

GCSE PE TOPIC 5A: SOCIAL-CULTURAL INFLUENCES

1. PARTICIPATION

Research has shown that there are many differences in levels of participation between social groups:



- 17% of **people with a disability** participate regularly in physical exercise and sport
- 38% of adults from **black and other ethnic minority groups** participate regularly in physical activity and sport
- 26% from the **lowest socio-economic groups** participate regularly in physical activity and sport
- **Male participation** is 41% and **female participation** is 31%

There are two terms that you are required to learn:

i. **Social Groups:**

People who interact with one another, share similar characteristics, and have a sense of unity/togetherness.

ii. **Engagement patterns:**

Trends/tendencies in involvement.



2. PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN

Summarized from GCSE AQA PE Dynamic Learning Textbook

One of the biggest factors that determines a person's engagement is gender.

Women's participation has been majorly affected by a range of **stereotypical**¹ views. The following are stereotypes held by men about women:



- Women lack the strength to do the same physical activities as men
- Women who are competitive are not being feminine
- Too much physical activity limits a women's ability to give birth.
- A woman's role is to be the career, mother and manager of the home and

this prevents involvement in sport.

Despite the society is becoming more accepting of the idea of female sporting participation. Many **barriers to participation**² have been put in place which put off women from participating in as wide a range of sports as men:

- Sport is a male-dominated activity
- Elite female sport performers receive less media coverage than men
- Women receive less support from their peers and family
- Facilities for women have developed more slowly than those for male performers
- Media coverage of elite women performers is likely to include details that are not relevant to their performers – looks, attractiveness, whether they are married or have children, etc

¹ Stereotype: Widely held but fixed and oversimplified idea of a particular type of person.

² **Barrier to participation:** An obstacle that prevents a group within society from participating in sport or physical activity and therefore reduces overall levels of participation.

3. PARTICIPATION BY ETHNICITY

The definition of an **ethnic group**³, which is: *“A community made up of people who share a common cultural background.”* In the UK, the examples of ethnic minority include, “Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi...”.



30% of players in England football and the UK athletics squads are from ethnic minority communities. The stereotypical response to these numbers is that people from Black Caribbean and African groups have better physiological or anatomical attributes due to their genetic make-up. They have an innate advantage.

4. OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING PARTICIPATION

A. Socio-economic groups

A socio-economic group is defined as **“A group’s place within society; depends on a number of factors, including occupation, education, income, wealth and where they live.”**

Socio-economics has an effect on participation in that participation invariably involves a cost to the participant. In the UK you “pay to play”, and some physical activities may cost a lot of money to play.

Many people from ethnic minority groups are also in lower socio-economic groups and therefore has less disposable income. This may explain the high proportion of elite footballers and athletes from certain ethnic minority groups. These activities are relatively inexpensive to participate in, especially when compared to activities such as tennis or golf.

B. Age

i. How:

³ **Ethnic group:** A community made up of people who share a common cultural background.

*All school children participate in physical activity, because PE is a compulsory subject in schools. It is after children leave school that participation levels drop, which is called “**post-school drop-out**”⁴.*

ii. Age Difference in Sport Participation

Sports participation tends to be lower in older people than younger people, because many activities are restricted by physical fitness and as this decline with age, so participation levels drop.

iii. Age Difference in Type of Activity

Younger people are more involved with team sports and older people are more likely to be involved in individual activities.

Family

C.

i. Good:

A family can have positive effects on participation through their support of a performer. This support can be financial through paying for kit or fees for coaching. They may also provide transport for training and matches. The support can be simply emotional, when they watch the young performer play and cheer them on. Many parents also act as **role models** for their children.



ii. Bad:

Occasionally a lack of family support can be a negative influence on participation.

D. Peer groups

i. Positive:

⁴ Postschool-dropout: The reduction in participation levels in young adults after they leave full-time education

Peers exert pressure on their friendship groups. There is a tendency to conform to the rest of the peer group. Peers encourage participation in certain physical activities.

ii. **Negative:**

Peers, on the other hand, can discourage participation in some other activities, causing the tendency not to do the physical activity.

5. DISABILITY PARTICIPATION

Disability is defined as “a physical or mental condition that limits a person’s movements, senses or activities.” DISABILITY is not a barrier to sports participation. There are three main three main categories of disability

- Mobility impairments
- Sensory impairments
- Mental impairments

There are two ways in which we provide opportunities for those with a disability to participate in sport. There is **integration** (*involving the full participation of all people in community life, but usually referring to disabled people*) and **adapted sports** (*competitive sports for individuals with disabilities. While they often parallel existing sports played by able-bodied athletes, there may be some modifications in the equipment and rules to meet the needs of the participants*):



i. Benefits for integration

- Reduced possibilities off discrimination⁵
- Less stereotyping
- Fewer barriers

ii. Benefits for adapted sports/separate opportunities

- Greater range of opportunities through specifically designed programs.
 1. *Examples for adapted sports for people with disabilities*
 - Boccia – a bowls-type game, played at the Paralympics
 - Goalball – an active court game for visually impaired or sighted players
 - Wheelchair athletics/rugby/tennis/basketball/fencing
 - Seated volleyball/shooting/archery
 - Visually impaired football
 - Cycling



6. BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

A barrier to participation is an obstacle that prevents a group within society from participating in sport or physical recreation and therefore reduces overall levels of participation. There are a range of barriers to participation:

- Attitudes

⁵ Discrimination: The unjust or prejudicial treatment off different groups of people, especially on the grounds of people, especially on the grounds of race, age or sex.

