



University of  
St Andrews



The Political Institute  
of Action Research

# Mapping the Impacts of Socio-economic Background on Sport Participation:

## 'A University of St Andrews Case Study'

Authors:

*Rhea Nazir (Head Researcher)*

*Raph Robeson*

*Milly MacKenzie*

*Adeline Shaw*

*Lucie Siu*

*Eleanor Summers*

*Peter Napier*

Editor:

*Nina Harbison*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This paper investigates the influence of socio-economic background on student participation in sports at the University of St Andrews, focusing on motivation and ability. Drawing on social identity theory, social comparison theory, and economic factors, the first part explores how socio-economic background affects students' motivation to engage in sports. The second part delves into the concept of ability, considering early development, geographical circumstances, employment status, and education. The analysis combines primary data from an online survey of St. Andrews students with relevant secondary research.

The findings suggest that socio-economic background significantly influences motivation, with social comparison and social class playing crucial roles. Economic factors, such as family occupation and income, also impact motivation, particularly in terms of time availability and financial constraints. In terms of ability, early development, prior sporting experience, and geographical circumstances contribute to disparities in sport participation. Surprisingly, employment status and educational background have less discernible effects on participation.

To address these findings, potential solutions are proposed, including making gym facilities more accessible, promoting inclusivity through cultural societies, offering free play opportunities, and organizing more informative events. The paper concludes that socio-economic background does influence student motivation and ability to participate in sports, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to enhance inclusivity and overcome barriers in the university sports culture.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.0 MOTIVATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN SPORT .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Theories on Motivation.....	4
a. Social Identity Theory .....	4
b. Social Comparison and Social Class.....	5
c. Survey Results: Social Comparison and Student Participation in St Andrews .....	6
2.2 Economic Factors Influencing Motivation.....	11
a. Theoretical Background: Becker’s Theory of Time Allocation and the SLOTH Model.....	11
b. Review of Previous Research .....	12
c. Financial Limitations on Sport Participation for Students at St Andrews .....	12
d. Impact of Working as a Student at St Andrews.....	14
e. Motivations for Sport Participation Across Socio-economic Groups .....	15
<b>3.0 ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN SPORT .....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Early Access and Development .....	18
3.2 Impact of Geography and Employment Status .....	21
a. Geography.....	21
b. Employment Status.....	22
3.3 Pre-University Education and Sport Participation.....	27
<b>4.0 DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>5.0 CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>7.0 APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>38</b>

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic background is determined by a number of interlinked social and economic factors such as occupation, income, amount and type of education, financial security and opportunities (Oxford Reference, n.d.). Socio-economic background or status can be used as a way to compare individuals or groups within communities, such as the University of St Andrews. This paper will explore the research question of how socio-economic background influences student participation in sport at university, specifically the University of St Andrews.

This report tackles this question in two parts. First, the influence of socio-economic factors on motivating participation in sport will be explored. Motivation is an internal psychological process which directs and sustains an individuals' behavioural activities towards a goal (Liu et al., 2023). This paper will look at the influence of motivation through the lens of social identity theory (SIT), social comparison theory, perception of social class, and the impact of economic factors, such as family occupation and income.

Second, this paper will consider the concept of ability in the context of sport participation at university and discuss how ability to participate in sport is affected by an individual's socio-economic background. Ability, in this paper, refers not just to an individual's physical performance in any given sport but also to their access to resources, prior experience during earlier years of development, time availability and financial constraints. It will do this by looking at the impact of early development on future participation in sport as well as the influence of familial encouragement, geographic circumstances, employment status, and, finally, students' former education with a particular focus on the influence of private education on sport participation.

The analysis for this paper uses both primary and secondary data. Qualitative primary data was collected using an online survey of 83 University of St Andrews students. The aim of this survey is to investigate whether social-economic background is the main influencing factor behind St Andrews students' motivation and ability to participate in sports. The data collected will be used to gain a better understanding of the perspectives of the St Andrews student demographic, compare it to secondary research, and formulate informed solutions to allow more students to participate in sport at university. We hope that the proposed recommendations will be used to facilitate increased student participation in sports and boost the overall wellbeing of St Andrews students.

## 2.0 MOTIVATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

### 2.1 Theories in Motivation

Motivation is an integral part of sport performance and can be considered to be a critical factor in encouraging sport (Sáez et al, 2021).

#### a. Social Identity Theory

Social identity is defined as an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in social groups (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). An individual's perceived belongingness to different social groups strongly affects their behavior. The Social Identity Theory (SIT) proposed by Tajfel and Turner accounts for concepts that explains individual behaviour behind the extent of integration to social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). According to SIT, a person has not just one "personal self" but rather several social selves that correspond to group memberships. For example, having an identity as part of a school, sports team, or family. The four aspects of SIT include: social categorization, social identification, social comparison and positive distinctiveness. Social groups are categorised based on similar characteristics. Groups that share features are known as in-groups, while groups that are different are represented as out-groups. Social comparison is when people consciously compare their in-groups with out-groups to justify membership in the group. Positive distinctiveness results from social comparison, when people display in-group favouritism by favouring members and traits of the in-group, and out-group discrimination by developing preferences against the out-group members.

Differences in socio-economic background can lead to social comparison by creating inequalities in resources and opportunities. These disparities prompt positive distinctiveness because individuals will assess their own hierarchy in relation to others based on the amount of opportunities they have (Manstead, 2018). Current data shows that people from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to be inactive compared to people in higher socio-economic groups because they lack the money to pay for certain activities and experiences. Additionally, people from a less advantaged socio-economic background often experience more discrimination due to financial barriers (Iqbal & Nagalingappa, 2021). From these theoretical findings, we can infer that prejudice and discrimination can negatively influence participation and motivation in sports.

SIT plays a significant role in student sport clubs and societies by suggesting how the formation of group memberships fosters a strong social identity. Social identification can drive motivation and promote a sense of belonging, but prejudice and discrimination can lead to low self-esteem and a lack of participation. The next section will discuss how social comparison affects student participation in sport clubs and societies, focusing on current and past research and examples of actions that could be taken to increase participation. It will specifically explore the influence of social comparison on university student motivation to participate in sport. Finally, this section will consider questions from the survey conducted in St Andrews that explore perceptions of inclusiveness in sport, the impacts of socio-economic backgrounds on sport participation, and the social aspects of being in a sporting club.

#### b. Social Comparison and Social Class

Social comparison theory explains the ways in which individuals judge their own abilities and attitudes in comparison with others. This is seen to influence individual self-image and subjective well-being (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Research supports the idea that most people consistently engage in social comparisons. Socio-economic background is an important factor that drives social comparison between individuals in sport clubs and societies. Comparison tends to make individuals vulnerable to psychological and behavioural responses, such as a lack of motivation or participation.

Research suggests that the way people judge their own abilities and attitudes in comparison with others influences motivation. A study by Diel et al. (2021) explored the impact of social comparison on motivation in university student athletes. It used an experience sampling method with questionnaires to collect self-reported data and found that social comparison has an influence on motivation. It was found that moderate upward comparison (comparison to superior others) was seen to be beneficial to athletes; however, extreme upward comparisons lead to decreased motivation and declining tendencies of engagement. Downward comparisons were observed to lead to coasting or decreased motivation. This study sheds light on the strong influence of social comparison on motivation in sport.

Social environment is said to consist of all of society's beliefs, costumes, practices and behaviour. Research shows that it is an important factor which contributes to student

behaviour (Arfin et al., 2018). When exploring motivation, perception of social class is an important influencer. Social class encapsulates differences in occupation, education, and income due to social status of different groups throughout society. It has been found that people's behaviour towards participation in leisure sports activities is significantly influenced by social class (Liu et al, 2023).

Research conducted by Liu et al. (2023) categorised university students into characteristics of behaviour motivation and further explored the influence of familial social class on university students' behaviour motivation. It used College Students' Sports Behavior Motivation Questionnaire to survey 1092 college (university) students. It then used a potential profile analysis to classify types of behaviour motivation and investigate the impact of familial social background on sports behaviour motivation. The findings showed that sports behaviour motivation could be categorised into four types: low motivation type, healthy appearance type, healthy fun type and high motivation type. Further, it was found that there was a relationship between the motivation type exhibited by students and familial social class. The study revealed that lower familial social class correlated with a higher likeliness that a college student would exhibit the low motivation type. Alternatively, students from higher social classes were more likely to exhibit higher motivation types and had higher perceptions of their own health. The findings clearly show that factors of social background, such as that of familial social class, impact students' motivation to participate in sport.

