PERCEIVED BARRIERS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS AND SOCIETIES AMONG HOME BAME STUDENTS

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**INTRODUCTION**

Improvement of students’ well-being and school experience is a core focus of most Universities and Colleges around the globe. In the United Kingdom (UK) specifically, it is the responsibility of universities to ensure that all students, irrespective of background, obtain high-quality academic experience throughout their stay in the University (Office for Students [OfS], 2022). However, it is well known that inequalities and disparities continue to exist between Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students and white students, in terms of degree awarded, sports and societies participation, and overall school experience (National Union of Students, [NUS], 2019; OfS, 2022). For instance, a study by Trendence UK (2019) revealed that BAME students are less likely to be involved in campus extracurricular activities. In addition, in 2017/2018, a 13% gap was found between the percentage of UK BAME students awarded a first-class or 2:1 degree and that of white students, with BAME students recording less likelihood of attaining good honours degree (NUS, 2019). Although a recent report has shown a reduction in this gap to 8.8% (NUS, 2022), the disparity is still significant, indicating the need for more research and actions to address it.

At Sheffield Hallam University (SHU), whilst there has been a decrease in the degree awarding gap from 19.4% in 2018/2019 to 13.7% in 2020/2021, this gap remains high, way above the national average (SHU, 2021). In line with this, the Vice-Chancellor (Professor Sir Chris Husbands) emphasised the unacceptability of this inequality and called on all staff and students to make a sustained effort to address and eradicate it (SHU, 2022). Given the complex nature of the causes of the degree awarding gap (SHU, 2021), and the significant role that a sense of belonging plays in retention and success (Thomas, 2012), it is pertinent that attempts to close this gap consider factors such as participation in campus extracurricular activities, which can impact BAME students’ sense of belonging in the University. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the barriers home BAME students face in joining sports and societies and explore their opinions on the best possible solutions.

Engagement of students in social activities such as sports clubs, and societies can be an avenue to socialise, make friends, and in turn experience an improved sense of belonging as well as mental well-being (Read-Bone, 2019). In line with this, research has demonstrated an association between participation in sports and other social activities and enhanced academic performance, retention, as well as improved mental and physical health among students (Milton et al., 2020; Vasold et al., 2019; Wilson and Millar, 2021). In addition, there is evidence to suggest that the attributes and skills developed via involvement in student sports and physical activity actually translate into higher employment rates for the graduates themselves. A study by Sheffield Hallam University's Sports Industry Research Centre (SIRC) showed that students who engaged in campus sports were less likely to experience unemployment compared to those who did not: 24% in comparison with 27% (Griffiths et al., 2017). Similarly, research by HECSU (2012) revealed that graduates who participated in extracurricular activities were less likely to be unemployed. Thus, societies and sports are the most important aspect of student life because they promote friendship, personal development, career development, and inclusiveness (Conway, 2017).

Several studies have demonstrated a relationship between engagement in sports clubs and societies and a sense of belonging as well as academic success. Research conducted by Soria et al. (2022) showed that participation in recreational activities like sports clubs and outdoor activities positively impacted a sense of belonging and resilience among college students. Likewise, students who engaged in campus recreational activities like sports and clubs were found to experience tremendous benefits such as greater social network, increased resilience, and a better sense of belonging (Henchy, 2011; Miller, 2011; Milton et al., 2020; St. Quinton & Brunton, 2020). Sense of belonging is in itself an important predictor of students’ success rates and overall well-being in the university. For example, studies have shown a significant correlation between a sense of belonging and the rate of graduation and retention among students (Hoffman et al., 2002; Stuber, 2011). Additionally, researchers have reported that sense of belonging promotes students’ psychological well-being and level of thriving (Soria et al., 2019; Soria & Horgos, 2021). Therefore, in order to achieve maximum academic experience for all students, it is important for every campus activity that contributes to an improved sense of belonging to be promoted especially among the already disadvantaged group like the BAME students.

Despite the enormous physical, psychological, career, and academic benefits of sports and societies, participation by members of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic populations is confronted by diverse barriers both at the society and university level, further contributing to the existing ethnic disparities in the level of sports engagement in the UK (Fadoju, 2020). For instance, reports from Sport England (2020) demonstrate significant differences in the level of engagement in physical activity (sports inclusive) across various ethnic groups. Asides from mixed ethnicity, adults aged 16 years and above who were white British, were more likely to engage in physical activities (63.2%) than those from other ethnicities including Black (56.0%) Chinese (60.2%) and Asian excluding Chinese (55.1%). This report also reveals that BAME especially black participation in sports is concentrated around only a few sports including football and basketball, leaving a question of the extent to which the various sports are inclusive and welcoming to BAME community.

Previous research has identified a number of barriers that prevent students from participating in campus sports clubs and student-led societies. Glazzard (2017) investigated barriers to engagement in students’ union activities among working-class students and found that time, cost, and ‘fitting in’ were factors that prevented these students from engaging in student union activities like sports and societies. Likewise, research conducted by Lincoln University Students’ Union showed that cost and time negatively impacted International Students’ involvement in students’ union sports and societies (Lilley and Barnes, 2017). However, this study also revealed additional barriers including cultural differences, difficulty making friends, and lack of information. Furthermore, Brereton and Mistry (2019) revealed a lack of inclusivity and communication, cost and payment arrangements, time and timing, and geography as barriers to student engagement in clubs and societies. While these studies have highlighted the likely barriers that students face in general, none of them specifically explored home BAME students. Given the unique circumstances of UK-domiciled BAME students- ethnic minority students with prior educational background within the UK and likely access to support systems and networks including family members and friends within the UK, it is likely that their experience with campus extracurricular activities is different from international students or White students.

