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SFN Team · Nov 13, 2023

Characteristics of Squash Players - A Deep Dive into Socioeconomic Status and Gender Bias

As part of our commitment to providing valuable insights for successful business strategies in squash, the Squash Facilities Network (SFN) is dedicated to answering a pivotal question: what are the main characteristics of squash players?

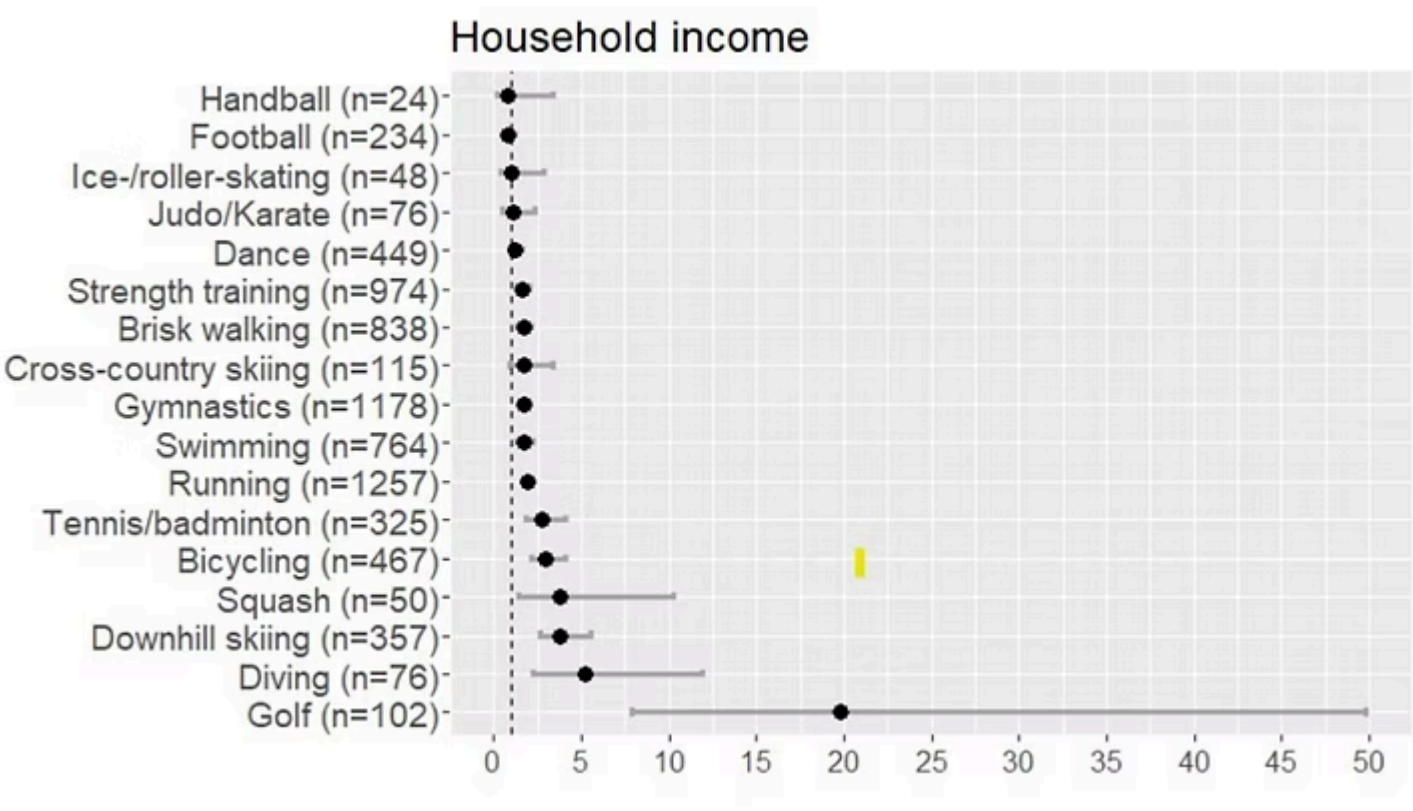
SFN's survey section delves into two key characteristics of squash players: socioeconomic status and gender bias, drawing upon the Eurostat 2020 sport participation study and the insightful research, "Socioeconomic inequalities in sport participation" by Viviane Richard et al., published in BMC Public Health.