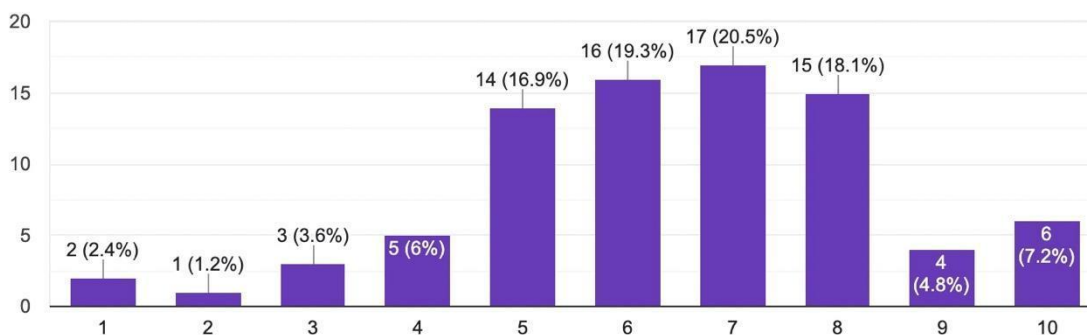
These studies demonstrate that the social factors of social comparison and social class play a major role in influencing motivation in sport, specifically amongst university students. Therefore, the following section will compare these findings with those obtained from primary research conducted among students at the University of St Andrews.

#### c. Survey Results: Social Comparison and Student Participation in St Andrews

The survey used in this study explored social comparison and class through student perception of inclusivity in sport, impact of socio-economic background on access to sport opportunity and the social context of the sport club. Student perspectives on possible solutions to increase student participation among students from lower socio-

economic backgrounds were also collected. Below are some of the data collected from survey responses related to inclusiveness and sport participation.

On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about the inclusiveness at St. Andrews for sports? [Copy](#)  
83 responses

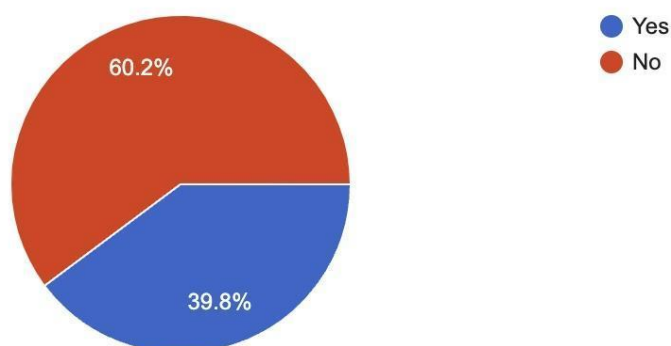


*Figure 1: A bar graph showing the rate of inclusiveness students feel.*

Figure 1 shows the data on how students feel about the inclusiveness in sport clubs and societies at St Andrews. The graph shows that the majority of the participants feel like the sporting environment at St Andrews is welcoming and inclusive. However, there are still 25 students who rated the inclusiveness as 5 or below, showing that there is room for improvement. Inclusiveness is important to improve participation because students have increased motivation to participate when they feel like they belong (are included in) the sporting group.

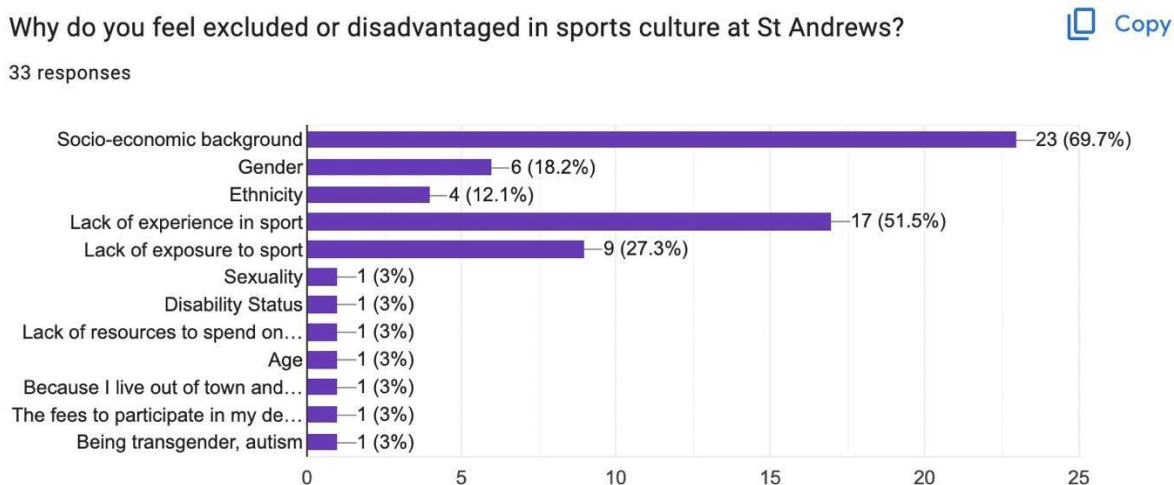
Have you ever felt excluded or disadvantaged in sports culture at St Andrews?

83 responses





*Figure 2: A pie chart showing the percentage of students feeling left out from sports culture at St Andrews.*

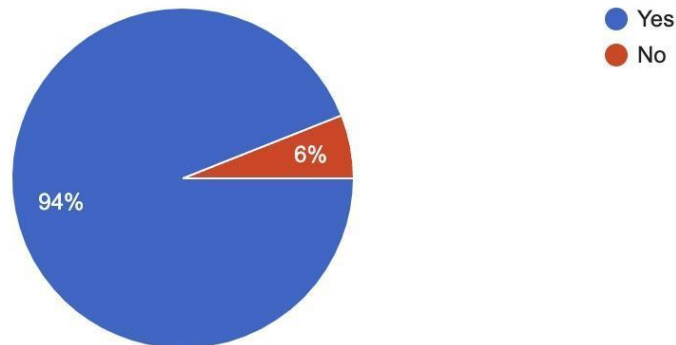


*Figure 3: A bar graph showing the reasons why students feel excluded.*

Figure 2 is a pie chart showing the percentage of students who feel excluded from sports culture. The majority of participants feel like they belong to the club they participate in, suggesting a strong social identity, belongingness, and inclusivity in sport clubs. We then asked the remaining 39.8% of participants who felt excluded why they felt this way; 69.7% of participants who felt excluded suggested difference in socio-economic background as the main reason, followed by a lack of sport experience. Figure 3 suggested that socio-economic background is a key factor contributing to students feeling excluded or disadvantaged in sporting culture at the University of St Andrews. Additionally, the research suggests that lack of experience and exposure to specific sports tends to put students at a disadvantage and foster feelings of exclusivity. Thus, we conclude that students from a lower socio-economic group could potentially feel prejudice from social comparison with others because they lack opportunities and financial support to participate in sport from a young age. It follows that the discrimination experienced by these students can lead to a weak sense of belonging and identification to the sporting group, limiting students' overall willingness to participate in sport.

Do you feel that individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds have more opportunities or advantages in participating in sports at St. Andrews?

83 responses

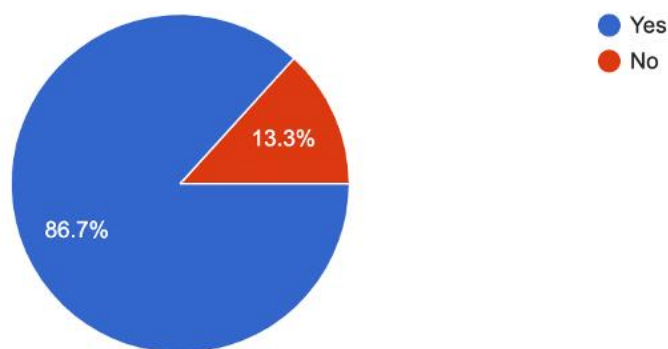


*Figure 4: A pie chart highlighting the number of students who feel disadvantaged when they compare themselves to other students doing sports.*

Figure 4: Out of all 83 participants, 94% of students feel disadvantaged when they compare their sporting opportunity with people from higher socio-economic backgrounds. This social comparison shows that there is a distinct feeling of disparity among students' perceptions of opportunity, which causes extensive upward comparison. From these findings we can infer that different socio-economic backgrounds can act as a demotivator in students' sport participation.