At SHU, recent research conducted by the BAME students research ambassador revealed that UK-domiciled BAME students were less likely to join sports or societies, compared to international students and white students (Murrell-Smith, 2022). Specifically, only 13% of home BAME students reported engagement in sports/societies, compared to 27% of international and white students (Murrell-Smith, 2022). An analysis of the demographic data of societies within Sheffield Hallam Students’ Union (SHSU) however indicated that there is no significant difference in the rate of participation in society between home BAME students and White students when compared to the overall SHU population. However, further analysis of this data at the individual society level reveals that home BAME students’ engagement in societies is clustered around only a few and culture-specific societies. For example, BAME and Afro-Caribbean societies record high levels of home BAME participation (100% and 97% respectively), whereas non-culture-specific societies such as Film, Surf, and Tabletop Gaming record significantly low levels of home BAME students’ participation (14%, 8% and 3% respectively), relative to white students. This implies the need for further research to investigate barriers to engagement in sports/societies among home BAME students especially in the aspect of inclusivity, and ways to address such challenges. This is especially important because the role of sports/societies in academic success is well established and closing the degree awarding gap is a priority of SHU. Therefore, this research aims to employ a mixed-method design to investigate and provide deeper insights into the barriers faced by home BAME students in joining sports/societies and their opinions on the best possible solutions. The present study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What barriers to sports and society participation do Home BAME Students (HBS) experience at Sheffield Hallam University?
2. How inclusive and welcoming are societies and sports clubs to HBS?
3. What do Home BAME Students perceive to be the solutions to barriers faced in joining sports and societies?
4. Does HBS participation in sports/societies differ based on socio-demographic characteristics?

**METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted a parallel mixed method approach, with quantitative and qualitative data collected concurrently and independently of each other. This design allowed for equal priority to be given to both the quantitative and qualitative data and provided an opportunity to investigate the same research questions from two different methodological perspectives; thus, enabling a more thorough analysis of the research problem (Creswell & Clarke, 2011).

**Population**

The sample of this study consisted of UK-domicile (home) BAME students at Sheffield Hallam University. International students and students from white backgrounds were excluded from the study.

**Quantitative data collection**

Quantitative data for this research was collected using an online questionnaire that was created on Jisc Surveys. The questionnaire consisted of socio-demographic questions (gender, ethnicity, level of study, and College), filter questions to exclude international students and students from white backgrounds, and questions related to sports and society’s interests, barriers to participation, and potential solutions. Data collection began immediately after ethical approval was obtained and lasted from the 1st of March 2023 to the 15th of April 2023. Participants were recruited using non-probability convenience sampling. This sampling method is inexpensive and less time-consuming (Taherdoost, 2016) and thus allowed the researcher to conveniently reach a considerable number of participants within a limited period. The anonymous survey link was distributed to participants via emails and social media platforms. In addition, the survey was promoted throughout the students’ union via social media channels, general newsletters, Students Rights and Campaigns Team newsletters, and a pop-up stall. Furthermore, potential participants were contacted via emails sent out by the BAME society and SHSU’s volunteering/society team. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete.  While completion of the survey was completely voluntary, students were incentivised to do so by having the chance to win a £50 Amazon voucher.

A total of 50 students consented to participate in the survey. However, 29 were excluded because they were either international students or students who identified as White (See figure 1). The final sample consisted of 21 home BAME students. All participants identified as either male or female, with females constituting 61.9% while males made up 38.1% of the sample population. Most of the students were undergraduates. Further details of the sociodemographic characteristics of the study population are presented in Appendix A.

**Figure 1**: *Flowchart of study participants*



**Qualitative data collection**

Qualitative data for this study was obtained mainly through semi-structured interviews. Purposive sampling was used to recruit home BAME students both from the survey and through promotion on Newsletters and social media platforms. Particular attention was given to interviewing home BAME students with varied levels of engagement in sports clubs or societies including current members especially those in a predominantly White sports club or society, non-current members, those with interest, and those without interest. While participation was voluntary, each participant was incentivised with a £15 Amazon voucher. The in-depth interviews took place online via Zoom. This was to encourage participation from commuting students and students with extra responsibilities by saving time, reducing costs, and promoting comfort and convenience (Oliffe et al., 2021). Additionally, as data collection continued beyond the Easter break, setting up a face-to-face interview would have been challenging given that many students might have left Sheffield during this time. Although the researcher had prepared a variety of topics to be explored in the interview, the order of the questions was flexible, allowing participants to direct the discourse in light of their personal experiences. (Padgett, 2012). The interview was made up of 5 main sections - sports or society interests, awareness of benefits of sports/society, inclusivity, barriers, and potential solutions (Appendix B).

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Word. The researcher then manually verified the transcripts, and all errors were edited. Overall, 4 home BAME students were interviewed. All participants were undergraduates and identified as females.

**Data analysis**

Quantitative data from the survey were analysed using SPSS. Some graphs were however exported directly from Jisc surveys. Qualitative data from both the interviews and survey free-form texts were analysed using thematic content analysis. Specifically, the processes and framework laid out by Braun and Clarke (2006) were adopted for this analysis. As Clarke and Braun (2013) stated, thematic analysis allowed the researcher to explore and identify patterns, concepts, and themes across the data set; thereby, gaining deeper insights into the experiences of home BAME students in society and sports clubs participation.

**Ethical considerations**

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Committee (Ethic Review ID: ER51245568). Throughout the research process, it was ensured that the study followed the guidelines and standards set out in the ethics proforma. Prior to participation, all relevant study information including data management procedures and potential risks was provided to participants in the form of an information sheet. Participants were also informed of the voluntary nature of their involvement and their right to decline to answer any specific question or withdraw entirely from the research without repercussions. Thereafter, informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to both the surveys and interviews. Additionally, confidentiality and anonymity were upheld throughout the research process by eliminating any personally identifiable information and ensuring secure storage of data on a password-protected Sheffield Hallam University Q drive.

As discussions about topics like race and barriers may potentially cause emotional discomfort to participants, the researcher modified the interviews based on the student’s willingness and emotional capability to share their experiences. Furthermore, a debrief form containing referral information to both Sheffield Hallam Students’ Union and external wellbeing centres was provided to participants at the end of each interview session, so that participants could access further support and advice if required.

**FINDINGS**

**Sports and societies participation in the sample of home BAME students**

The survey showed that 52.4% (n=11) of home BAME students were current society members at Hallam. This is an interesting finding, given that previous research reported only 13% of home BAME students to be members of any society or sports club at Hallam (Murriel-Smith, 2021). In terms of sports, no respondent reported being a member of any sports club at Hallam. However, 10 out of 21 (47.6%) home BAME students indicated an interest in joining Hallam sports team.

In order to determine whether there is any association between specific socio-demographic variables (gender, level of study, and college) and society participation, a Chi-square test of independence was performed. The results as presented in Table 1 below showed no significant association between participation in society and gender, level of study, or college. While this may provide some preliminary evidence that these demographic characteristics may not impact engagement in SHSU societies, it is important to apply caution when considering this finding due to the small sample size of the present study.