- Role models
- Accessibility – to facilities/clubs/activities
- Media coverage
- Sexism
- Culture/religion
- Family Commitments
- Available leisure time
- Familiarity
- Education
- Socio-economic factors
- Adaptability

A. Attitude

i. Definition of attitude

An attitude is an opinion about something and means that people have a tendency to respond in a certain way towards something.



ii. How does the attitude a person affect participation?

A person may have a negative attitude about exercise and therefore does not participate.; whereas another person may have a positive attitude about exercise and does take part.

iii. How are attitudes changed?

- Attitudes can be changed by convincing the performer of all the good things about an activity, such as explaining the health benefits of exercise.
- By getting the performer to take part in the activity and finding out that they actually enjoy it, rather than hating it as they expected.

B. Roles Models

i. How do role models encourage participation?

Roles model tend to encourage participation in sport. They may also encourage people to play in a certain way and even influence fashion choices both on and off the field.

C. Accessibility

i. Examples

- Disabled swimmers may need a hoist to enter and leave the water
- Skiing needs snow or an artificial surface
- Water canoeing needs access to the type of water found in fast-flowing rivers usually found in rural areas; it is much less accessible in cities.

D. Media Coverage

Positive Effects of Media Coverage	Negative Effects off Media Coverage
Attendances may rise as people want to see the best players.	Attendances may fall as more people watch from home.
Supporters become better informed.	Only few sports on TV; minor sports not shown.
Easier to attract sponsorship	Sports personalities lose privacy
Encourages participation	Events can be sensationalized to promote the media rather than the sport
Developed personalities and role models	Changes to playing season like summer rugby league
Multiple cameras give viewers a close-up view of the action	Changes to event timings like Premier League matches on Friday and Monday nights
	Changes to the rules like new scoring system for badminton

E. Sexism



i. What is sexism?

Sexism is the belief that one sex (usually the male) is naturally superior to the other. It involves and leads to prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of gender.

ii. Sexism/Discrimination Examples

- The men's decathlon has been an Olympic event since 1912 but there is no place for the women's event
- While men play five sets at tennis Grand Slam events, women can only compete over three sets.

F. Culture/religion



i. Examples

Muslim women participate less than women from other social or cultural groups. Not only does this cultural group face the same inequalities as other women, but they also have the additional cultural difficulties of needing to follow a strict dress code and they need to only mix with other women.

ii. Reasons why participation from ethnic-minority groups are low

- The effects of discrimination as a result of prejudice, which may lead to reduced opportunities either through limited access or by individuals choosing not to participate.
- There is a high percentage of ethnic minority communities that are in economically deprived areas and have lower disposable incomes, and therefore cannot afford to participate.

G. Family Commitments

Individuals may need to look after other members of their family and this may limit opportunities to participate in sport and physical activities.

H. Available leisure time

i. Definition of leisure time

Leisure time is the time people have when they are not working, taking care of themselves or completing their family and home duties.

ii. How does leisure time affect participation

More leisure time means more time for sport and physical activity, but there are still many people who through choice or through necessity still have limited leisure time due to work or other commitments.

I. Familiarity

Most people would rather be involved with something they already know about and understand. Some of the more common ways to have familiarity with an activity is through parental influence, where children become more involved in the same activity as their parents.

J. Education

i. How do schools affect participation?

- Compulsory physical education lessons give every child an introduction to activities that they may continue to participate in after leaving school.
- The facilities of the school will affect participation rates of certain sports and affect PE provision.
- Teachers who have interests in certain sports that they emphasize in their lessons, but this in turn may actually limit a child's experience to certain activities.
- School's timetable can be a problem, as there may be a greater emphasis, and more lessons, given to academic subjects, so there is insufficient time allocated to PE.



K. Socio-economic factors

i. Reasons why there is lower level of participation by certain socio-economic groups

- The lower **disposable income**⁶ available to spend on leisure activities

⁶ Disposable income: Income available to be spent or saved as one wishes

- People from lower socio-economic groups may have limited leisure time because of the need to work long hours
- Some activities are associated with certain social groups, leading to possible rejection or discrimination
- Some activities still have membership that is restricted to certain socio-economic groups

L. Adaptability

People with disability or with limited disposable income are able to participate in sport that is either adapting a mainstream version of the sport or by designing a new sport. Adapting an activity to enable more people to participate is making an activity **inclusive**⁷:

- The sport of basketball can be adapted to wheelchair basketball for disabled users
- The sport of polo can be adapted to bicycle polo for people with limited disposable income.



⁷ Inclusive: Including everyone