Socioeconomic Status of Squash Players

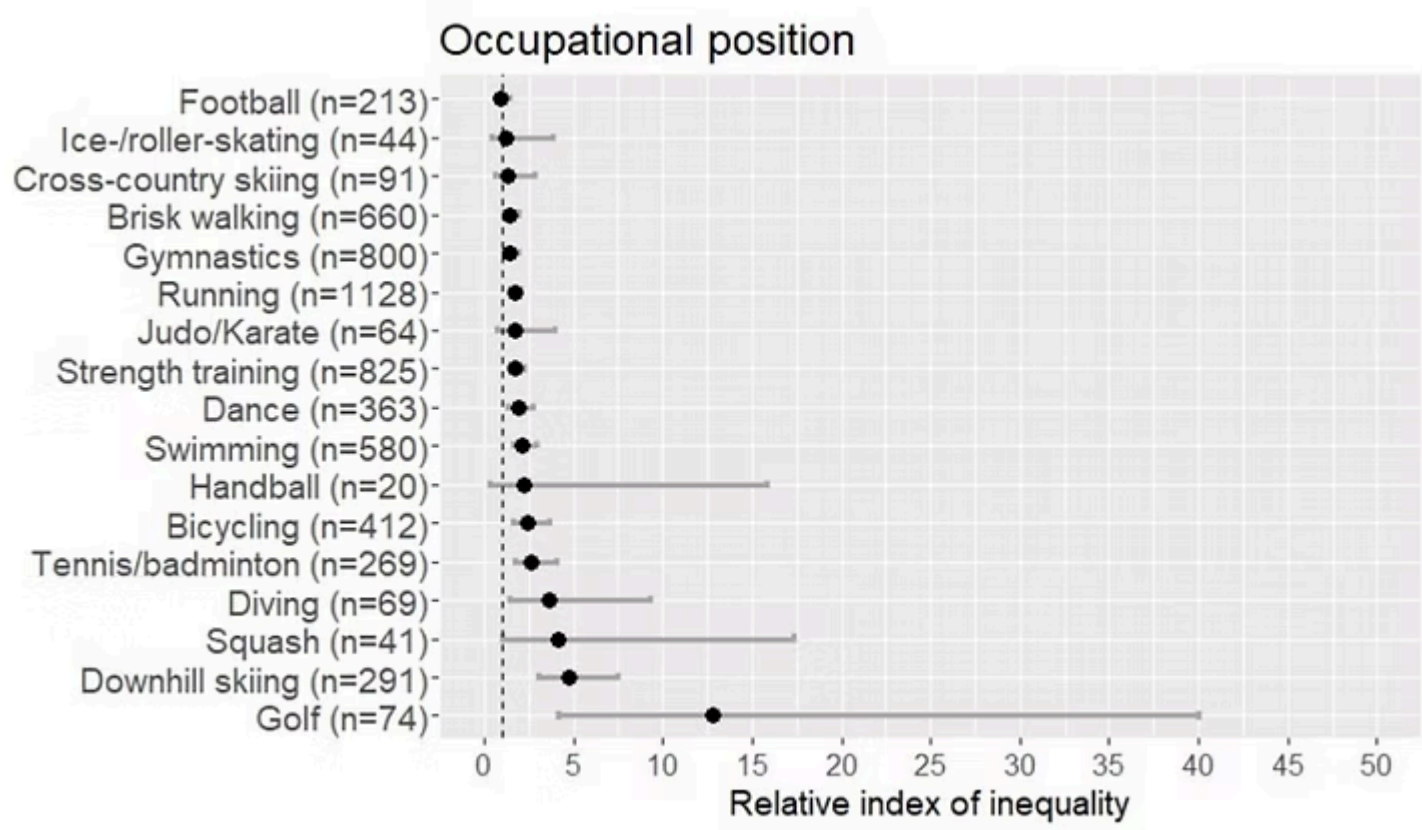
The Eurostat 2020 sport participation study highlights a clear trend: individuals with lower incomes are less likely to engage in sports activities. This disparity is evident in the 2019 data, which shows that while 55% of those in higher income brackets actively participated in sports, the participation rate drops to 37% among lower-income groups. This divide is not just about financial capability; factors such as education, social standing, health awareness, and availability of leisure time play a significant role.

In the specific context of squash, as reported in the "Socioeconomic inequalities in sport participation" study, there is a notable trend: squash players typically come from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. This is evidenced by higher levels of education, income, and professional status among squash enthusiasts. The study presents a notable relative inequality index of 4.25 for squash, indicating a significant disparity in participation rates based on socioeconomic status. Key findings regarding squash include:

- Squash participation is more common among those from privileged socioeconomic strata [page 4].



- Socioeconomic disparities in squash participation are more pronounced among men [page 4 of study].
- A higher educational background correlates with more squash participation [page 4 of study].



- Relative inequalities in squash are substantial when compared with other sports, as evidenced by a Relative Index of Inequality (RII) of 4.25 [page 4 of study].

Gender Bias in Squash

The sports world at large exhibits a significant gender bias, with squash being no exception. Although it shows male dominance, other sports like ice hockey and cycling have even more pronounced gender imbalances. Conversely, activities such as netball and yoga are predominantly favoured by women.

The 2022 U.S. data indicates a gender gap in daily sports participation: 21.2% of men versus 19.1% of women engage in daily sports, exercise, and recreational activities. The "Socioeconomic inequalities in sport participation" study further reveals that men of higher socioeconomic status are more inclined towards racket sports like squash, compared to their female counterparts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, squash players often resemble golfers in terms of income and occupational status, setting them apart from participants in many other sports. The engagement of high-status individuals in squash is a positive indicator for the sport's sustainability and development. While the focus of one study is only on the Geneva area, the trends observed are consistent with findings across Europe, suggesting a broader pattern of socioeconomic impact on sports participation.

This analysis underscores the importance of understanding the demographic makeup of squash players for effective business strategy and development in the sport. It also points to potential areas for growth and inclusion, emphasizing the need to make squash accessible to a broader audience, transcending socioeconomic and gender boundaries.

In the upcoming months, SFN will be conducting its own surveys among squash players to gather more detailed information about their characteristics. This initiative aims to deepen our understanding of the squash community, focusing on various aspects including (but not limited to) socioeconomic factors, lifestyle, preferences, and playing habits. This data will be instrumental in tailoring our strategies and services to better meet the needs and expectations of squash players.

Read the full study: "[Socioeconomic inequalities in sport participation](#)".