**Table 1**: *Chi-square test of association between society membership and socio-demographic characteristics.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | SOCIETY | MEMBERSHIPN= 21 |
| DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE  | **Total** | **Yes**n(%) | **No**n(%) |
| GENDER |  |  |  |
| Male | 8 | 5 (62.5%) | 3 (37.5%) |
| Female | 13 | 6 (46.2%) | 7 (53.8%) |
| *p-*value |  |  | 0.659 |
| LEVEL OF STUDY |  |  |  |
| Undergraduate (first year) | 9 | 5 (55.6%) | 4 (44.4%) |
| Undergraduate (middle year) | 4 | 2 (50.0%) | 2 (50.0%) |
| Undergraduate (final year) | 5 | 3 (60.0%) | 2 60.0%) |
| Postgraduate (taught) | 3 | 1 (33.3%) | 2 (66.7%) |
| *p*-value |  | 0.895 |  |
| COLLEGE |  |  |  |
| Business, Technology and Engineering | 8 | 4 (50.0%) | 4 (50.0%) |
| Health, Wellbeing and Life Sciences | 4 | 3 (75.0%) | 1 (25.0%) |
| Social Sciences and Arts | 9 | 4 (44.4%) | 5 (55.6%) |
| *p*-value |  |  | 0.574 |

**Barriers and solutions to sports and society participation**

**Figure 2:** *Barriers to sports participation.*

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**Figure 3:** *Barriers to society participation*

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Several barriers that prevent home BAME students from getting involved in campus sports clubs or societies were identified by participants. Respondents also expressed their views on what the possible solutions to these barriers might be. The identified barriers are discussed below alongside students’ perceptions of possible solutions (where applicable).

**Belonging and Inclusivity**

As rated in the survey, a lack of sense of belonging was the third major barrier to engagement in sports (figure 2) and societies (figure 3). About 42.9% of home BAME students cited this as their reason for not participating in SHSU societies. Additionally, 23.8% of respondents reported a lack of inclusivity to be the barrier they face in society participation. However, when asked about how inclusive they feel the societies at Hallam were, only 9.6% of the respondents disagreed that the societies at Hallam are inclusive. This implies that although home BAME students may be aware that they have an equal opportunity like White students to join any society of their choice, they may not feel welcome in or comfortable enough to do so. The students’ opinions on how welcoming and racially diverse SHSU societies also reflect this. More students, specifically, 28.5% and 19.1% of the respondents disagreed with societies being ethnically diverse and welcoming to home BAME students respectively.

Regarding sports participation, 38.1% of the respondents identified a ‘lack of sense of belonging’ as the barrier they face in joining sports clubs. Additionally, 38.1%, 28.6%, and 23.8 of the students disagreed with SHU sports clubs being ethnically diverse, welcoming, and inclusive respectively.

The qualitative data provides deeper insight into the issue of belonging and representation. Most students expressed that they did not feel accepted or wanted in the societies and/or sports clubs at Hallam. While there may be several reasons for this, a lack of diversity, loneliness, and personal feelings were evident.

*‘I just felt very much like I wasn't being included. Like, people weren't making an effort to talk to me, and I just didn't feel very welcome, so, I just didn't go back after that.’*

*‘Most people would just avoid talking to new people and if you’re on your own it makes you feel lonely around others’.*

For the most part, students joined societies or sports clubs and later drop out if they feel unwelcomed or excluded from conversations. Other students, however, make quick judgments about whether a society or sports club will be welcoming and decide not to join if they believe the society or clubs are not inclusive.

*‘Not sure how inclusive and comfortable it would be. I am not convinced it’s diverse enough.’*

Another important sub-theme that emerged was a lack of representation. The underrepresentation of BAME students in campus societies and sports clubs can create a sense of exclusion and make it more difficult for BAME students to participate. Some students noted the importance of BAME representation to their sense of safety and belonging.

*‘I tend to like, to be somewhere where I see at least one coloured person like whether black, Asian like, as long as you're ethnic. Basically, I tend to be a bit more comfortable where there is at least one or more ethnic people’.*

When asked about what challenges they feel home BAME student experience in joining a sports club or society at Hallam, an interviewee stated:

*‘I think it's just a diversity thing. Because most of the time like especially like during the sports fair and the society fair, 90 maybe 96 percent or so from what I saw at least, all the time the representatives were white people. So, there was no like insight on whether there are other people who are non-white there.’*

More home BAME students will get involved in sports clubs and/or societies if they felt other students from diverse backgrounds were active members as well. Similarly, home BAME students will lack interest if they feel there is less BAME representation. The quotes below from three students summarise how representation impacts participation.

*‘…if you don't see people that look like you or have somewhat of a cultural or similar cultural bias then you are less likely to join. And then even if you want to join, I will try it like well like oh let's try and get our friends to join with us. They probably have so many different things going on. They're like, actually, I don't want to join. And then because your friends don't come then you're not gonna come as well so yea.’*

*‘Worried about standing out too much. Only joining ones which my friends will join even though I am interested in other ones. Some societies aren’t diverse enough it would feel really awkward to be there.’*

*‘I think maybe they feel like there are not going to be any BAME students as well, so they might feel like they can't connect with anyone.’*

Overall, when home BAME students do not feel represented or welcome in sports clubs or societies, engagement may trigger or worsen feelings of loneliness rather than build a sense of belonging as commonly reported (Soria et al., 2022). Consequently, students made a number of suggestions on what the students’ union can do to improve their engagement in this regard.

*‘Pushing and showcasing to students the diversity that some of the groups may have and the things in place that the union have that help that happen.’*

*‘Find out who else on my course is part of sports societies and get us to go together.’*

*‘I think that societies should be actively putting out there that they are a safe space, and that they're open to people of all backgrounds. I think anyone running a society should have to undertake some kind of training on diversity and inclusion.’*

**Cultural barriers**

Cultural differences were cited by every student interviewed as a significant barrier to involvement in sports and society. These barriers were related to religion, family upbringing, shared beliefs, and values. One student expressed concern about dressing when opposite genders are involved.

