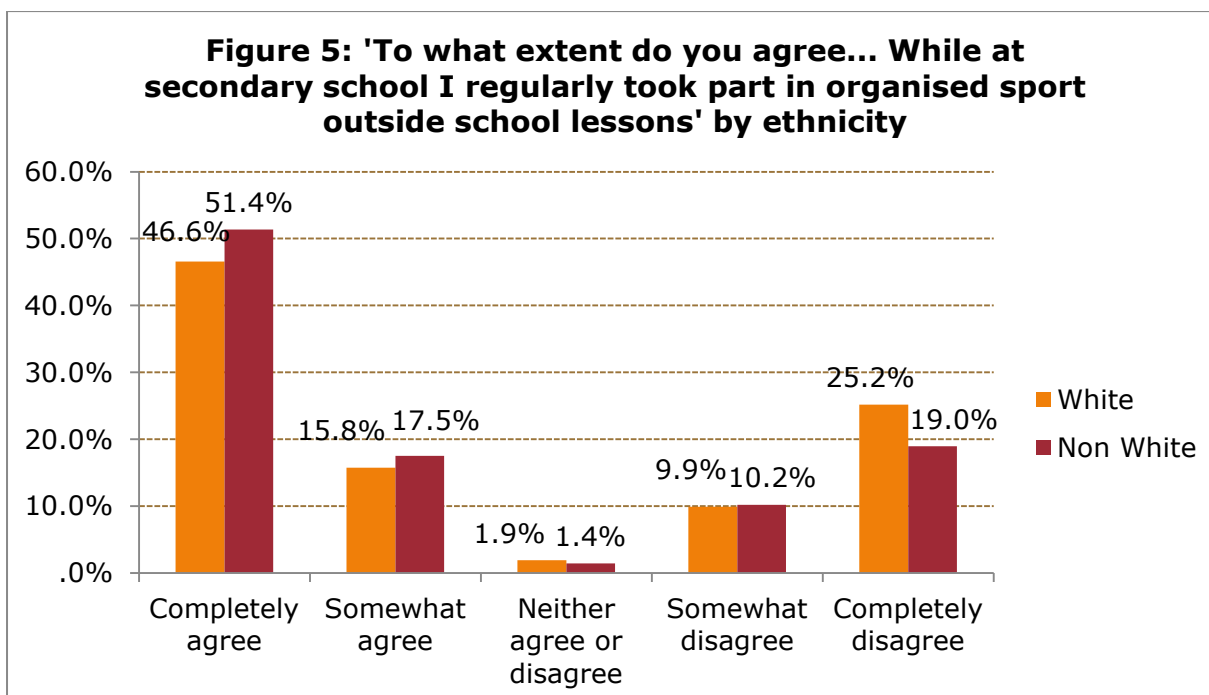


An interesting measure in the social domain relates to friendship networks asking '*To what extent do you agree... Most of my friends regularly take part in sport*'. Figure 6 shows how the response to this question differed between the White and non-White population. It can be seen that significantly larger proportions of the non-White population than the White

population 'somewhat' or 'completely agreed' that their friends were regular sports participants (54% compared with 45%) .



Another measure in the social domain focuses on the extent to which the respondent agreed or disagreed that *While at secondary school I regularly took part in organised sport outside school lessons'*. Again the results provided in Figure 7 show a more positive profile amongst those from a non-White rather than White background with respectively 51.4% completely agreeing compared with 46.6%. At the other end of the spectrum 25% of the White population completely disagreed that they regularly took part in sport outside of school lessons compared with 19% of the non-White population.



Sporting Capital and ethnicity – the implications for public policy and practice

Any conclusion on the implications of these findings for public policy must be prefaced by the fact that this analysis is a very broad one that is limited by the definition of ethnicity that is applied. A more detailed and meaningful breakdown into different ethnic groups would provide much greater insight. However the results are interesting and suggest that by focusing on participation rates alone we may have under-estimated the levels of interest and capacity for sports participation amongst the non White population. The relatively high levels of Sporting Capital in this group suggests that their relatively low rates of participation compared with their White counterparts may be a consequence more of the barriers they face than their motivation to take part. However we need to temper this conclusion with the fact that the non White population has a younger age profile than the White population and this may go some way to explaining the overall differences. This conclusion is supported by the fact that although Sporting Capital levels are comparable amongst the young, the older White population has higher levels of Sporting Capital than their non-White counterparts.

ⁱ This Sheet is the seventh in a series of eleven 'Sporting Capital Resource Sheets'. The Resource Sheets are organised in way that move from the general to the more detailed and specific. The common thread is the theoretical concept of Sporting Capital and its application to public policy and practice.

Each individual Sheet has been designed to be freestanding and to make sense in its own right – the series of Sheets has been designed to provide a logical progression that builds knowledge and understanding about Sporting Capital, its characteristics, the relationship it has to participation in sport, its distribution in the population, its variation across different social groups and its potential to influence and shape future sports policy and practice.

The Sheets have been purposefully designed to be succinct and selective rather than long and comprehensive. Each should leave the reader with an interest to think further about Sporting Capital as an idea and what it may mean for their work in sports development whether at the higher strategic levels of policy making or delivering localised programmes on the ground.

All the analysis in the Sheets draws from empirical data collected by Sport England's Active People Survey (6). The analysis in these Resource Sheets is carried out on the household survey sample collected in APS6 (October 2011 to October 2012) of the APS6 survey period. The sample size used in this analysis was 4,527 cases. For more information about the methodology see the full Technical report available from StreetGames.

These Sheets build on earlier thinking and analysis in work carried out for StreetGames and available in the following publications:

Sporting Capital – a new theory of sport participation determinants and its application to 'Doorstep Sport' Nick Rowe, Sport Research Consultant, September 2012, A report commissioned by StreetGames

Part 1. What is Sporting Capital and how can its principles be applied to create a new generation of sustained sports participants?

Part 2. The Sporting Capital Index – exploring the levels of Sporting Capital in the English population and its variation across different social groups.

The following Sheets are available in this series:

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 1: Sporting Capital – what is it and why is it important to sports policy and practice?

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 2: What is the relationship between Sporting Capital and participation in sport and why does it matter?

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 3: Are we a sporting nation – what are the levels of Sporting Capital in England?

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 4: Sporting capital and gender – mind the gap

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 5: Sporting capital and inequality – does social class make a difference?

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 6: To what extent do levels of Sporting Capital impact on the frequency of participation and vary by the type of sport people play?

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 7: Sporting Capital and ethnicity

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 8: Sporting Capital amongst the young – a focus on 16 to 25 year olds

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 9: Sporting Capital - why it is important to public policy – a strategic perspective

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 10: Doorstep Sport - building Sporting Capital to increase participation in sport – applying the theory to practice

Sporting Capital Resource Sheet 11: Sporting Capital – testing and applying the theory - future research requirements.