Do you think certain sports are more accessible and inclusive to students from more privileged backgrounds?

83 responses



*Figure 5: A pie chart exploring student perception of influence of socio-economic background on accessibility to participate in sport and inclusivity within sport.*

Figure 5 shows that the majority of students surveyed (86.7% of the 83 students) believe that individuals from more privileged socio-economic backgrounds have greater accessibility to participate in sport and inclusivity within sport. From this, we can conclude that there is an awareness of the differential of social class between students. Further, it can be inferred that students often feel disadvantaged due to these disparities, specifically with respect to accessibility and inclusivity within sport. This difference could result in demotivation of university students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to participate in sport.

## 2.2 Economic Factors Influencing Motivation

Economic factors, such as students' family or personal income, have a significant effect on students' motivation to join a sports club and, as a result, their overall participation in sport. Multiple studies have investigated the relationship between income and sport participation and have demonstrated a significant causal relationship between these factors. There are also a number of economic models that help explain the links between income and sport participation, including Becker's Theory of Time Allocation and the SLOTH model, which develops Becker's model further to investigate economic decisions influencing participation in physical activity (Becker, 1978; Cawley, 2004). These models are helpful in analysing how economic factors influence sport participation by measuring the impact of income and the differences in time available to participate in sport across socio-economic backgrounds. This research has shown that motivating factors for participation in sport vary between students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and higher socio-economic backgrounds.

### a. Theoretical Background: Becker's Theory of Time Allocation and the SLOTH Model

A socio-economic perspective considers that income and availability of time are codependent and these factors determine the economic situation of an individual (Griffiths et al., 2020, 333). Becker's Theory of Time Allocation provides a structure to explain how individuals make choices regarding the allocation of their time to varying activities and how these decisions can be affected by economic situations. Becker's model considers the effects of the "combination of income, time and human capital on determining the consumer choice to participate in sport" (Becker, 1978; Griffiths et al., 2020, 333). According to this model, it can be predicted that participation is easier for those with higher incomes, because acceptable incomes for more necessary costs, such as heating and food, could be maintained while committing more time to sport (Griffiths et al., 2020). As income rises the opportunity cost of time rises, which has both an income and substitution effect working in opposing directions. Analysis has shown that the income effect can prevail as income rises. This is because sport can be assumed to be a normal good and "economic theory informs us that as hourly earnings increase, individuals consume more of a normal good" (Eberth & Smith, 2010). Part of the reason for this is that the same amount of time working is associated with a higher level of income, which allows individuals to afford participation in sport due to spending less time working while still receiving a high income.

The SLOTH model, which is based upon Becker's model of labour and leisure choice, also helps predict the relationship between income, sport and time (Cawley, 2004). SLOTH is an acronym for sleeping, leisure, occupation (paid work), transportation and home production (unpaid work) (Cawley, 2004). According to this model, individuals choose how best to allocate time and what bundles of goods and services to purchase subject to time and budget constraints. This model helps explain how higher incomes help increase willingness and ability to participate in sport as high incomes enable choices to be less constrained (Cawley, 2004).

#### b. Review of Previous Research

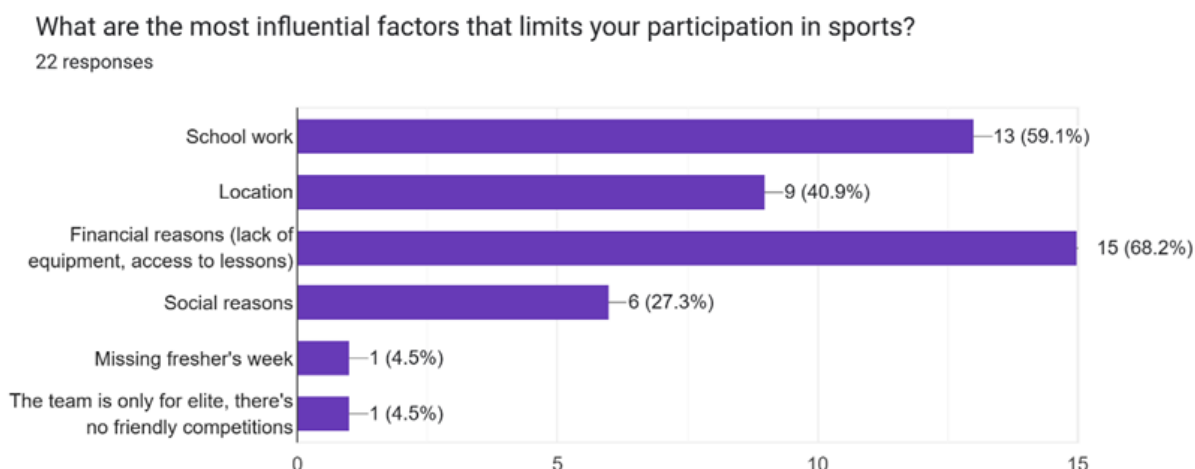
A number of studies worldwide consider how household income and other economic factors influence sport and the motivation for participation in sport. With respect to the effect of economic factors upon motivation to participate in sport, there is a general consensus that "Individuals with higher income are more likely to participate in physical activity" (Grima et al., 2017, 17). This finding is backed by Rintaugu's research showing how certain types of sport are more prevalent amongst different socio-economic groups, with more expensive individual sports or culturally intense sports being more common amongst high socio-economic groups (2003). This makes logical sense as those with more income are more able to purchase memberships, sports equipment, travel to sports facilities and spend more time participating in leisure activities instead of working. Previous research focusing specifically on university students highlights that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds (based upon income and occupation), were more likely to have lower motivation towards sport, and were less likely to be intrinsically motivated to participate in sport, with intrinsic motivation referring to doing something because it is inherently enjoyable (Liu et al., 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2).

#### c. Financial Limitations on Sport Participation for Students at St Andrews

These models help show that both deciding to participate and actually participating in sport will be easier for people with higher incomes. Applying this to students, it is easier for students whose families are of higher income backgrounds to participate in sport by enabling those students to have less financial pressures whilst at university. Alternatively, those with families from lower income backgrounds may feel more financial pressure at university, especially at the University of St Andrews where sports memberships are relatively high, which limits low-income students' ability to justify

joining sports or spending time playing sport when they may have to work to help finance their living costs. Students from a lower socio-economic group could potentially feel prejudice from others because they lack opportunities and experiences. At St Andrews, students have to pay fairly high membership prices to enter sports clubs. A high sport membership price can reduce participation due to economic barriers by limiting access for individuals with lower financial means. Additionally, there are limited bursaries and scholarships for sports. From our survey, when looking at whether students participated in sport, there were significantly more students who did not participate in sport who were from lower socio-economic backgrounds showing that socio-economic background can affect motivation for joining sports at St Andrews.

Survey responses asking about the most influential factor limiting respondents' participation in sport made it clear that financial reasons were the most significant factor amongst all respondents. However, when we accounted for one's socio-economic background by just focusing on the respondents who attended fee paying schools and whose parents both went to university, financial reasons were no longer the most significant factor, instead school work and location (of sports facilities) were more significant limiting factors to participation for these higher socio-economic groups. These results continue to signify socio-economic background influences why students do not participate in sport, with those who are not from higher socio-economic backgrounds finding financial reasons a more significant limiting factor at St Andrews. Therefore, the economic barriers created by differences in socio-economic backgrounds hinders inclusivity within the sports community, and discourages potential participants from engaging in sport activities.



