Sports leadership and underrepresentation of racialized minorities
Chapter. Cunningham, G. (2020). The under-representation of racial minorities in coaching and leadership positions in the United States. In Bradbury et al. (Eds). Race, ethnicity and racism in sports coaching. Routledge
Link: **The under-representation of racial minorities in coaching and leadersh**

Aim. Despite significant representation of racial minorities as athletes, these groups are consistently underrepresented in coaching, management, and leadership positions across North-American sports, from professional leagues to college athletics. This isn't just a matter of fairness; it suggests a systemic issue that may be hindering the full potential of the sports industry. This chapter – published in an edited collection on football coaching and race - reflects on the issue relying on existing data and studies. The purpose is to offer an overview of potential reasons for the fact that racialized minorities are comparatively under-represented in leadership positions, including coaching and administration.

Key findings. The research investigates the problem by analyzing existing literature and data on hiring trends. It reviews previous studies that conducted surveys and interviews with people working in sports. These studies have looked at everything from the number of minoritized head coaches to the experiences of administrators and the effectiveness of policies designed to promote diversity. The findings consistently point to a 'pipeline problem' – a drop-off in representation as you move from player to leadership roles. This is driven by a complex mix of factors. These include both 'access discrimination' (limited opportunities to even get considered for leadership positions) and 'treatment discrimination' (being held to higher standards or facing bias once in the workplace). Crucially, research shows that workplaces committed to diversity and inclusion benefit all employees, particularly racial minorities, leading to greater job satisfaction and performance. However, simply implementing policies like the NFL's Rooney Rule (requiring interviews with minoritized candidates) isn't enough; broader cultural changes within organizations are needed. Access to strong professional networks ('social capital') and the right education and experience ('human capital') also play a role, and these opportunities aren't always equally available. Addressing the underrepresentation of minoritized coaches is vital for creating a more equitable sports industry and ensuring that organizations benefit from diverse perspectives. It's not just about fairness; diverse leadership can lead to better decision-making and a stronger connection to the communities sports serve.

Limitations. The research relies on existing data and studies, meaning it's, by definition, limited by the scope and methods of those original investigations. Much of the existing research focuses on the US context, so the findings may not be universally applicable. Moreover, studying issues of race and discrimination is inherently complex, and it's difficult to isolate the impact of any single factor.