Diversity in the global coaching community: exploring race, inclusion and belonging

Article

Accepted Version

Diversity in the global coaching community: Exploring race, gender, identity and belonging

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Citation: Passmore, J., Liu, Q., Tee, D. & Tewald, S. (2023) Diversity in the global coaching community: Exploring race, inclusion and belonging, *International Coaching Psychology Review*, 18(2), 73-89.

Abstract

This paper examines data from a global survey of coaches (N=1380) undertaken by the research team in collaboration with EMCC Global, and with the support of a wide range of professional coaching providers, coaching schools and global coaching providers. This paper focuses on diversity within the global coach community, including race, gender and sexual orientation. There were seven hypotheses based on three broad topics: (a). Minorities and marginalised groups in the coaching community (gender, race, region) earn significantly different incomes. (b). Coaches of diversity (gender, race) have different preferences for digital coaching. (c). Coaches of diversity (gender, race) hold different perspectives on future trends in coaching. These were expressed in the seven hypotheses: (i) There will be a statistically different level of income generated by white and People of colour coaches. (ii) There will be a statistically different level of income generated by female and male coaches. (iii) There will be a statistically different level of income generated by coaches based within different regions. (iv) There will be a statistically different preference for digital coaching by white and People of colour coaches. (v) There will be a statistically different preference for digital coaching by female and male coaches. (vi) There will be a statistically different perspective on future trends in coaching by white and People of colour coaches. (vii) There will be a statistically different perspective on future trends in coaching by female and male coaches. The results indicated that region was a significant factor in explaining incomes, but that gender and race were not statistically significant factors. Secondly, there were gender differences in the use of digital coaching. Female coaches or coaches who did not identify as White were more likely to be engaged in digital coaching pre-Covid-19 compared with other coaches, but this gap has narrowed since the global lockdown has drawn more coaches digital. Finally, the 'future trends' data highlights a number of differences based on gender and race, including the belief by female coaches that regular supervision is essential for professional coaches. The study has implications in terms of acknowledging the flexibility of coaching as a fair pay career for women and secondly the need to make coach training more available for People of Colour coaches through bursaries offered by providers and accrediting bodies.

Key words: *Big Mac Index; People of Colour; Coaching; Digital coaching; Disability and sexual orientation; GDP and coaching fees; Gender; Nationality; Race*.

Introduction

Globalisation brings new opportunities and challenges to cultural diversity in organisations (Martin, 2014). This includes greater diversity in race, ethnicity, language, nationality, religion and sexual orientation (Amadeo, 2013). Employee diversity should not be regarded as a problem that needs to be addressed, but rather as a potential asset to be seized (Holvino et al., 2004). Effective use of workforce diversity can increase an organisation's competitiveness in the globalisation process, (Henry & Evans, 2007) and create more stimulating, engaging and enjoyable workplaces for employees.

As diversity has increased in the global labour market, structural inequality in organisations has drawn the attention of researchers (Henley Business School, 2021; Kalev & Deutsch, 2018). Workplaces differ in the extent that they discriminate against groups of workers such as women or people of colour (Reskin, 2000). This was a global survey and we recognise terms regarding race vary widely across geographic regions, including BIPOC, black, people of colour and global majority. After consultation, for this article we have used the terms ‘coaches of colour’ and ‘people of colour’.

Any structural inequity is a hindrance in creating an inclusive work environment in an organisation and may lead to a higher rate of talent turnover, as well as lower levels of motivation and employee engagement. In response, Harris (2022) has called for organisations to expand their DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) policies and programs and to address the needs of minority and marginalised employees.

Coaching has been regarded as one of the most efficient interventions to help organisations in creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive work environment (e.g., Bernstein, 2019; Bocala & Bocala, 2021; Bragg et al., 2019; Cornish, 2009; Khunou, 2019). Coaches can enable employees to become more aware of their unconscious bias, help reflect on individual behaviours and to plan and implement systemic change to reduce structural inequities in the organization. Executive coaches also play a vital role in supporting these change with the most senior leaders who in many parts of the world remain less diverse than their workforce or the stakeholders whom their serve. Estimates of the number of coach practitioners vary widely, but our recent estimates place this figure at more than 120,000 based on a definition of individuals who earn a significant portion of their income from coaching activities (Passmore et al., 2021), as opposed to those solely who are accredited or credentialled coaches. This compares with 71,000 practitioners in 2019; a figure drawn from the ICF (International Coaching Federation) which generating this data from its professional

body membership (ICF, 2019). Whilst the exact numbers remain unclear, the evidence confirms coaching is a fast-growing profession, with the influence of coaching as a learning and development intervention continuing to grow in global organisations.