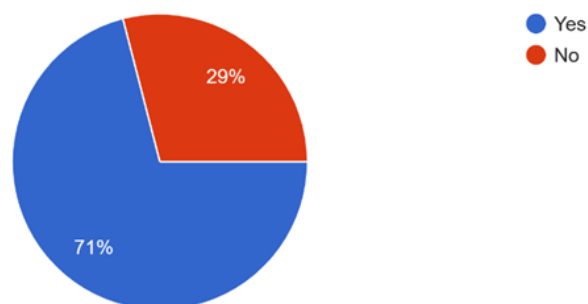
*Figure 6: Factors limiting participation in sports.*

d. Impact of Working as a Student at St Andrews

In the economic models studied, time is interlinked with one's occupation and free time is counted as whatever time is left over after one's job is completed. As this study solely considers students, there are fewer differences in time constraints due to employment because students will not usually be working full time. However, some students may need or wish to work alongside their studies for economic reasons and this often affects their ability to participate in sport as individuals with more time constraints are less likely to partake in intensive or prolonged activities (Hallmann et al., 2011). This indicates that students from lower economic backgrounds may be limited to less time consuming sports and or informal physical activity, such as attending the gym. From our survey data, out of 83 respondents, 37.3% (31 people) work during term time, and out of these students who work during term time, 71% (22 people) said that working during term time hindered their ability to participate in sport.

Does working during term time hinders your participation in sports?

31 responses



*Figure 7: Does working in term time hinder participation in sports?*

e. Motivations for Sport Participation Across Socio-economic Groups

From our survey it is evident that the two main reasons for participating in sport at the University of St Andrews were physical fitness and social reasons, and there was little variation in these two main reasons between students from lower and higher socio-economic backgrounds. Using the same survey data and classifying those who attended fee paying schools and those with both parents holding university degrees as the higher socio-economic group, and those who attended non-fee paying schools and both parents did not attend university as the lower socio-economic group, the graphs below show little differences in motivation to join sports at university, with physical, social and having played since childhood or school being the main reasons.



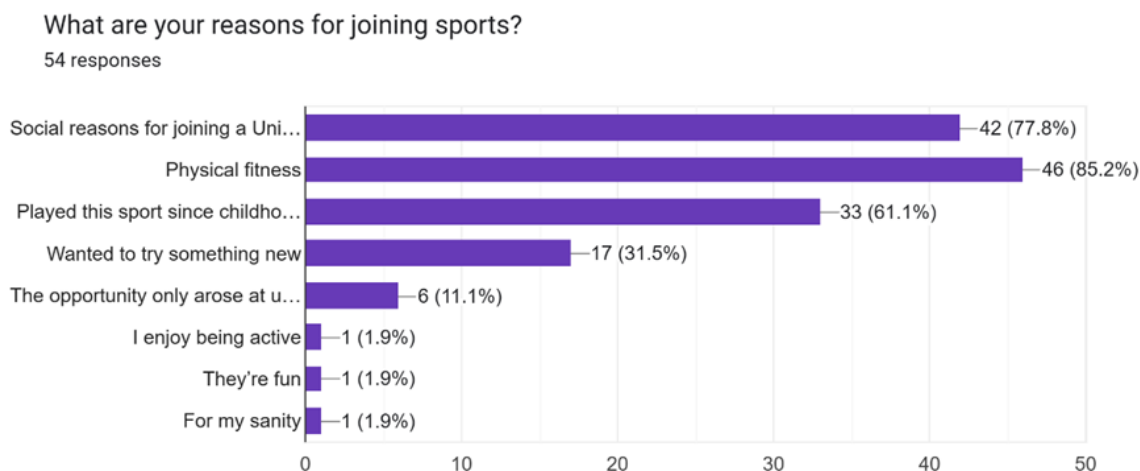


Figure 8: Reasons for joining sports

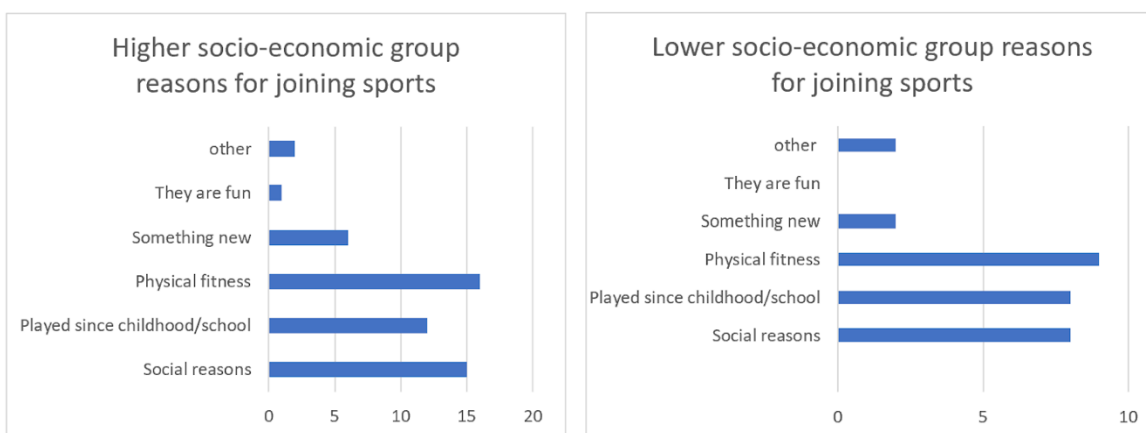


Figure 9: Reasons for joining sports split between higher and lower socio-economic groups.

Considering the survey and secondary research, it is evident that socio-economic background does not seem to affect student's reasons for joining sports clubs at the University of St Andrews, but it does affect whether they can join sports clubs. Financial reasons are a significant limiting factor amongst all students and especially amongst those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, as well as those who work during term time. With regards to economic factors, these are significant in affecting student's motivation to participate in sport. As the results of our survey show, working a job during term time affects student's free time and their motivation to participate in sport.

Importantly, the type of motivation to join a sports club (intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation) was not significantly affected by a student's socio-economic background.

### 3.0 ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN SPORT

#### 3.1 Early Access and Development

Analysing the impact of socio-economic background on sport participation at university requires consideration on how early development stages across the socio-economic spectrum can affect future ability to participate in sport.

It is generally accepted that younger stages of development have foundational importance for continued participation in sport and general physical activity (Griffiths et al. 2022, 334). It was found in Griffiths et al.'s research into students' sport participation at a UK-based university that, coupled with a general decrease in sport participation with age, students without prior sporting experience were less likely to engage with sport at university (Griffiths et al. 2022, 332-3). This implies that universities can have a significant role in encouraging continued student sport participation.

In reviewing the connections between younger years, socio-economic background and later sport participation, it is evident that children from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds tend to participate in sporting activities less than children from more advantaged socio-economic backgrounds (Bardid et al. 2022, 317). If we conclude that these early years of sport activity pave the way for future participation at university and beyond, it is highly probable that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more disadvantaged.

Diet is one of the several factors that can affect sport participation in early years and thus have a consequential effect in future years. It was generally found in the research conducted by Craig et al. that individuals who followed a healthier diet tended to have lower levels of deprivation combined with higher incomes and education levels (Craig et al. 2009). On the other hand, individuals with less healthy eating patterns tended to be from higher levels of deprivation, lower income and lower education levels (Craig et al. 2009, 324). As Craig et al. presents, there are direct connections between eating habits and physical activity and inactivity, with individuals with healthier diets engaging in less screen time and more physical activity. This has been particularly observed in girls aged 5-11 with less healthy diets who are recorded as having increased screen time (Craig et al. 2009, 327). Thus, it is evident that certain dietary conditions associated with socio-

economic levels have a direct impact on engagement with physical activity and thus have an inevitable knock-on effect on future participation.

There are intergenerational effects on sport participation that can merit some further discussion. It has been noted that the lifestyle choice of adults in relation to sport and health can shape the environment in which children and adolescents grow up and contribute to their engagement with physical activity. Shropshire and Carroll (1997) claimed that the sporting experience of fathers is even more crucial than socio-economic background on children's participation, with fathers' sport participation having a positive influence on children's sport participation (in Downward et al. 2014, 333). The transferral of behaviours between generations appears to have a substantial effect on continued participation in sport. Therefore, it is essential to consider the influence of socio-economic background on the attitudes and behaviours towards sport in family units so as to identify potential overlaps.