*‘For cultural reasons, a society mixed with the opposite gender would feel uncomfortable depending on the context. Non-sports it’s fine but for sports, I would have to worry about how to dress appropriately and comfortably. For example, I’d want to wear clothes to move easily in, but I’d feel too self-conscious depending on who I’m around.’*

There were feelings that most societies organise social events that revolve around clubbing and alcohol drinking. This may be discouraging to those who are abstainers, come from societies where binge drinking is not common, or belong to particular religious organisations:

*‘Focus on the activity itself rather than make them late in the evening to focus on going to clubs/ drink alcohol after’.*

*‘For me, it's a lot of the socials for the societies are mostly like clubbing and you know that kind of stuff. I'm personally not interested in that’.*

This finding is in line with previous reports that members of ethnic minorities generally consume less alcohol and are more likely to completely abstain from it in comparison to their White British peers (Institute of Alcohol Studies, 2020).

Culture did not only affect participation in sports clubs or societies, but it also played a key role in the choice of which specific society to join. In the interviews, some students noted that their motivation for participating in society is the chance to be able to connect on a deeper level with other students, beyond the activities offered by the society. They believe such connection can only happen in ethnic or culture-specific societies like the Afro-Caribbean where there are shared values and beliefs, similar backgrounds as well as familiar cultures.

*‘I think it's just more with like relatability like we tend to relate more with people who kind of have like the same background as us than people who don't’.*

*‘Probably because of the relations and like being around familiar people, being around people who are from your background who understand like what and why you're doing what you're doing’.*

Interacting with people who share similar experiences to their own provides home BAME students with a safe space, where they can be themselves irrespective of the negative experiences they encounter as minoritized students. They develop a sense of community as a result and rely on each other for information on how to ‘cater to their personal needs’. Many of the students believed such a deeper level of connection may not be possible in culture-neutral or predominantly white societies, which would explain why the participation of home BAME students in SHSU societies is clustered around only a few culture and ethnic-specific societies like Afro-Caribbean and BAME societies.

*‘Because it's harder. Culturally it's different. Like, we were brought up in a different way. So, like if you have to look at the parenting styles that both sides have, it's completely different. So, if I say something, it can sometimes be turned around into something that is actually not.’*

In fact, one interviewee asserted that because of shared cultural traits, she had encountered no obstacles to participating in Afro-Caribbean society.

*‘I don't think there was any barrier. You know, I felt the barriers that would have been present if I joined another society is not there because of the familiarity of cultures.’*

Participants recommended some solutions to this barrier. The students generally felt societies should be encouraged to ‘improve their knowledge of BAME cultures.’ They also believed societies should advertise the inclusion of different ethnicities to appreciate their culture.

**Insufficient Information**

In the semi-structured interviews, most home BAME students identified a lack of adequate information as another main challenge when attempting to join either society or sports clubs at Hallam. Although most of the students were aware of, and regularly visited society and sports websites for updates, they were concerned the information on the website does not provide adequate guidance on how to become actively involved in sports clubs or society. Some of the students felt they lacked the knowledge necessary to make an informed decision about whether to engage in sports or society and what that participation would mean for them specifically. Similarly, some students felt that the instructions for joining were not sufficiently clear.

*‘So, I think some of it is very obvious that they've updated it recently so it might have like recent meeting dates, but other societies’ web page looks very old. So, there's no information on like how to join, it just gives very general information about what society is about.’*

With regards to sports, one of the interviewees noted:

*‘They're just like oh, we have a taster session on this, this this dates, scan the QR code, join our WhatsApp group, that will give you like the times for you to come. And then I’m like, well, I don't know what your sport is about so how can I just sign up for a taster session that I don't understand.’*

Beyond the issue of societies and sports clubs not providing sufficient details of their activities as identified above, there were also concerns that information about campus extracurricular activities are not readily available to students. In both the interviews and survey free texts, several home BAME students stated how difficult accessing information about sports clubs or society has been for them and how this has negatively impacted their rate of participation.

*‘Make the society more inviting, rather than the want-to-be members seeking out information on their own. It can be overwhelming and lead to not joining.’*

*‘I do not know how to join a sports club. I would like to do badminton but not sure where to book’.*

The lack of sufficient information on societies’ webpage as well as the difficulty in accessing the available information appears to not just prevent students interested in societies from becoming actively involved, but also influence their overall perception of Hallam societies. Students seem to think that the societies at Hallam are ‘alcohol-focused’, and most social events usually take place in pubs. Other students believed that most available societies at Hallam are not active and do not have regular events. When asked about their reason for not joining a particular society, a student said:

*‘…like a lot of these societies that are available, they don't actually have events like sometimes I'll look into a society, and I'll try and find like the next meeting and I can't find any information about it.’*

The impact of insufficient information as a barrier to participation in societies is also reflected in the quantitative data. About 52.4% of home BAME students were not aware that there are over 60 sports clubs at Hallam, and 23.8% were not aware that there are over 100 student-run societies at Hallam. In addition, Chi-square statistics as shown in Table 3 revealed a significant association between knowledge of the various societies at Hallam and participation in societies (*p=*0.01). That is, students who were aware that there are over 100 student-run societies at Hallam were more likely to participate in society. Furthermore, while none of the students who said they were unaware of Hallam's numerous societies were involved in any of them, 69.2% of those who said they were aware of these societies were active members of at least one society.

Table 3: *Chi-Square test of association between society awareness and membership.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **SOCIETY** | **MEMBERSHIP****N=21** |
| **VARIABLE** | **Total** | **Yes**n(%) | **No**n(%) |
| **Awareness of societies** |  |  |  |
| Yes | 13 | 9 (69.2%) | 4 (30.8%) |
| No | 5 | 0 (0.0%) | 5 (100.0%) |
| Not sure | 3 | 2 (66.7%) | 1 (33.3%) |
| *P*-value |  |  | 0.010 |
| Likelihood Ratio |  |  | 9.197 |
| df |  |  | 2 |

Participants thought that raising awareness and increasing advertising was the best course of action in terms of potential remedies. Additionally, they believed that all students should have easy access to information on Hallam's sports clubs and societies, as well as specific disclosure of each club or society’s beliefs, values, and accessibility to students from all backgrounds. Giving as much information as possible to home BAME students will make them aware of what activities are available to them, the benefit they stand to gain in participating, as well as how to join any club or society of interest to them.

**Lack of varieties and options**

The second most frequently cited obstacle to participation in sports and activities, according to the surveys, is a lack of varieties and options. This was viewed as a hindrance to participation in sports and societies, respectively, by 38.1% and 47.6% of the students. In the interviews, however, only one student felt the society options available at Hallam were insufficient. This participant believed the existing societies were few and inadequately focused; thereby, consisting of too many members and unsuitable for students with a preference for more private and smaller groups.