In parallel with a growth in the number of coaches, demand for coaching grows, as does the volume of organisational coaching research, now reaching around 150 papers per annum, compared with less than 150 papers in total in the period 1900-1999 (Grant & O'Connor, 2019).). However, little of this research has explored structural inequalities in the coaching industry.

There are two main aspects that are worth exploring: gender and race. In the coaching profession, unlike many industries, women in the coaching profession are not discriminated against in employment, but rather make up the majority of coaches (ICF, 2019; Passmore et al., 2017). In fact, the data points towards positive discrimination towards female practitioners, with both female and male clients across multiple geographical territories (Passmore et al., 2017; 2021) favouring women coaches. Based on the overrepresentation of females, gender segregation in the coaching community may bring some different insights compared with that in other professions. A second emerging topic is the coaching professions' response to the anti-racism movement (Roche, 2021). Few coaching studies have included race as a factor. As a result, there is a general lack of data about representation, participation or activity of coaches of colour in the global coaching community (Roche & Passmore, 2021; Roche & Passmore, 2023a; Roche & Passmore, 2023b) or the importance of identity in the coaching relationship to groups who in many economies have experienced sustained direct and, more latterly, indirect and structural discrimination.

This study aims to address this gap, using data from a large-scale global survey of coaches. We firstly explore whether there is discrimination against coaches which is expressed in terms of income, a common feature of many labour markets. Secondly, we explore whether female coaches and coaches of colour have behaved differently with respect to delivering face to face coaching and their engagement with digital coaching compared with coaches who identified as male and 'white'. Thirdly, we explore perspectives of diverse coaching groups on the future trends in coaching and try to interpret the differences of these perspectives.

Hypothesis

In this study, our objective was to explore differences in terms of genders and race with respect to income, coach mode of delivery (face to face, digital) and perceptions of future trends in coaching. We proposed a number of hypotheses.

Firstly, we hypothesised that coaches earn significantly different incomes due to their gender or racial identity. Due to structural inequality, female coaches and coaches of colour are under-valued and paid less in a wider workforce in most of the industries (e.g., Wilson et al., 2015). Income disparities due to structural discrimination can be categorized as allocative discrimination, within-job wage discrimination, and valuative discrimination (Petersen & Saporta, 2004). Although, unlike other industries, female coaches are overrepresented in the coach community, it is not enough to conclude whether they experience within-job income inequality or not. Moreover, we further noticed that between-nation inequality on income accounted for seventy percent of the income inequality globally (Firebaugh, 2000). Therefore, we also hypothesised that coaches from different regions earn significantly different incomes, again reflecting trends in other industries.

Secondly, we would like to investigate whether a specific group of coaches favour digital coaching over face to face delivery. The use of digital coaching has never been compared in relation to gender and race in the coaching field. However, we were able to find some insights from social behaviour research. The results were inconsistent from previous research. Bimber (2000) found that women are less intensive Internet users than men. The reasons that women are less intensive Internet users may involve stereotyping, inherently "gendered" technology embodying male values, content that favours men, sex differences in cognition or communication, or other factors. However, Antoine, (2011) found that although females had less computer self-efficacy, they had less computer anxiety and were more intent to use computers than males. Regardless of the contradictory findings, these studies point to gender and race as factors that significantly influence computer or Internet use. Therefore, we hypothesised that coaches of different genders and races in the coaching community have different preferences for digital coaching.