It is clear that early stages of development across socio-economic groups has a significant impact on sport participation at university and beyond. The availability of sporting opportunities during this time can affect future engagement with physical activity. Additionally, factors such as diet and intergenerational transfers further contribute to disparities in sport participation. As such, this evidence suggests that universities can play a pivotal role in encouraging continued sport participation.

When asked what the reasons were for joining sports at St Andrews, as conveyed in Figure 8, approximately one third of the respondents attributed it to their prior experience playing sports during childhood, whilst only 6% mentioned that the opportunity to play sport arose at university. This can indicate the lasting impact of early sporting experiences on individuals' inclination to join sports at the university level and, on the other hand, the university's limited success in encouraging students without prior experience to engage in sport at university.

Moreover, as Figure 3 indicates, a significant portion of students (17%) expressed feeling excluded or disadvantaged in St Andrews sports culture due to their limited experience in sport, while 9% attributed their feelings to a lack of exposure to sports. This suggests that access to and familiarity with sports prior to university plays a crucial role in shaping feelings of exclusion within the sports community in St Andrews.

In detailing the reasons why certain sports (e.g. polo, rugby) are seen to privilege students from higher socio-economic backgrounds, students often spoke of the experiences in sport they had in younger years. Out of 72 responses, 31 detailed the associations of these sports with a privileged background, private school education, pre-existing knowledge and experience from younger years. It was not just the expensive nature of these sports which appeared to cut them off from students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, but also the culture of these sports which students are initiated into from a young age.

Overall, the primary data, which supports the findings of secondary material reviewed, highlights the lasting impact of early sporting experiences on an individual's inclination and ability to join sports at the university level. It also suggests that the university has had limited success in encouraging students without prior experience to participate in sports. Additionally, the perception of certain sports as privileged and exclusive due to associations with higher socio-economic backgrounds further underlines the importance of early development in sport participation.

### 3.2 Impact of Geography and Employment Status

The effect that a student's socio-economic background has on factors relating to their ability to participate in sport at university is significant and is perceived as particularly relevant by St Andrews students, though our survey of St Andrews university students showed there was little difference in sport participation between the socio-economic classes represented. There exist multiple ways through which one is able to break down these factors and analyse the impact of socio-economic class, if any. This section will look at two of these: students' geographical circumstances (both prior to university and at university) and employment status while at university.

#### a. Geography

The first factor that merits analysis is a student's past and present geographical circumstances. To begin with, a student's geographical circumstances prior to university, heavily dependent on their socio-economic background, can have a large effect by influencing the amount and quality of the sporting facilities available. Prior participation in a sport has been shown to be one of the most important factors when it comes to predicting whether a student will continue with sport at university, with our survey showing that 75% of those who did not participate in sport between the ages of 15-17 do not currently participate in any sports within the university.

Did you participate in sports/sports clubs between the age of 15-17? ↴	Are you currently participating in any sports within the university?
No	No
No	Yes
No	No
No	No
No	No
No	Yes
No	No
No	No
No	No
No	No
No	Yes
No	No
No	No
No	Yes
No	No
No	No
No	No
No	Yes
No	No
No	No
No	No
No	No

*Figure 9: participation in any sports within the university filtered by those who did not participate in sports/sports clubs between the age of 15-17.*

This ties in with access to sporting facilities, which can be the deciding factor in a child's exposure to a certain sport. As Griffiths et al. discuss, prior participation in a sport "was an important factor for both SEGs [socio-economic groups]", with no students increasing their levels of participation from what it had been prior to university (2020, 343). Research completed in South Australia by Eime et al. illustrates the differences between both sporting facilities and subsequent participation in neighbourhoods with different socio-economic levels (2015, 1-2). This is therefore a clear way that a lower socio-economic background can have a negative effect on a student's participation in university sport. Even whilst at university, students from a lower socio-economic background face the same problem of geographic location, as they are much more likely to commute and therefore be further away from the university sporting facilities, as shown in the interview and survey data from Griffiths et al. (2020, 343). Indeed, a respondent to our own survey wrote that taking part in sports that require a "huge number of hours" is "impossible for someone who commutes". See Appendix A.

#### b. Employment Status

The other factor that can be considered influential is a student's employment status while at university. Students who work in part-time jobs while completing their studies will naturally have less free time to engage in recreational activities, such as sport, than those who are not employed. This is where socio-economic background becomes relevant, with students from a lower socio-economic background being much more likely to have a job during their studies because of the additional financial support it provides, with Connor et al. showing that a higher proportion (just over half) of students from lower social classes compared to those from higher social classes took a job during term time (2001, 65). It is therefore the case that lower socio-economic background students may simply lack the time to participate in sporting clubs due to their employment status. Findings from our survey support this idea, with 22 of the 31 students who worked during term time responding 'yes' to the question "Does working during term time hinders [sic] your participation in sports?". See Figure 10.

Do you work during term time?	-Y	Does working during term time hinder your participation in sports?
Yes		No
Yes		No
Yes		No
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		No
Yes		No
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		No
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		Yes
Yes		No
Yes		No
Yes		No

*Figure 10: responses to the question of “Does working during term time hinder your participation in sports” filtered by those who work during term time.*

Griffiths’ research has produced similar results, though not as pronounced, with the observation being made that “for some there was a challenge of balancing a part-time job whilst at university” (2020, 341). However, it should be noted that analysis of our survey showed that student employment status did not correlate with a lack of participation in any sport, with around 37% of those not in term time employment not currently participating in any university sport, compared to just 32% of those in term time employment. See Figure 11.



Do you work during term time?	Does working during term time hinders your participation in sports?
Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	No
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes
Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	No

*Figure 11: Responses to the question of “Do you work during term time filtered by those who do not currently participate in any sports within the university.*

This goes against the findings of other studies and potentially suggests that employment is not as much of a hindrance as it is perceived. Of course, this question only covers participation in any university sport, and it may be the case that term time employment has more of an effect on further participation in multiple sports, but this is not something our survey has addressed.

To conclude, it is certainly the case that a student’s socio-economic background can influence their interaction with university sport, with the findings of our survey showing there is a strong and definite perception that students from lower socio-economic

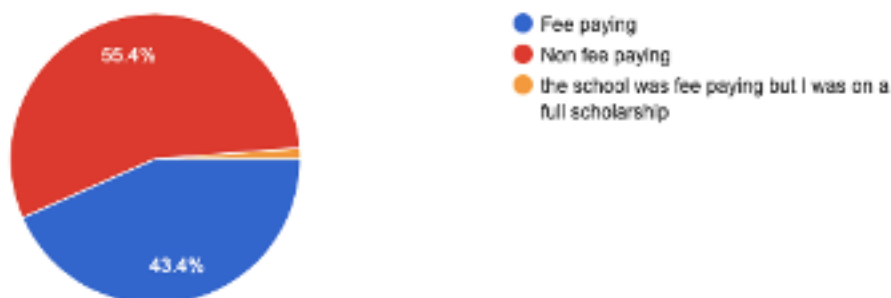
backgrounds are negatively impacted when it comes to their ability to participate in university sports. See Figure 4.

Secondary research also demonstrates this conclusion and shows how socio-economic background, as well as other factors correlating with socio-economic background, can influence university sporting participation across the globe. However, despite this, when it comes to participation in St Andrews specifically, our survey did not highlight any major differences between the actual participation of those with different socio-economic backgrounds in sport, though correlating factors such as prior geographical circumstances did seem to be relevant. This disparity with the secondary research may be because the university has developed a uniquely open and inclusive sports scene, an idea which our survey shows a majority of students agree with, despite their other qualms about membership prices and the quality of sporting facilities. Another reason for this disparity could be that our survey did not specifically ask about the number of university sports clubs a student was able to take part in, which may have better displayed the impact of various factors, but focussed more on any level of participation at university. Finally, the demographics of those surveyed could be a reason, as they were not particularly representative of the wider university population. Despite Higher Education Statistics Agency Data (2022) putting the amount of full-time undergraduates at St Andrews coming from state schools or colleges at 63.1%, already far lower than the national university average, only 55.4% of the respondents to our survey indicated that they went to a non-fee paying school. See Figure 12.

What type of school did you attend at age 15-17?