*‘…isn’t there like another society for people from Africa like one that's a bit more targeted rather than just Afro-Caribbean because that's a big group of people, and for a person like me that doesn’t like being around too many people, it just kind of, like, deters me from wanting to be involved with a massive group of people that are just like from all different perspectives’*

Inadequate options/varieties as a barrier may be a consequence of insufficient information related to societies and sports clubs as frequently mentioned by participants of this study. Hallam has over 100 societies and over 60 sports clubs; moreover, students have the right to create a brand-new society of interest. Thus, the feeling that Hallam societies and sports clubs lack variety may reflect the fact that home BAME students have not been provided with detailed information about sports clubs and societies at Hallam. A student’s suggestion of a possible solution to this barrier also mirrored this. When asked what the students’ union can do to improve engagement, a student stated in the survey free text:

*‘I’m not sure if this is their role but the introduction of more societies’.*

**Costs**

Another barrier identified was the cost and the financial repercussions of participating in sports clubs or societies. Even though only a few students cited this obstacle, their emphasis on it makes it significant. There are fees associated with engagement in sports clubs or societies at Hallam. It is simple to understand how these fees could act as a barrier to participation for students.

*‘I just thought it was really expensive for one, like you have to pay and it's not a one-off charge. You know you're paying for a lot, paying for meeting places every week…’*

Although this may not be particular to home BAME students since UK students, in general, have acknowledged financial barriers to sports participation (Milani and Shotton, 2018), the impact on home BAME students may be exacerbated given that they frequently endure social disadvantages. For instance, BAME communities are more likely to experience unemployment (Powell and Francis-Devine, 2023) and poverty (Butler, 2020). Consequently, BAME students may find the financial commitments required for sports clubs and societies membership as a serious practical barrier especially if they desire to join more than one club or society. When asked about a reason they would choose not to join a particular society, some students noted:

*‘Yeah, like I said, if they're expensive, that's a big barrier’.*

 ‘*No- they cost too much’.*

In terms of perceived solutions, the participants felt the financial obligations should be completely eliminated. In the survey free text, a student noted:

*‘… make societies for free’.*

Offering free or discounted membership to sports clubs and societies is one approach that can be adopted to lower cost-related barriers. Indeed, this concept has been reported to significantly improve participation in various institutions (Milani and Shotton, 2018).

**Time and timing barrier**

The most frequently reported barrier to sports and societies in the quantitative sample was time constraints. Specifically, 66.7% and 52.4% of participants cited time constraints as a barrier to participation in societies and sports respectively. Consistent with this quantitative result, most of the interviewed students identified inconvenient timing and a lack of time owing to academic workload and part-time jobs as a barrier to being involved in sports clubs or societies at Hallam.

*‘So well, at the start of the year, I did join quite a few different societies, but because I was in so many and they're all like on the same day, so I had to kind of pick and choose what I wanted to do. And I do volunteering as well, so that takes priority, so, I wasn't able to do the Netball one’.*

*‘I guess, again, like the timing cause like I've been to like maybe four or five different societies, and they're all on a Wednesday night at the same time, so I can't be in, like multiple places at once’.*

*‘I’ve never really had any interest of like participating in any sport or societies because I have a busy life. Like, I have a lot going on. I have Uni and then part-time work, so I don't know how to fit it in to be fair’.*

It was evident that the students prioritised the aspects of their university life that they believed were relevant to their future careers and employability over involvement in sports and society. While they recognised that participation in sports and society was important to their social life at the university, they did not think it was a priority when compared to other demands on their time. To some, volunteering was more important while to others, academic excellence was more vital, and family influence appeared to play a key role in this.

*‘…I’m more geared towards like family orientated like it's always like make sure you get a good education and make sure that you're doing something that's going to help your career later on’.*

*‘…it's like because I volunteer that's my main priority, so, it kind of stops me from pursuing like hobbies and like sports and stuff, because my time is taken up elsewhere’.*

Although it is hoped that participation in campus recreational activities will enhance and advance students' academic progress, for some students, it actually takes away from their limited study time. It is important to note however that if students do not prioritise engagement in campus sports and societies for the sole reason that it does not contribute to their academic achievement and career, it could be because they are not aware of the advantages that such involvement has for their academic performance and employability. For instance, the quantitative data of this study revealed that whilst no students disagreed with the social and physical health benefits of sports and society participation, 14.3% disagreed that it is beneficial to academic success. Hence, there is a need to properly educate home BAME students on the academic and career-related advantages of campus recreational activities.

Regarding perceived solutions to time-related barriers, the students felt the meeting days and times for sports and societies should be more varied.

*‘Like doing them on different days of the week, like maybe one week, do it on like I don't know on Tuesday then the second week on a Thursday, because then you might not be able to go to every session, but you still do have that opportunity to go.’*

Students who already have significant responsibilities on a certain day of the week will have the chance to participate in sports or society on a week where the meeting day does not conflict with their strong commitments if meetings are not held on the same day each week.

**Perception of campus sports**

This barrier emerged only in the qualitative data and was relevant to only sports participation. Some students believed the sports clubs and activities at Hallam were solely for competitive purposes and were open to only skilled and experienced students who are looking to build a career out of it.

*‘I feel like a lot of them are mainly for people who are doing it like competitively because when I play sports, I only do it for fun because I'm not like proper like skilled at any so I felt like maybe I shouldn't maybe join any.’*

*I just feel like I probably wouldn't get that much of a career out of it if I wasn't that great. So, it would just be something to do Instead of like something I can do as a career.’*

This perception appears to have been fuelled by the students’ negative experiences when attempting to join sports clubs at Hallam, and the lack of knowledge about the social clubs that Hallam offers.

*‘Had a very bad experience with [name of a sport club] - felt as though this could have been racially motivated.’*

*‘I would have loved to join football or rugby (women’s) but they don’t offer a social aspect to it or don’t advertise that they have a social section.’*

Some suggestions were made by participants regarding what they feel should be done to correct this perception of sports clubs among home BAME students:

*‘More advertisement for social clubs, more encouragement for people with lack of experience in the sports to join.’*

‘*Be more welcoming - especially for those that do not know much about the sport.’*

Overall, students felt there should be a proper promotion of the available social sports clubs and a friendly environment should be created for those who may not be very competent at the sport of interest.

