Active Life Club (ALC) was constituted in 1999 and run by the volunteer committee. It has been a registered Scottish charity since 2013 with the respectable mandate to empower communities and young people through sport. As part of this mandate, Active Life Club provides training and support to youth in order to impart transferrable skills necessary for future employment. ALC has developed a successful model to offer coaching & mentoring to young volunteers and develop their leadership skills. This approach has been affective to promote active citizenship and equip young people with employability skills to compete in the labour market.

Introduction
Contemporary forms of discrimination are often subtle, covert, and pose many problems when one is trying to conceptualize and measure. It is often difficult to distinguish when there is a legitimate reason for an employer to decline an application and when they are discriminating. However, real case accounts show that discriminative practices by employers exist. Some of the cases relate to prejudiced notions about the way one looks and talks, including a person's ethnic or racial background. Perceptions and biases of this nature affect the employment opportunities of people from different ethnic groups.

At the time of the Scotland Census 2011, less than 5.3 million people were living in Scotland. 93% identified themselves as ‘white Scottish’ or ‘white British’. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups made up the remaining 7% (National Records of Scotland 2013). Among ethnic minority groups, participation in the labour market stood at a high of 67% in 2007, falling to a low of 51% in 2013 (Skills Development Scotland, 2014).

| Table 2: Numbers and rates of participation in MA by ethnicity, 2009-10 to 2013/14 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                 | 2009/10         | 2010/11         | 2011/12         | 2012/13         | 2013/14         |
| Not BME                         | 19,318          | 20,755          | 25,347          | 25,196          | 24,871          |
|                                 | 98.3%           | 98.6%           | 98.3%           | 98.9%           | 98.9%           |
| BME                             | 332             | 288             | 442             | 274             | 284             |
|                                 | 1.7%            | 1.4%            | 1.7%            | 1.1%            | 1.1%            |
| Total Known                     | 19,650          | 21,043          | 25,789          | 25,470          | 25,155          |
|                                 | 100%            | 100%            | 100%            | 100%            | 100%            |
| Not Known                       | 566             | -               | 638             | -               | 221             |
|                                 | 100%            | 100%            | 100%            | 100%            | 100%            |
| Source: Skills Development Scotland (2014) |

Accessing Employment Support and Advice
It is evident from statistical information that Government initiatives are set to develop a young workforce through MA and other training programmed. These initiatives have been successful in engaging with indigenous groups
but under representation for BME remains a challenge. Government has directed public sector organisations to take lead on offering MA and internships but there is little evidence of tackling the under representation of BME groups. It is a time for public sector and other key organisations involved in developing work force to set examples and take actions to show impact. Lessons can be learned from the example below.

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) service aims to provide free, confidential and impartial advice and support to individuals regardless of their race or ethnicity. Most of the clients who use its services are low paid, relatively low skilled and generally unaware of their employment rights. They are often exposed to poor and illegal working conditions and subject to discriminatory and unfair employment practices (Scobie). Many people are unaware of their rights and responsibilities or even the services available to them to aid with access to employment. By ensuring that there is a better flow of information about recruitment advice services like the CAB, employment outcomes could be improved.

**Recruitment, Retention and Promotion**

In a study conducted in 2014, it was found that ethnic minority groups do not manage to obtain similar post-graduation outcomes as their white peers, even after taking educational characteristics into account (Lessard-Phillips et al. 2014). This is also backed up by the figures produced by SPICe (2015) which highlights the consistent lower rate of participation in the labour market among ethnic minority groups compared with white ethnic groups (Macpherson 2015).

**Figure 2** shows the rate of employment among different ethnic minority groups.

![Figure 10: Employment rate by ethnic group, 2014](image)

There have been suggestions for research to focus on the experiences and aspirations of different ethnic minority groups. Ethnic minority groups may have different levels of training and education, be concentrated around a particular geographical location, have differing accents etc. There is evidence to show that chances of getting past the first stage of the recruitment process
is often affected by the ‘name’ an ethnic minority applicant uses on the job form. This discrimination exists at each subsequent level of the recruitment process, the more high up the role, the less likely the chances of success for the job. This may explain why people from ethnic backgrounds find it difficult to get into senior positions. Discrimination, conscious/unconscious segregation, work biases and assumptions about a person’s abilities are all factors that may contribute to these outcomes.