 Copy

83 responses

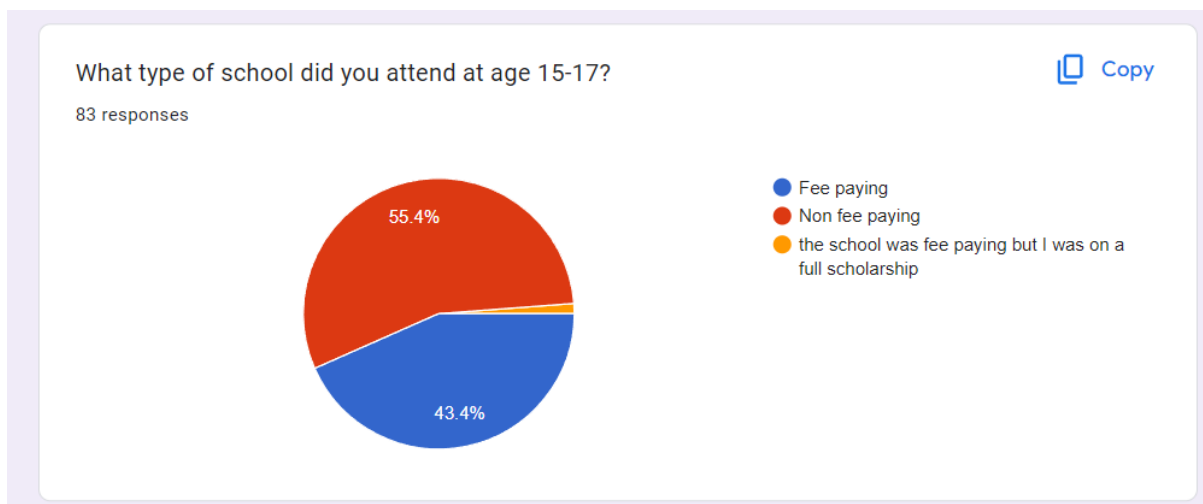


*Figure 12: Pie chart displaying responses to the question of “What type of school did you attend at age 15-17?”.*

This likely had a strong effect on the experiences and views represented in the data, and could explain the differences with secondary research on this topic, which, with wider samples, could have been able to get more representative results.

### 3.3 Pre-University Education and Sport Participation

There is currently an ever-growing spotlight upon the advantages that private schools offer to students, particularly in sport, as top players dominate professional sports teams; whilst only 7% of UK children attend private schools, private school attendees make up for 37% of the men's rugby union internationals and 43% and 35% of the male and female cricket teams, respectively (Statista Research Department 2023). One could therefore interpret that a more privileged socio-economic background generally increases ability to participate in competitive sports, as those who could afford to go to private schools are more likely to get onto teams because of the benefits that their education provided. However, this section looks to identify how participation in sport in St Andrews correlates to this phenomenon. This will be achieved by looking at data from our survey about the socio-economic background of students who participate in sports, and by comparing this with findings of secondary research on the topic to see whether ability to participate in sports in St Andrews is similarly influenced by educational background in fee paying vs. non-fee paying schools.



*Figure 13: pie chart displaying responses to the question of “What type of school did you attend at age 15-17?”.*

Which sport/s?

Copy

54 responses

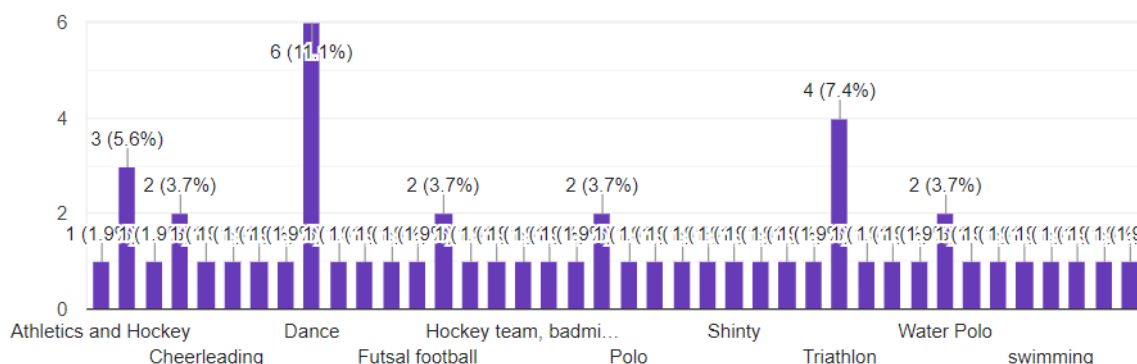


Figure 14: Bar chart showing the number of students who participated in each sport.

The 10 recognised competitive sports, or so-called ‘performance sports’, at St Andrews differentiate from the other sports offered as they hold trials of ability to put teams together for British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) Championships, and therefore students’ ability to participate in competitive sports depends upon their physical ability in the sport (Saint Sports 2023). Our survey suggests that participation in these competitive sports is relatively low, as such sports were only played by 18.7% of participants. This is not reflective of the proportion of privately educated students who participated in the survey (43.4%) according to Figure 13. However, though the number of privately educated participants is relatively high considering the aforementioned population statistics, it is more in proportion to the UK demographic than the education backgrounds of professional players.

This finding both contrasts and aligns with theories supported by secondary research that states that private school pupils’ sporting ability is increased due to the advantages provided to them by their schools, from “specialist coaches [...] arriving direct from elite sport” to “facilities and [...] focus on sport” that are “vastly superior in private schools” (Wilson 2022; Hayden & McConnell 2013). This clearly differs from the financial ability for such facilities and lower average number of hours that are dedicated to sports at state-funded schools as “the government recommends a minimum of two hours PE per week – less than most private schools even before differences in after-school opportunities – but that guideline is not being met by many schools amid other competing pressures” (Wilson 2022). As a result, though the proportion of privately educated participants is relatively high, the dissimilarity between sporting ability in

wider society and the data that we received from students at the University of St Andrews regarding competitive sports participation suggests that, though socio-economic background impacts sports participation ability on a societal level, the University of St Andrews appears to be a more level playing field.

Despite our data not entirely correlating to secondary research regarding the difference between private- and state-educated students' participation in competitive sports, it is worth explaining potential reasons as to why our survey exhibits this difference. This difference could be due to the particularly academic focus of the University of St Andrews and the contrasting sports-focussed environment of many private schools, therefore making the University of St Andrews a more level playing field for sports participation across socio-economic backgrounds as private school students who prioritised sports instead of academia are less likely to be offered a place. This can be explained by the fact that “more than 46 per cent [...] are won by independent schools, despite them accounting for only 13% of the schools in the country”, whilst the most renowned sporting schools offer bursaries to children to encourage loyalty to the schools' team (Wilson 2022). However, studies have shown that those who receive sporting scholarships and bursaries tend to do less well academically than their peers, as “the narrowly focused athletic and career interests of many athletes could be causing them to neglect the broader educational opportunities” offered to them, leading them to fall behind in class rankings (Dyck 2011, 56). Though one might assume that this would disadvantage those from a lower socio-economic background more, such bursaries and scholarships are often unattainable for those from such backgrounds as fee reductions tend to be relatively minimal.

On the other hand, entrance into the University of St Andrews requires academic excellency with standard UK entry requirements ranging from ABB to A\*A\*A at A Level and equivalent, whilst in 2022, only 24.14% of grade entries were A or above nationwide (University of St Andrews 2023; Clark 2023). Considered alongside the disproportionate sporting focus at many private schools, it is possible to suggest that the keen academic focus that allows entrance to the University of St Andrews is often not met by many socio-economically advantaged, privately educated pupils, as their high levels of sports participation at school can be a distraction to academia. It is therefore a possibility that

the University of St Andrews has fewer privately educated students who played competitive sports in school due to the competitiveness of admissions.

To conclude, though on a societal level it may appear that privately educated pupils are more likely to be able to participate in competitive sport at the university level due to the advantages they received during their time at school, this does not appear to be the case at the University of St Andrews. We argue that St Andrews' academic reputation may provide an obstacle for students with private school sporting advantages.

#### 4.0 DISCUSSION

Using the student feedback collected in our survey, we propose a list of potential solutions to socio-economic disparities in sport participation inspired by student feedback. These solutions may be taken into consideration to reduce the impact of socio-economic barriers on motivation and ability to participate in sport.