**Distance**

Distance and traveling were cited as a barrier by some participants in the survey, as well as one interviewee. The quantitative data showed that 28.6% and 23.8% of the participants were respectively not engaging in societies and sports clubs due to distance. This barrier was mostly applicable to commuting students.

*‘…it was also at collegiate as well, which is quite far from me, so having to travel to and from every time just felt a bit difficult.’*

In terms of solution, one student emphasised the need for society and sports-related meetings and events to be earlier in the day so commuting students do not have to travel late. As commuting is expensive, tiring, and stressful (Thomas and Jones, 2017), it can be hard to engage in campus recreational activities considering the associated costs and required time commitments.

**Disability**

Qualitative data from the survey free text showed that a few students were not engaging in sports or societies mainly because of their disability. This was mostly related to a feeling of fear and lack of confidence.

*‘I haven’t joined a club or society but my disability fears me from joining.’*

*‘Disability stops me from joining.’*

*‘Disability and confidence barrier’*

As this barrier only emerged in the survey free texts, it is not clear what the cause of these feelings may be. Therefore, it is important for future research to explore deeper the experiences of disabled students with sports clubs and societies at Hallam.

**DISCUSSION**

This study employed a mixed-method approach to explore and provide deeper insights into the barriers faced by home BAME students in joining sports clubs and societies at SHU. Findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data indicated that home BAME students often face multiple barriers to engagement in sports clubs and societies at Hallam. A lack of sense of belonging and inclusivity as well as cultural differences were found to be significant barriers to their participation in sports clubs and societies. The participants generally felt that the societies and sports clubs at Hallam are not inclusive and welcoming enough to home BAME students, forcing them to either completely exclude themselves from campus recreational activities, or settle for ethnic-specific societies like the Afro-Caribbean, where they feel relatively safe and can easily connect to each other on a deeper level because of shared cultural beliefs and values. This finding is in line with a previous study by Brereton and Mistry (2019), which showed that most students withdrew from student groups for reasons such as a ‘lack of feeling included’ or they ‘did not fit in with their club or society’. As students typically view campus clubs as a place for socialisation and new friendships (Culic et al., 2016), and socialisation is a key motivation for engagement in sports (Long et al., 2015), it is possible therefore that when home BAME students experience a lack of connection with their white peers in a club or society, they tend to withdraw or refuse participation irrespective of their level of interest and what the club or society may offer. The implication of this is that Hallam sports clubs and societies must be a good socialising environment for home BAME students in order to encourage their participation.

Consistent with previous studies (Brereton and Mistry, 2019; Glazzard, 2017; Lilley and Barnes, 2017), time constraints, and insufficient information were serious obstacles to engagement with societies or sports. While some of the students genuinely could not afford the extra time for sports clubs and societies because of part-time jobs, commuting, and other commitments, others simply gave campus recreational activities less of a priority because they believe they do not have much of an impact on academic success, employability skills, and future career. This was found to have a clear linkage to a lack of adequate information on the academic and personal development opportunities that sports and societies offer. Indeed, participation in sports and other social activities is associated with enhanced student retention and academic success (Milton et al., 2020; Vasold et al., 2019; Wilson and Millar, 2021) as well as improved employability skills (Griffiths et al., 2017; Mansfield et al., 2013). Therefore, there is a need to raise awareness of the academic and employment-related benefits of engaging in campus extracurricular activities among home BAME students, particularly given that BAME students believe higher degrees will allow them to prove their employability and competencies (Connor et al., 2004) and stand a chance of succeeding in a highly unfavourable society. Other barriers namely perception of Hallam sports and lack of varieties and options were equally a reflection of inadequate information. For instance, the notion that Hallam sports clubs are strictly competitive prevented some home BAME students from getting involved. However, this may have been an indication of a lack of knowledge of the social sports programmes provided by SHU. Alternatively, this can be a sign that Hallam's social sports groups are insufficient. Notwithstanding, it is obvious that home BAME students are underinformed about their options; hence, it is important to efficiently promote sports and social activities among these students to allow them to make informed decisions.

Other barriers revealed by this study were related to cost and disability. Contrary to Brereton and Mistry’s study which found Cost to be the second most important reason student would choose not to join a club or society, only one participant in the survey free texts and one interviewee mentioned cost in the present study. In addition to being a practical barrier to engagement, society costs can make students feel unwelcomed (Glazzard, 2017); further reducing participation. However, since cost only emerged as a barrier in this study’s qualitative data, it is difficult to ascertain its significance at SHU; thus, a university-wide survey of finance-related barriers to participation in sports clubs and societies at Hallam is required to fully understand the impact of cost as a barrier. With regard to disability, this study revealed that disabled home BAME students feel afraid and not confident enough to join a sports club or society at Hallam. This finding aligns with a report that 17% fewer disabled students were participating in sports compared to their non-disabled counterparts (BUCS, 2014 in Milani and Shotton, 2018). The exact reason for this feeling of ‘fear’ was not explored in this study. Nonetheless, as disabled students often express less satisfaction with their academic experience (BUCS, 2014 in Milani and Shotton, 2018), it will be useful for future research to explore deeper the experiences of disabled students in clubs and society at Hallam.

Another important finding of the present study was in relation to home BAME students’ opinions of the solutions to the barriers they face. The most frequently suggested solutions were related to increased appreciation of BAME cultures and advertising. The students felt societies and sports clubs at Hallam should be encouraged to learn about BAME cultures and all relevant information about each society or club, their values, as well as available social sports activities should be well communicated to students. The students also suggested that societies should be made free. These findings are consistent with the examples of good practice recommended by Milani and Shotton (2018) in a report for NUS on how to address barriers to students' participation in clubs. In general, home BAME students believed their participation rate could be increased and were aware of the steps needed to remove the obstacles they encounter as a minoritized group. This suggests their reliance on the students’ union and the university to effectively address these obstacles and improve their experiences in sports clubs and societies.

The findings of this study also showed that there was no significant association between society participation and gender, level of study as well as college. This may suggest that SHSU societies attract members based on shared interests and preferences rather than gender or level of study or college. This finding is contrasting with a report by Trendence UK (2019) that postgraduates are less likely to be involved in extracurricular activities while at university. This may be because the sample of this study included only postgraduates on taught courses, with no postgraduate research students. It should be noted also that, since all participants of this study identified as either male or female, it is difficult to say whether the impact of gender on engagement in society will remain non-significant when other gender identities are considered. Moreover, the small sample size of this study may have impacted these findings. Future studies with larger sample sizes or more representative samples might yield different results.

