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VERMA, GAJENDRA K. AND DARBY, DOUGLAS S. *Winners and Losers: Ethnic Minorities in Sport and Recreation*. London and Washington, D.C.: The Falmer Press, 1994. Pp. 161. Bibliography, index, tables.

This book attempts to establish the extent of participation in sport among the ethnic minority population of Greater Manchester in northwest England. It is based upon interviews and questionnaires administered to 452 males and 475 females belonging to major ethnic groupings found in Greater Manchester: Bangladeshi, African, Afro-Caribbean, Chinese, East African, Asian, Indian, Pakistani, and White British. The respondents were divided into those aged 16 to 20; 21 to 25; and 26 and over. For both sexes, the youngest age group had the highest number of respondents. The main finding of the survey is that sport is the most popular leisure activity for the males from all ethnic groups, but it is less popular among females. Fifteen percent of the males surveyed and nearly twenty-nine percent of the females do not take part in sport. The disparity in sports involvement between Bangladeshi and Pakistani males and females is especially wide. Religion, and particularly Islam, appears to strengthen cultural factors that discourage sports participation among South Asian women. Only a small number of the respondents said that they had been excluded from a sports club because of racism, but the tales of racism in everyday life recorded in the interviews leads Verma and Darby to argue that racism constrains participation in sport. Both sexes of all ethnic groups wish to have greater opportunities for participation in sport. Most of these conclusions will not surprise those who have investigated the involvement with sport among ethnic groups in Britain, but few other studies have amassed such a body of detailed material. There is rightly much emphasis placed on how religion and gender have influenced sport participation, but perhaps more stress needed to have been placed on economic status. Data was collected about housing and occupations of relatives as an indication of socio-economic status, but this receives little more than incidental comment in the discussion of

the factors affecting sport participation. Given what appears to be the hero worship of Indian and Pakistani cricket stars like Sachin Tendulkar and Imran Khan among the South Asians living in England, it is surprising that little discussion exists of whether such stars have influenced the desire to participate in sport. Readers of this book from outside the UK would probably welcome a map of Greater Manchester, whilst some indication of the difference among the ethnic populations of the ten local authorities which make up Greater Manchester would be appropriate.

One of the most illuminating sections of this book is its discussion of the interviews with those responsible for the provision of sports facilities at the grass-roots level. These show that the conservative government's reforms of local government finance and education, such as the introduction of compulsory competitive tendering for local authorities, the local management of schools which has given individual schools much more control over their budgets whilst obliging them to maximize all possible sources of income, and the publication of league tables indicating how well each school has performed in tests of student attainment, have restricted access to sport facilities among the ethnic minorities, especially in inner-city areas. The Youth and Community Services, which appears to have had some success in encouraging access to sport for the ethnic minorities, has often been the part of the education sector that has suffered most from underfunding. The aim of the Sports Council to provide more access to sport for all social groups and the appointment of sport development officers by local authorities has not always been effective because of a lack of data about the needs of ethnic minorities and lack of evaluations of the success of initiatives to increase participation. Verma and Darby show that it will not be easy to increase sport participation among the ethnic minorities, especially among South Asian Muslim women, but they do stress the need for dialogue between the ethnic minorities and central and local government agencies concerned with sport and for the adequate monitoring of attempts to increase such participation. Verma and Darby have produced a valuable case study that should be compulsory reading for all of those concerned with the involvement with sport among ethnic minorities in the United Kingdom.

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