1. Adjust gym policy to make the gym a community gym with no entrance fee to access gym facilities. If the gym must include a membership, either give a student or package discount.
2. Increased inclusivity to different racial and ethnic backgrounds by encouraging different cultural societies (e.g. BAME, Hongpao, Latin society) to advertise sport opportunities.
3. More opportunities for casual play without any fees or training, such as weekly free tournaments for all students.
4. Make sports training more flexible and accessible by allocating lessons on weekends so that students can maximise weekend time.
5. More give-it-a-go opportunities and more frequent sports fair or informational sessions throughout the academic year to advertise sport clubs to students.
6. Decreased fees for sport club membership for international students, particularly international students from countries with lower GDP per capita or currency rates.
7. Social events that are inclusive to both sport club members and the broader student population who do not take part in sport.



## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This paper explored the impact of socio-economic background on student motivation and ability to participate in sport at the University of St Andrews.

When exploring motivation, our primary research supported the findings of our secondary research, which suggested that students perceived socio-economic background as an influence on opportunity and inclusivity within university sporting culture. Therefore, it can be inferred that socio-economic background influences student motivation to participate in sport.

Looking at the reasons behind motivation, we found that social comparison regarding differences in socio-economic background is a main influencing factor. Students are aware that some social groups may have higher socio-economic backgrounds. This awareness can influence student's individual perception of their belongingness to social groups due to comparison of opportunity and experience. A weak sense of belonging can lead to demotivation to participate in sports. It was found that this comparison was often done with regards to social class. Here, social comparison and social class are seen as major contributors to motivation. Economic factors are also significant in affecting students' motivation to participate in sport. As the results of our survey show, working a job during term time affects students' free time and their motivation to participate, and, alongside financial factors, is a significant reason why students might be limited in joining sports clubs in St Andrews.

In terms of ability, our conclusion regarding University of St Andrews' students ability to participate in sports as a result of socio-economic background is multidimensional and our findings have both contrasted and aligned with secondary research on the subject.

On the one hand, the analysis of the impact of socio-economic background requires recognition of the importance of early development stages and how childhood experiences can impact future relationships with sport. Secondary research shows that factors such as prior sporting experience, diet and intergenerational transfers have all contributed to disparities in sport participation. Geographical circumstances also have an effect on sporting participation, both prior to and during a student's time at university.

On the other hand, it seems that factors such as employment status have less influence on ability to participate in sport at St Andrews than secondary research of nation-wide sports participation would have suggested. Our survey suggests that there is no discernible difference in sport participation based on these factors in contrast with much of the secondary research.

Alongside these two survey outcomes, students' previous education appears to have less of an influence on ability to participate in sports at the University of St Andrews than nation-wide secondary research suggests. Though secondary research shows that, on a national level, private school students are more able to participate in competitive sports than their state-educated counterparts, the effects of this disparity do not appear to be significant at the University of St Andrews, potentially due to the University's highly academic status.

## 6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "APA Dictionary of Psychology." APA Dictionary of Psychology. Accessed October 24, 2023. <https://dictionary.apa.org/social-comparison-theory>.
- Arifin, Raihan B., Noradilah B. Wahab, Kamarul S. Teh, and Mohd. S. Otman. "Influence of Social Environment on Student's Behaviour." *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8, no. 7 (July 2018), 930-939. doi:10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i7/4520.
- Bardid, Farid, Simone A. Tomaz, Avril Johnstone, Jenni Robertson, Leone C.A. Craig and John J. Reilly. 2022. "Results from Scotland's 2021 report card on physical activity and health for children and youth: Grades, secular trends, and socio-economic inequalities." *Journal of Exercise Science & Fitness*, 20: 317- 322 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesf.2022.07.002>.
- Becker, Gary Stanley. 1978. *The Economic Approach to Human Behaviour*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Cawley, John. 2004. "An Economic Framework for Understanding Physical Activity and Eating Behaviours." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 27 (3): 117-25. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2004.06.012.
- Clark, David 'GCE Advanced Level (A Level) results in the United Kingdom from 2000 to 2023, by grade' (August 2023). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/282973/a-level-results-in-the-uk/>
- Connor, Helen and Sara Dewson with Claire Tyers, Juith Eccles, Jo Regan and Jane Aston, 'Social Class and Higher Education: Issues Affecting Decisions on Participation by Lower Social Class Groups' *Institute for Employment Studies*(2001) 65.
- Craig, Leone C.A, Geraldine McNeill, Jennie I. Macdiarmid, Lindsey F. Masson and Bridget A. Holmes. 2009. "Dietary patterns of school-age children in Scotland: association with socio-economic indicators, physical activity and obesity." *British Journal of Nutrition* 103: 319-334. doi:10.1017/S0007114509991942
- Diel, Kathi, Laura Broeker, Markus Raab, and Wilhelm Hofmann. "Motivational and emotional effects of social comparison in sports." *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 57 (November 2021), 102048. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2021.102048.

- Downward, Paul. 2007. "Exploring the Economic Choice to Participate in Sport: Results from the 2002 General Household Survey." *International Review of Applied Economics* 21 (5): 633–53. doi:10.1080/02692170701474710.
- Downward, Paul, Kirstin Hallmann & Tim Pawlowski. 2014. "Assessing parental impact on the sports participation of children: A socio-economic analysis of the UK." *European Journal of Sport Science*, 14:1, 84-90. doi: 10.1080/17461391.2013.805250.
- Dyck, Noel 'In Pursuit of the "Full Ride": American Athletic Scholarships and Mobility, Sport and Childhood in Canada' *Anthropologica*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (2011), pp. 53-66.
- Eberth, Barbara, and Murray D. Smith. 2010. "Modelling the Participation Decision and Duration of Sporting Activity in Scotland." *Economic Modelling* 27 (4): 822–34. doi:10.1016/j.econmod.2009.10.003.
- Eime, Rochelle M., Melanie J. Charity, Jack T. Harvey and Warren R. Payne, 'Participation in sport and physical activity: associations with socio-economic status and geographical remoteness' *BMC Public Health* 14, no. 434 (April 2015) 1-2.
- Griffiths, Kerry, Richard Moore, and Julie Brunton. 2020. "Sport and Physical Activity Habits, Behaviours and Barriers to Participation in University Students: An Exploration by Socio-Economic Group." *Sport, Education and Society* 27 (3): 332–46. doi:10.1080/13573322.2020.1837766.
- Grima, Simon, Alan Grima, Eleftherios Thalassinou, Sharon Seychell, and Jonathan. 2017. "Theoretical Models for Sport Participation: Literature Review." *International Journal of Economics and Business Administration* V (Issue 3): 94–116. doi:10.35808/ijeba/138.
- Hallmann, Kirstin, Pamela Wicker, Christoph Breuer, and Ute Schüttoff. 2011. "Interdependency of Sport Supply and Sport Demand in German Metropolitan and Medium-Sized Municipalities – Findings from Multi-Level Analyses." *European Journal for Sport and Society* 8 (1–2): 65–84. doi:10.1080/16138171.2011.11687870.
- Hayden, Tom, McConnell, Alice 'Private or state: Where do professional sportspeople go to school?' (February 2013)  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-21457349>.

- Higher Education Statistics Agency, 'Widening participation: UK Performance Indicators 2020/2021 (February 2021) <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/performance-indicators/widening-participation>.
- Hogg, Michael A., and Graham M. Vaughan. *Social psychology*. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Ltd, 2002.
- Iqbal, and Dr. Nijalingappa H. "Socio-economic Status and Participation in Sports: A Review of Literature." *International Journal of Physical Education, Sports and Health* 8, no. 3 (2021): 243–46.  
<https://doi.org/10.22271/kheljournal.2021.v8.i3d.2093>.
- Kanters, Michael A, Jason N. Bocarro, Michael B. Edwards, Jonathan M. Casper and Myron F. Floyd. 2012. "School Sport Participation Under Two School Sport Policies: Comparisons by Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Socio-economic Status." *The Society of Behavioral Medicine* 45: 113-121. DOI 10.1007/s12160-012-9413-2
- Liu, Liping, Shanping Chen, Xueyan Yang, and Yuqing Yang. 2023. "Family and Social Class Differences in Sports Behavior Motivation among College Students: An Empirical Study Based on the Latent Class Model." *Frontiers in Psychology* 14. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1070862.
- Manstead, Antony S. "The Psychology of Social Class: How Socio-economic Status Impacts Thought, Feelings, and Behaviour." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 57, no. 2 (2018): 267–91. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12251>.
- Oxford Reference . 2023. "Socio-economic Status." Oxford Reference. Accessed November 7.  
<https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100515750>.
- Rintaugu, Elijah G. 2003 "Influence of parents' socio-economic status on selected Kenyatta university students' type of sports Participation."
- Ryan, Richard M., and Edward L. Deci. 2000. "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions." *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 25 (1): 54–67. doi:10.1006/ceps.1999.1020.