**Promoting positive action**

In recruitment, a review of the equality laws and policy should reinforce the protection of vulnerable groups by accounting for the difference in circumstances across ethnic groups. For example, there should be greater emphasis on promoting positive action in private sector companies as is currently being carried out in the public sector.

Employers should be encouraged to use positive action before and at the application stage. This can be achieved through targeted training and providing support to particular groups or people with protected characteristics. There is also evidence of a lack of sustained continuity in the same job because of the absence of internal promotion opportunities and/or harassment. There is a feeling that career progression by ethnic minority workers can only be achieved by moving to new companies and to roles with more responsibility and better terms. Therefore, employers should be encouraged to offer transparent access to training and development opportunities for all.

There are many publically funded initiatives, which are outsourced to private companies. Private sector employers should be monitored more closely to ensure that they are promoting an equality and fairness culture within their companies. There should be contractual requirement on companies to offer fair practice in recruitment, retention and promotion, and best practice used in the public sector should be extended to the private sector with consistent government monitoring to ensure that employers are adhering.

**Further Research Study**

The objective is to provide real life case evidence to show either direct or indirect forms of discrimination in recruitment and progressing in employment.

**When Education is not enough (case study interview)**

It used to be the case that students were guaranteed a job after University. Following the final placement of a one-year postgraduate diploma in education, an ethnic minority student is finding it hard to bypass internal bureaucracy and recruitment barriers to achieve his goal of becoming an English teacher. Although, the individual has attained the academic passes, there is a feeling that the lack of success is because of the way he sounds in the classroom ("speaks with an accent").
Conclusion

The Scottish Government must ensure that Public Sector and NDBP’s are leading from the front and setting good examples on workforce diversity at all levels such as tackling under representation on National Training programmes, fair representation in the workforce and community, and BME staff getting fair opportunities to progress to management roles.

Education establishments must do more to support pupils in schools in getting career education and awareness on training initiatives to tackle proportional under representation. It is observed, working with young people that education establishments are forcing BME under achieving youth to leave school at the age of 16, which means they are leaving with poor grades.

It is time to enforce EHRC mainstreaming equality duties and encourage positive action rather than organisations using creative avoidance approaches and glossy reports produced by the gatekeepers, with hardly any impact on BME workforce fair representation. Government must hold public and private organisations accountable to show impact on mainstreaming equality. It is also important to recognise that Racism does exit in the society and workplaces, which may be the main contributor for the unequal platform for BME communities. There is a pool of talented BME professionals with educational attainments and skills that are getting overlooked at various levels because employers have pre-conceived ideas that an employee must speak look and be a certain way. Governments should adapt a two-strand approach by narrowing the gaps for those facing colour as a barrier to find employment.

Raza Sadiq
Chairperson
Active Life Club
1 July 2015

Bibliography


### ANNEXE 1 – THE SCOTTISH POPULATION BY ETHNICITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White: Scottish</td>
<td>4,445,678</td>
<td>83.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: other British</td>
<td>417,109</td>
<td>7.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: Irish</td>
<td>54,090</td>
<td>1.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: Gypsy / Traveller</td>
<td>4,212</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: Polish</td>
<td>61,201</td>
<td>1.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other white</td>
<td>102,117</td>
<td>1.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: white</strong></td>
<td>5,084,407</td>
<td>96.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed or multiple ethnic groups</td>
<td>19,815</td>
<td>0.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British</td>
<td>40,381</td>
<td>0.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British</td>
<td>32,706</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British</td>
<td>3,788</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British: Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British</td>
<td>33,706</td>
<td>0.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British</td>
<td>21,097</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British</strong></td>
<td>140,678</td>
<td>2.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African: African, African Scottish or African British</td>
<td>29,186</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other African</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total African</strong></td>
<td>29,638</td>
<td>0.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean or Black: Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British</td>
<td>3,430</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean or Black: Black, Black Scottish or Black British</td>
<td>2,380</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Caribbean or Black</td>
<td>730</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total: Caribbean or Black</strong></td>
<td>6,540</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British</td>
<td>9,366</td>
<td>0.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnic groups</td>
<td>4,959</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Scottish population</strong></td>
<td>5,295,403</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Scotland’s Census 2011 (National Records, 2013)