Thirdly, we hypothesised that coaches of diversity hold different perspectives on future trends in coaching in terms of a variety of topics. In this study, we surveyed coaches' views on a range of future trends, including coaching supervision, AI and climate change, etc. Once again, although no data was available in the coaching field, the evidence from social science and psychology revealed that race and gender are crucial factors in subjectivity (Mama, 2002). Therefore, we assumed there are differences existing between coaches with different genders and races.

Based on the three aspects, seven hypothesis were summarised as following:

H1: There will be a statistically different level of income generated by white coaches and coaches of colour.

H2: There will be a statistically different level of income generated by female and male coaches.

H3: There will be a statistically different level of income generated by coaches based within different regions.

H4: There will be a statistically different preference for digital coaching by white coaches and coaches of colour.

H5: There will be a statistically different preference for digital coaching by female and male coaches.

H6: There will be a statistically different perspective on future trends in coaching by white coaches and coaches of colour.

H7: There will be a statistically different perspective on future trends in coaching by female and male coaches.

Method

Participants

A total of 1380 participants completed the questionnaire, of which 1266 agreed to include their data in the study. The final participants provided data from 79 countries.

66% of participants identified themselves as female and 32% as male, with other participants identifying as Cisgender, Transgender and ‘Preferring to describe’. The male-female ratio is comparable with other studies (see for example Passmore et al., 2017). The mean participant age was 54. ranging from 24 to 80. The mean age for men was 55 and the mean age for women was 53.

We believe for the first time ever in a global study, data was also collected from coaches on racial identity and sexual orientation. Following feedback from the pilot survey, ‘Self-

categorisation', was added alongside other identity categories. 81.2% of participants identified as 'White', 5.1% identified as 'Asian', 3.2% as 'Black' and 2.4% as 'Latinx' or 'Hispanic'. A further 2.6% preferred to self-describe. The most popular word used in the self-classification was 'human', with other self-classification terms included 'Jewish', 'Indian' and 'Celtic'. When examining the data at a national level, it appears that several racial subgroups in the United Kingdom and the United States are underrepresented in the coaching community, when the results are compared with national statistical data on ethnicity in these nations.

When asked about their sexual orientation, 91.2 percent of participants said they were heterosexual, 2.8 percent said they preferred not to say, 2.6 percent were identified as gay or lesbian, and 1.8 percent said they were bisexual. It's worth noting that the data is based on a global sample, and some of the participants were from countries where being gay or lesbian is outlawed.

Measures

This study used a survey method, with the questionnaire in English (only) and with an approximately 20-minute completion time. The research team worked collaboratively with the EMCC Global Research Committee to develop the research topics. The study focused on four key areas: team coaching, digital and digital coaching, future trends, and diversity and inclusion.

The initial questionnaire was pilot tested with two groups of 10 people, each recruited from a global pool of associate coaches drawn from a digital coaching provider and a university business school advanced coaching programme. After completing the survey, participants were invited to a focus group to provide feedback on the draft questionnaire. The questionnaire was modified following feedback from the two pilot groups.

In the current study, we mainly focused on the measures of three aspects: the hourly fee rate, perspective of digital coaching, and their perspectives of future trends in coaching. Firstly, three types of hourly fee rates were collected in the survey: fee rates from individual paying clients, fee rates from organisational clients, and fees as an associate (working on behalf of another company). Moreover, the perspectives of digital coaching were assessed using the estimated time they reported to spend in digital coaching. Participants were asked to provide their proportion of digital coaching in their total coaching practices in two stages: pre-covid-19 and during covid-19. The proportions of digital coaching in these two periods were used to measure their preference to digital coaching and assess whether it is statistically significant between

different groups. Finally, the instrument included thirteen statements, including different aspects such as 'Regular supervision is essential for professional coaches. A five-point Likert scale was adopted to assess their perspective from 'extremely disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

Procedure

A link to participate in the survey was issued by EMCC Global, as well as the African Executive Coaching Council, COMENSA and large global coaching providers including EZRA, CoachHub and AceUp, with the aim of securing a diverse range of participants, both in terms of professional body membership but also in terms of geographical location. The use of a snowballing technique was used to further secure wide scale involvement, with networks encouraged to share the online questionnaire.

