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Cracking the glass ceiling? The under-representation of minority coaches and structural discrimination in football in Europe [presentation]

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Cracking the glass ceiling?

The under-representation of elite level minority coaches and structural discrimination in football in Europe

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The original study

Research and methods

- Identify levels of – and structural barriers impacting on - representation of minorities and women in football in Europe: playing, coaching and leadership
- Review of academic/policy literature, and interviews with 20 key stakeholders

Key areas of focus

- I. Levels of representation
- II. Socio-economic/cultural barriers
- III. Overt racisms and sexism
- IV. Physical and cultural stereotypes and oppositions
- V. Organisational provision and institutional discrimination

Presentation of findings

- Final report and presentation of findings at UEFA conference in January 2011

Presentation format

Presentation format

- Europe, European football and minorities
- Overt and cultural racisms
- Physical stereotypes and the black body
- Cultural stereotypes and oppositions
- Institutional discrimination, whiteness, and networks
- The glass ceiling: impact and resistance
- Moving forward: new research

Europe, European football and minorities

About Europe

- The demographic and cultural context of Europe
- Defining minorities
- Racism, discrimination and disadvantage

About European football

- Mixed levels of representation of minorities as players
- Limited throughput of minority players into coaching positions
- 'Sport is reflective of and reflects back upon the societies in which it takes place'
- 'The experiences of minorities in sport are mediated by racisms'

Overt and cultural racisms

Overt and cultural racisms

- Little research evidence suggesting overt abuse of elite level minority coaches
- Culture of silencing, negotiation of 'entry tickets', and assimilationist identities
- Implicit recognition of cultural racism and oppositions in occupational culture
- 'I don't think they want to employ minorities as managers because they are worried that they will not be accepted by the squad, and by the other coaching staff. In terms of black managers, it just wouldn't happen, they just wouldn't be accepted by the players or by the spectators, especially in central and Eastern Europe' (Interviewee, Poland)

Physical stereotypes and the black body

Physical stereotypes and the black body

- Blackness, physicality, and power over intellect
- Whiteness, cognition, and organisational capacities
- Generational impact of stacking and centrality on career pathways
- 'This is all to do with stereotypes. They might play, but they are instinctive players, they don't breathe the game and are not educated in tactics and so on. If coaches and managers and club owners have specific perceptions of black players and treat them differentially as players, then of course, the potential for those players to progress onto coaches and managers is limited' (Interviewee, Germany)

Cultural stereotypes and oppositions

Cultural stereotypes and oppositions

- The cultural other, attitude, and appropriateness
- Occupational discourse of 'instability', 'uncertainty', and 'risk'
- Racialised assessments of club owners and impact on career pathways
- 'There is the general atmosphere at clubs and the cultural stereotypes, which, I think, is stronger than the racist abuse from fans or from other players, you know, more powerful, in some ways. For example, in the case of Roma, there are a lot of stereotypes about the way they are and how they can't be good coaches. It's quite open in many central European countries the way that Roma are openly denied coaching positions' (Interviewee, Austria)

Institutional discrimination, whiteness and networks

Institutional discrimination, whiteness and networks

- Closed recruitment practices to coaching appointments
- Hegemonic whiteness, and dominant social and cultural networks
- Processes of institutional discrimination and impact on career pathways
- 'What we've got used to is seeing white managers coming through and therefore white managers proportionately have had virtually all the opportunity to get some experience and visibility. And so it is not in their [club owners] consciousness to think of a former black player who might be doing their coaching awards and have the possibility of becoming their next manager' (Interviewee, UK)

The glass ceiling: impact and resistance

Impact

- Reducing self esteem, confidence and aspirations
- 'With very few role models it's very easy from a black player's perspective to fall into the trap of thinking 'it's not going to happen. Why should I bother to take my qualifications? I'm not going to get a job'. It's about breaking down those barriers and encouraging those former players to step into doing their qualifications. (UK)

Resistance

- Empowerment, assertiveness, and voice
- 'I think we've just come into that period now where there is a saturation of qualified, black ex-professionals, a decisive group of qualified, black coaches who are saying, "We're not going to accept rejection, we're not going to accept second best, and we're not going to accept just being overlooked' (Interviewee, UK)

Moving forward: new research

Research and methods

- Examination of processes and practices which have enabled or limited the career pathways of elite level minority coaches in the UK, France and Netherlands.
- Qualitative interviews with 45 elite level minority coaches (15 per country)

Key areas of focus

- Establishing the national political and football context
- Examining the experiences - and centralise the voice – of elite level minority coaches
- Identifying models of good practice and recommendations for action

Presentation of findings

- Final report and presentation of findings to UEFA/FARE in March 2013