**LIMITATIONS**

The findings of the present study should be considered in light of some limitations. First, this study had a very small sample size which may have impacted the findings, as a small sample size is known to increase the possibility of assuming a false premise as true (Faber and Fonseca, 2014). In addition, the use of non-probability sampling for the recruitment of participants for this study means this study’s findings may not be generalisable. Lastly, this study had no current members of any sports clubs at Hallam.

Despite these limitations, this research was not without its strengths. The adoption of a mixed-method approach for this study allowed for the study’s research questions to be addressed from two different philosophical perspectives. Additionally, even though the sample size was small, and the sample was not properly randomised, there was still a good representation of different levels of study and colleges at Hallam.

**CONCLUSION**

This study highlighted the significant barriers faced by home BAME students in joining sports clubs and societies, including lack of belonging and inclusivity, insufficient information, cultural barriers, cost, time constraints, disability, and distance. It also provided promising solutions that can tackle these barriers. By implementing increased advertising and promotion of BAME cultures among all sports clubs and societies, we can create an environment that embraces diversity, fosters inclusivity, and ensures that home BAME students feel welcomed, represented, and empowered to participate fully. These measures have the potential to not only enhance the experiences of BAME students in sports and societies but also contribute to a more equitable and diverse campus community.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Intensify efforts aimed at promoting inclusivity and diversity in sports clubs and societies; encourage respect and appreciation for different cultures.
2. Increase advertising and promotion of sports clubs and societies and emphasise their values and availability to students of all backgrounds.
3. Organise targeted outreach to home BAME students.
4. Removal or subsidisation of membership costs
5. Ensure adequate BAME representation in all societies and sports clubs at Hallam- collaborate with BAME Ambassadors.
6. Proactively work with representatives of sports clubs and societies on responsible alcohol consumption.
7. Introduction of more social sports programs or clubs and intensify efforts aimed at promoting this among home BAME students.
8. A more thorough investigation of the experiences of disabled students in sports clubs and societies.
9. Create more awareness of the benefits and opportunities available in societies and sports clubs.

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**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

**Table A1:** *Demographic characteristics of participants.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CHARACTERISTICS | FREQUENCY (PERCENTAGE) | CHARACTERISTICS | FREQUENCY (PERCENTAGE) |
| Gender |  | **Ethnicity** |  |
| Male | 8 (38.1%) | Black or Black British- Caribbean | 1 (4.8%) |
| Female | 13 (61.9%) | Black or Black British- African | 1 (4.8%) |
| Gender same as birth | 21 (100.0%) | Black or Black British- Others | 1 (4.8%) |
| Level of study |  | Asian or Asian British- Indian | 1 (4.8%) |
| Undergraduate (first year) | 9 (42.9%) | Asian or Asian British- Pakistani | 7 (33.3%) |
| Undergraduate (middle year) | 4 (19.0%) | Asian or Asian British- Bangladeshi | 1 (4.8%) |
| Undergraduate (final year) | 5 (23.8%) | Mixed- White British and Black | 3 (14.3%) |
| Postgraduate (taught) | 3 (14.3%) | Mixed- White British and Asian | 2 (9.5%) |
| College |  | Mixed- White British and Others | 1 (4.8%) |
| Business, Technology and Engineering | 8 (38.1%) | My ethnicity is not described here | 3 (14.3%) |
| Health Wellbeing and Life Sciences | 4 (19.0%) | **Societies awareness** |  |
| Social Sciences and Arts | 9 (42.9%) | Yes | 13 (61.9%) |
| Protected Identity (multiple response) |  | No | 5 (23.8%) |
| Religion | 6 (26.8%) | Not sure | 3 (14.3%) |
| Disability | 4 (19.0%) | **Sports clubs awareness** |  |
| LGBTQ+ | 5 (23.8%) | Yes | 6 (28.6%) |
| None | 8 (38.1%) | No | 11 (52.4%) |
| Prefer not to say | 3 (14.3%) | Not sure | 4 (19.0%) |
| Society membership |  | **Sports club membership** |  |
| Yes | 11 (52.4%) | Yes | 0 (0.0%) |
| No | 10 (47.6%) | No | 21 (100.0%) |

APPENDIX B-INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

**THOSE ALREADY PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS (OR SOCIETY)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Focus area | Example of questions |
| Sports or Society Interest | Which clubs (or societies) are you a part of, at Sheffield Hallam Students’ Union? Tell me, how did you first learn about the various societies (or sports club) at Hallam?Why did you join this particular society (or sports club)? |
| Awareness of benefits | How has your participation in sports/society impacted your university experience? |
| Barriers | Tell me about your experience in sports clubs (or society). As a home BAME student, what challenges have you experienced in your engagement with this society (or sports club)?Are there any reasons you would choose not to join a certain society?  |
| Inclusivity | In your opinion, how welcoming are the societies (or sports club) at Hallam to BAME students? In your own words, do you feel that home BAME students are well represented at the various societies/sports club? |
| Solutions | How were you able to overcome these barriers?In your opinion, how can the student union improve participation of home BAME students? |

**THOSE NOT PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS (OR SOCIETY)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Focus area | Example of questions |
| Sports or Society Interest | Do you have any interest in participating in sports (or society)?Which clubs (or societies) are you aware of, at Sheffield Hallam Students’ Union?Tell me, how did you first learn about the various societies (or sports club) at Hallam? |
| Awareness of benefits | How do you think participation in sports/society can impact your university experience?(Prompt: When you look at other students who are actively involved in sports or society), what benefits do you think they have that you may not have?).  |
| Barriers | As a home BAME student, have you ever attempted to join or desired to join any sports club (or society) whilst studying at Sheffield Hallam University? Why/Why notAre there any reasons you would choose not to join a certain society?  |
| Inclusivity | In your opinion, how welcoming are the societies (or sports club) at Hallam to home BAME students? In your own words, do you feel that home BAME students are well represented at the various societies/sports club?  |
| Solutions | What do you feel are the solutions to these barriers?In your opinion, how can the student union improve participation of home BAME students in sports/society? |

APPENDIX C- A COPY OF THE SURVEY



PILOT: Home BAME students' barriers to joining sports/societies

# Welcome Page

## Thank you for your interest in this survey.

In the Student Rights Team at Sheffield Hallam Students’ Union, we are interested in exploring the barriers Home BAME students face in joining societies and sports. Given that engagement in sports/societies is linked to improved sense of belonging, academic performance and overall university experience, we are particularly concerned with improving the rate of participation of Home BAME students in sports/societies.

The survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you will be given the opportunity to enter a prize draw to thank you for your time.

Your responses are completely confidential. By hitting 'submit' at the end of this survey, you consent to Sheffield Hallam Students' Union using your data as described below. The findings of this study will inform recommendations on what measures the students' union can take to improve home BAME students experiences with sports and societies.

**DATA PROTECTION**:

## All data collected through this survey will be viewed, accessed and processed by staff within Sheffield Hallam Students' Union (SHSU). Hence, your responses to this survey are entirely confidential. At no point will the information you provide be shared in a way that would allow you to be personally identified. Any published material will be fully anonymised. Data collected via this survey will be stored in accordance with SHSU GDPR policies and practices. If you have any queries about this survey, please email us at uusresearch@shu.ac.uk or should you have questions about how your data is being used, please email su\_gdpr@shu.ac.uk.

Thank you.

You can access the full downloadable information sheet here. Participant Information Sheet BAME.docx

FILTER QUESTION 1

Which of these describes your current fee status?  *Required*

Home student (Including EU students). International student

# FILTER QUESTION 2

Do you describe your ethnicity as WHITE?  *Required*

Yes No

# Socio-demographic questions

In this first section, you will be asked some socio-demographic questions. Please be aware that your responses are completely confidential. These questions will only be used to understand the differences between students based on demographic characteristics.

Please read the following questions and tick the response that best apply.

How would you describe your ethnicity?  *Required*

Black or Black British- Caribbean Black or Black British- African Black or Black British- Others Asian or Asian British- Indian Asian or Asian British- Pakistani

Asian or Asian British- Bangladeshi Asian or Asian British- Chinese Asian or Asian British- Others Mixed- White British and Black Mixed- White British and Asian Mixed- White British and other

My ethnicity is not described here

Please choose a gender that you identify with.  *Required*

Male Female

Non binary/third gender

My gender identity is not described here

Is your gender the same as what was determined at birth?  *Required*

Yes No

Prefer not to say

Do you identify with another protected identity (Please select all that apply).  *Required*

None LGBTQ+

Disability Religion

Prefer not to say

Please indicate your level of study.  *Required*

Undergraduate (First year) Undergraduate (Middle year). Undergraduate (Final year) Postgraduate (taught)

Post graduate (research)

Which of the following is your college?  *Required*

Business, Technology and Engineering Health, Wellbeing and Life Sciences Social Sciences and Arts

# SPORT/SOCIETIES PARTICIPATION

Are you aware that there are over 100 student-run societies at Sheffield Hallam Students' Union?  *Required*

Yes No

Not sure

Are you aware that there are over 40 sports clubs at SHU?  *Required*

Yes No

Not sure

Are you a member of any societies at Sheffield Hallam?  *Required*

Yes No

Please tell us which societies you belong to. If not a member of any socety, please type in 'None'  *Required*

Are you a member of any sports club at Sheffield Hallam?  *Required*

Yes No

Please tell us which sports clubs you belong to. If not a member of any society, please state 'none'.  *Required*

To what extent do you agree or disagree that enagement in societies is beneficial to your... 

*Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row. Please select at least 4 answer(s).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| ...Academic performance |  |  |  |  |  |
| ...Mental wellbeing |  |  |  |  |  |
| ...Physical health |  |  |  |  |  |
| ...Social life |  |  |  |  |  |

To what extent do you agree or disagree that enagement in campus sports is beneficial to your...

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row. Please select at least 4 answer(s).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| ...Academic performance |  |  |  |  |  |
| ...Mental wellbeing |  |  |  |  |  |
| ...Physical health |  |  |  |  |  |
| ...Social life |  |  |  |  |  |

# Societies interest

Are you interested in joining any societies at Sheffield Hallam?  *Required*

Yes No

Already a member

If yes, please tell us what barriers are stopping you from joining. If No, please tell us why you are not interested.  *Required*


# Sports Interest

Are you interested in joining any sports club at Sheffield Hallam?  *Required*

Yes No

Already a member

If YES, please tell us what barriers are stopping you from joining. If NO, please tell us why you are not interested.  *Required*


# Barriers and solutions

To what extent do you believe that the societies at Hallam are...  *Required*

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row. Please select at least 3 answer(s).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Strongly disagree | Disagree |
| Inclusive |  |  |  |  |  |
| Welcoming to home BAME students |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ethnically diverse |  |  |  |  |  |

To what extent do you believe that the Sports clubs at Hallam are...

Please don't select more than 1 answer(s) per row. Please select at least 3 answer(s).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Strongly disagree | Disagree |
| Inclusive |  |  |  |  |  |
| Welcoming to home BAME students |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ethnically diverse |  |  |  |  |  |

Thinking about societies, which of the following barriers have impacted your level of participation? Please tick all that supply.  *Required*

Lack of varieties and options Lack of inclusiveness Unwelcoming environment Discrimination

Time constraints

Lack of sense of belonging

No culturally-appropriate society or club Distance

None of the above

I have not experienced any form of barrier.

If you have any comments about the challenges you experience in joining societies or if you have experienced any barrier that is not described above, please share below.

Thinking about sports, which of the following barriers have impacted your level of participation? Please tick all that supply.  *Required*

Lack of varieties and options Lack of inclusiveness Unwelcoming environment Discrimination

Time constraints

Lack of sense of belonging

No culturally-appropriate society or club Distance

None of the above

I have not experienced any form of barrier.

If you have any comments about the challenges you experience in joining sports club or if you have experienced any barrier that is not described above, please share below.

Do you agree that the Students Union can improve your level of engagement in sports and/or societies?  *Required*

Yes No

Not sure

Please briefly state what you think the Students Union can do to improve your participation in sports/societies.  *Required*


# CONCLUSION

Thank you, you have reached the end of this survey. if you would love to enter a prize draw to win a £50 gift card, please drop your SHU email address below.

If you would be interested in participating in a 30-minute interview about the topics explored in this survey, please type your email below.


# Final page

Thank you for participating in this survey.

If you have any queries about this survey, please email us at uuresearch@shu.ac.uk or should you have questions about how your data is being used, please email su\_gdpr@shu.ac.uk.