The survey link was active for four weeks in June 2021, with the stated goal of obtaining 1000 completions from professional coaches. These were defined as 'people who make their living entirely or partially from undertaking professional coaching'. In this way the survey aimed to exclude individuals using coaching as part of their day job, such as managers using a coaching style.

Data analysis

Firstly, we selected the items to show the differences of incomes, preference for digital coaching and perspectives in future trends in coaching between coaches of diversity (female vs. male; white coaches vs. coaches of colour; different regions). We investigated income in three categories, including incomes from individual paying clients, organisational clients, as an associate on behalf of another company. We also considered the average of the three types of incomes. In order to exclude regional effects on fees, we have also limited our study to a particular country when examining income by race and gender. The largest number of responses were obtained from the United Kingdom and the United States, possibly because the survey was only available in English. These two countries were therefore chosen as the regional examples to investigate gender and race issues. The preference for digital coaching was represented by the time proportion of these coaches conducting digital coaching in the total coaching practices. We analysed the proportion of digital coaching in two phases, including before and during the pandemic, to investigate whether the coaches of diversity changes modes of delivering coaching due to Covid-19. Future trends were one of the key areas in the survey. We asked the coaches to rate on thirteen statements to show their perspectives on future trends, including a variety of aspects such as the perspectives on coach supervision, DE&I, and AI in coaching.

Secondly, we presented descriptive data and discussed the differences between these descriptive data. In addition, a series of significance tests were carried out to test whether these differences were significant. The Shapiro-Wilk Test was conducted to assess the normality assumption, and it revealed that none of the groups had a normal distribution on the continuous dependent variables of income (average, individual paying, organisation, and as an associate), preference for digital coaching (pre- and during pandemic), perceptions on future trends in coaching , as evidenced by very significant p-values on all S-W Tests. As a result, the Mann–Whitney U test was selected to compare groups, as it works for non-normally distributed dependent variables. In addition, due to the multiple conditions and dimensions we considered, we need to do a large number of significance tests at the same time, therefore a Bonferroni-corrected alpha needs to be considered for the cut-off of p value to indicate the significance.

Results

H1: There will be a statistically different level of income generated by white coaches and coaches of colour coaches in the UK and US.

The hypothesis was rejected.

The results showed that the proportion of white coaches in the UK was 93.42%, which was more than the average percentage of white coaches of 82% across all participants in this study. In the UK, the average income of white coaches per hour in 2020 was 60 US$ more than the coaches of colour. In terms of different types of fee income, both white and coaches of colour, saw income from organisation clients as the highest rates, comparing with those from individual paying clients and income from associate work (work delivered on behalf of another company). The mean and median of the hourly fee rate of white coaches were higher than coaches of colour from individual and organisational clients. coaches of colour earned more than white coaches when they were an associate on behalf of another company, but given a small sample (12 participants) no conclusions can be drawn from this. Possible explanations could include organisations paying higher rates for People of colour or People of colour coaches being higher qualified. The data is summarised in Table 1.

However, due to the limited number of coaches of colour in the sample, it was not possible to statistically confirm coaches of colour received lower fees. In studies using small sample, such as this, extreme data can influence the overall result.

We therefore further examined income comparisons by race in the United States (US). The percentage of coaches of colour in the US coaching community (27.78%) was higher than it was in the UK (less than 10%), and even higher than the average of the sample in this study (around 20%). The income difference corroborated similar findings to those in the UK. coaches of colour were paid less than their white coach counterparts in the USA. However, a Mann-Whitney test indicated that none of the differences in the average income, nor separate types of income (individual coaching, organisational or associate work) were statistically significant in the US sample US.