Sáez, Iker, Josu Solabarrieta, and Isabel Rubio. "Motivation for Physical Activity in University Students and Its Relation with Gender, Amount of Activities, and Sport Satisfaction." *Sustainability* 13, no. 6 (March 2021), 3183.  
doi:10.3390/su13063183.Saint

Sports 'Performance sport' (2023) [https://sport.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/performance/Sport England, \*Active Lives Adult Survey November 2021-22 Report\* \(April 2023\)](https://sport.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/performance/Sport%20England,%20Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20November%202021-22%20Report.pdf?VersionId=ln4PN2X02DZ1LF18btgaj5KFHx0Mio9o)  
<https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-04/Active%20Lives%20Adult%20Survey%20November%202021-22%20Report.pdf?VersionId=ln4PN2X02DZ1LF18btgaj5KFHx0Mio9o>

Statista Research Department 'Distribution of educational background of professional athletes in selected sports in Great Britain as of 2019, by gender' (October 2023)  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1088542/educational-backgrounds-of-british-professional-athletes-by-sport-and-gender/>.

Tajfel, Henri, and John C. Turner. "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior." *Political Psychology*, 2004, 276–93.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203505984-16>.

University of St Andrews 'Entry requirements' (2023) <<https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/entry/>>.

Wilson, Jeremy 'Revealed: How private schools dominate English sport' (September 2022) <(telegraph.co.uk<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/2022/09/02/revealed-how-private-schools-dominate-english-sport/.uk>)>.

## 7.0 APPENDIX

Appendix A: Survey used to conduct primary research on students who participate in sport at the University of St Andrews.

...

### Consent and context

\*

As part of a PIAR research group, we will be conducting an investigation in to understanding if students' social-economic background is the main influencing factor of their willingness to participate in sport events by getting student feedback.

The PIAR team has allowed us to send out the questionnaire to collect student feedback. Completing the questionnaire will take no more than 15 minutes.

We can assure you that all results will be confidential and the anonymity of participants will be guaranteed. Only some responses will be anonymously selected to be added into the research article. All participants also have the option to withdraw from the survey at any time. Once you quit the form, your answer will not be saved and we will not consider you as a participant of our study. However, we do not anticipate any participants leaving as the survey is neither complicated nor stressful.

Students can be debriefed by reading our published research by the end of the semester.

- Yes, I give my informed consent to participating in this research.
- No, I do not give my informed consent to participating in this research.

## Background information



In this section, we will be asking you a series of simple questions in order for us to determine your socio-economic background.

## Gender \*

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other...

## Current type of degree \*

- Foundation
- Undergraduate
- Masters
- Phd
- Other...

## Year of study at St. Andrews

- First
- Second
- Third
- Fourth
- Fifth
- Other...

## What type of school did you attend at age 15-17? \*

- Fee paying
- Non fee paying
- Other...

## What are your parents' highest qualifications? \*

- Early years
- Primary



What is your parents occupation? \*

- Managerial position
- Labourer
- Professional
- Entrepreneur
- Business owner
- Other...

Did you participate in sports/sports clubs between the age of 15-17? \*

- Yes
- No

Have you been entitled to scholarships because of your socio-economic background? \*

- Yes
- No

Section 3 of 24

Question 1



Description (optional)

Are you currently participating in any sports within the university? \*

- Yes
- No

What are your parents' highest qualifications? \*

- Early years
- Primary
- Secondary
- Further education
- Higher education
- Other...

Did your parents have access to secondary education? \*

- Yes
- No
- Other...

Did both your parents attend university? \*

- Yes
- No

Section 3 of 24

Question 1



Description (optional)



Are you currently participating in any sports within the university? \*

- Yes
- No

## Section 4 of 24

If yes,



Description (optional)

Which sport/s? \*

Short answer text

What are your reasons for joining sports? \*

- Social reasons for joining a University society (to meet like-minded people)
- Physical fitness
- Played this sport since childhood/school
- Wanted to try something new
- The opportunity only arose at university
- Other...

Do you feel like you are from a different background to others who do this sport? \*

- Yes
- No
- Other...

## Section 6 of 24

If yes,



Description (optional)

Why do you feel excluded or disadvantaged in sports culture at St Andrews? \*

- Socio-economic background
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Lack of experience in sport
- Lack of exposure to sport
- Other...

## Section 7 of 24

Question 3



Description (optional)

On a scale of 1-10, how do you feel about the inclusiveness at St. Andrews for sports? \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Section 8 of 24

Question 4



Description (optional)

Do you have enough opportunities to participate in sport events? \*

- Yes
- No

## Section 9 of 24

If no,



Description (optional)

...

What are the most influential factors that limits your participation in sports? \*

- School work
- Location
- Financial reasons (lack of equipment, access to lessons)
- Social reasons
- Other...

## Section 10 of 24

Question 5



Description (optional)

How do you find the cost of membership fees? \*

- Low-cost
- Fairly priced
- Expensive
- Unaffordable

## Section 11 of 24

## Question 6



Description (optional)

Have you given up on joining one sport club because you felt that it was too expensive? \*

 Yes No

After section 11 Continue to next section



## Section 12 of 24

## Question 7



Description (optional)

Do you work during term time? \*

 Yes No

## Section 13 of 24

If yes,



Description (optional)

Does working during term time hinders your participation in sports? \*

 Yes No

After section 13 Continue to next section



## Section 14 of 24

## Question 8



Description (optional)

Do you feel that individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds have more opportunities \*  
or advantages in participating in sports at St. Andrews? Yes No

## Section 15 of 24

## Question 9



Description (optional)



Do you know anyone who does not participate in sport at St Andrews because it is too costly? \*

Yes

No

After section 15 Continue to next section



## Section 16 of 24

## Question 10



Description (optional)

Are there any resources or facilities that you think could be improved at St. Andrews to better support participation in sports for students from less advantaged socioeconomic background? \*

Yes

No

## Section 17 of 24

## If yes,



Description (optional)

Please tell us what are some of the resources or facilities that you think could be improved to better support students from less advantaged socioeconomic background: \*

Long answer text

After section 17 Continue to next section



## Section 18 of 24

## Question 11



Description (optional)



Do you think certain sports are more accessible and inclusive to students from more privileged backgrounds? \*

Yes

No

## Section 19 of 24

If yes,



Description (optional)

Which sports do you think are more accessible and inclusive to students from more privileged backgrounds? \*

Short answer text

How are these sports more accessible and inclusive to students from more privileged backgrounds? \*

Short answer text

## Section 20 of 24

Question 12



Description (optional)

Do you think there are any efforts made specifically to engage students from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds in sports at St. Andrews University? \*

 Yes

 No

Do you think it's necessary to engage students from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds? \*

 Yes

 No

After section 20 Continue to next section



## Section 21 of 24

If yes,



Description (optional)

Why is it necessary for the university to help less advantaged students feel engaged in sports? \*

Short answer text

## Section 22 of 24

## Question 13



Description (optional)

Would you prefer to pay for sports memberships by the year, semester or monthly? \*

- Year
- Semester
- Month

After section 22 Continue to next section



## Section 23 of 24

## Question 14



Description (optional)

Does your sport hold formal events or balls? \*

- Yes
- No
- I don't know





University of  
St Andrews



The Political Institute  
of Action Research

*The Political Institute of Action Research at the University of St Andrews  
December 2023*