

**\*\*Coaches, sport organizations and the framing of racial Inequality \*\***

**Article.** Rankin-Wright, A.J. , Hylton, K. & Norman, L. (2016). Off-Colour Landscape: Framing Race Equality in Sport Coaching. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 33, 357-368

**Link.** [Off-Colour Landscape: Framing Race Equality in Sport Coaching in: Sociology of Sport Journal Volume 33 Issue 4 \(2016\)](#)

**Aim and Method.** This research explores how UK sport organizations frame race equality and diversity, and which barriers prevent Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals from becoming coaches and reaching leadership positions. The researchers used a combination of methods, including 15 in-depth interviews with staff at sports organizations and governing bodies, and comprehensive reviews of existing research, reports, and legal frameworks. Theoretical frameworks like Critical Race Theory and Black Feminism were used to analyze the data and understand how systemic racism operates within sports.

**Key Findings.** Many sports organizations tend to avoid directly addressing race, often favoring approaches like promoting ‘diversity as inclusion’ – simply having a mix of people – or emphasizing ‘meritocracy’ – the idea that success is solely based on talent. This often leads to a ‘color-blindness’ where the specific challenges faced by BAME coaches are overlooked. A key finding was that ‘whiteness’ – the unacknowledged advantages associated with being White – is rarely discussed, and the dominance of White coaches is often seen as the norm. BAME coaches often encounter subtle discrimination and systemic barriers to advancement, including limited access to training, networks, and role models. Black women, in particular, face unique challenges due to the combined effects of racism and sexism.

The study demonstrates that simply ‘appearing’ diverse isn’t enough to address racial inequality in sports coaching. Genuine progress requires a deeper understanding of how race and privilege operate within organizations, a willingness to challenge existing structures and beliefs, and a commitment to actively removing barriers that prevent BAME coaches from reaching their full potential. It highlights the need for open and honest conversations about race and the importance of acknowledging systemic inequalities.

**Limitations.** The researchers relied quite heavily on interviews with individuals within sports organizations, and often with those in leadership positions, meaning the direct experiences of BAME coaches themselves were sometimes missing. The findings may not be fully representative of the entire UK sports landscape and/or of other countries or sports.