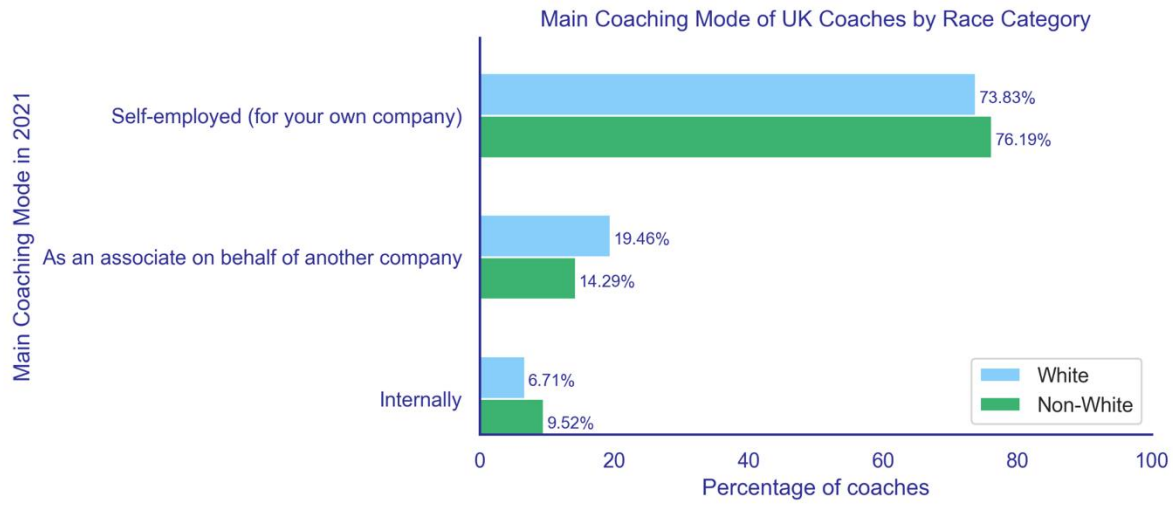
Thus, while the descriptive data showed that coaches of colour earnt less than white coaches the sample meant it was not possible to confirm this difference had not occurred by chance in both the US and UK sample. More research is needed with larger samples to explore possible differences in fee rates.

Table 1. Income Differences between Race in the UK

Race	Income types	N	Mean (average fee rate per hour over the past year (US$))	Median (average fee rate per hour over the past year (US$))
White	Income from individual paid clients	217	203.26	160.0
	Income from organisational clients	231	339.31	250
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	155	191.55	150.0
	Average income	285	268.3	206.0
People of colour	Income from individual paid clients	18	158.06	130.0
	Income from organisational clients	15	302.33	280.0
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	12	225.83	140.0
	Average income	21	208.69	183.33

We also found that over 70% of coaches in the UK were self-employed, with a slightly higher percentage among coaches of colour than white coaches by 3%. As for coaches who were an associate on behalf of another company, the percentage of white people was higher than its counterparts by 5%. Less than 10% of the coaches (white coaches and coaches of colour) worked internally in an organisation.

Figure 1. Coaching mode of UK coaches with different race



H2: There will be a statistically different level of income generated by female and male coaches in the UK and US.

The hypothesis was rejected.

We found that the female coaches in the UK accounted for 69.02%, which was slightly higher than the total sample in the study by 3%. Male coaches in the UK earnt an average of $60 more than female coaches on an hourly basis. The highest fee rates for both male and female coaches came from organisational clients (see Table 2). Regardless of the category of income for comparison, the mean and median income of male coaches in the UK exceeded that of female coaches.

In the U.S. sample, there were some different findings. The average income of female coaches was higher, but the median is lower than that of male coaches. When we further examine the different types of income, we found that this difference comes

mainly from organisational clients. Female coaches in the United States (Mean=574.69, Median=300, n=51) earned much higher average income from organisational clients than male coaches (Mean=397.37, Median=350, n=19), but had less median income than these male coaches. This indicated that in the United States, a small number of female coaches earnt comparatively higher earnings than male coaches when dealing with organisational clients. The majority of women still earnt less than men coaches. However, due to the limited sample, we could not argue whether this was a common phenomenon in the U.S. coaching community.

Similar to fee rate differences due to race, the differences in the UK and US, regarding gender, did not show statistical significance in any of the categories.

Table 2. Income differences between gender in UK

Gender	Income types	N	Mean (average fee rate per hour over the past year (US$))	Median (average fee rate per hour over the past year (US$))
Men	Income from individual paid clients	208	200.45	150.0
	Income from organisational clients	254	325.12	232.5
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	134	201.88	150.0
	Average income	312	258.98	195.0
Women	Income from individual paid clients	466	187.96	150.0
	Income from organisational clients	483	306.63	250.0
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	275	186.78	150.0
	Average income	641	238.61	182.50

Table 3 Independent samples test and samples effect sizes

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means								Effect sizes (Cohen's d)			
					Significance				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				95% Confidence Interval	
	F	Sig.	t	df	One-sided p	Two-sided p	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	Standardizer	Point estimate	Lower	Upper
Average fee paid by individual clients	.001	.974	-.912	672	.181	.362	-12.49055	13.69322	-39.37719	14.39610	164.21026	-.076	-.240	.087
Average fee paid by organisations	.720	.396	-.511	735	.305	.609	-18.48851	36.16593	-89.48935	52.51234	466.61249	-.040	-.192	.112
Average fee paid for associate work	.000	.988	-1.031	407	.152	.303	-15.09878	14.64137	-43.88093	13.68338	138.97571	-.109	-.315	.098
Average fee	.378	.539	-.761	951	.223	.447	-20.37195	26.77485	-72.91657	32.17268	387.87071	-.053	-.188	.083

H3: There will be a statistically different level of income generated by coaches based within different regions.

The hypothesis was accepted. We selected coaches in four regions that represented more than 5% of the total participants, including Europe, Asia, North America, and Africa. The results showed that coaches from North America earnt nearly doubled or more than doubled compared with coaches from other regions. A Mann-Whitney test indicated that this difference was statistically significant in the categories of individual paying clients and organisational clients. The income of North American coaches received a significantly higher hourly fee rate than coaches from all other regions. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was only confirmed at the level of region, but not with respect to race or gender.

Table 4. Income differences between regions

Regions	Income types	N	Mean (average fee rate per hour over the past year (US$))	Median (average fee rate per hour over the past year (US$))
Europe	Income from individual paid clients	476	175.01	140.0
	Income from organisational clients	517	281.22	220.0
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	282	176.32	140.0
	Average income	640	226.4	175.0
Asia	Income from individual paid clients	60	176.82	150.0
	Income from organisational clients	71	241.49	200.0
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	34	185.38	150.0
	Average income	90	201.95	170.0
North America	Income from individual paid clients	64	266.53	250
	Income from organisational clients	80	487.8	300.0
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	40	239.88	200.0
	Average income	96	415.87	250.0
Africa	Income from individual paid clients	38	129.11	120.0
	Income from organisational clients	43	195.33	190.0
	Income as an associate on behalf of another company	26	149.92	150.0
	Average income	52	155.29	150.0

H4: There will be a statistically different preference for digital coaching by white coaches and coaches of colour.

The hypothesis was partly supported. The results showed that prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, coaches of colour used digital coaching at a rate 50% higher than that used by white coaches. A Mann-Whitney test indicated that this difference was statistically significant, $U (2099.5, p<0.05)$. During the pandemic, coaches in both groups increased the percentage of digital coaching to over 80% of total coaching practices.

As we have noted elsewhere, we believe Covid-19 acted as an industry tipping point, accelerating what was a slow transition to digital (online) delivery of coaching to becoming the main mode of delivering both during the pandemic and what is likely to continue as the main mode, bring implications for coach practice and coach education (Passmore & Woodward, 2023).

Table 5. Preference for digital coaching by race

Category	Time	N	Mean (The proportion of digital coaching in the total coaching practices (%))	Median (The proportion of digital coaching in the total coaching practices (%))
White	Pre-Covid-19	299	36.45	20
	During Covid-19	299	85.89	80
People of colour	Pre-Covid-19	21	54.29	40
	During Covid-19	21	83.81	80

H5: There will be a statistically different preference for digital coaching by female and male coaches.

In terms of gender, the hypothesis was also partly supported. Female coaches (Mean=40.27, Median=20) conducted more proportion of digital coaching than their male counterparts (Mean=30.1, Median= 20) before the pandemic. The difference was confirmed to be statistically significant using a Mann-Whitney test, U (9411, $p<0.05$). Coaches in both groups raised the amount of digital coaching to over 80% of all coaching practices during the Covid-19.

In summary, it seems that coaches who are disadvantaged in diversity (e.g., female, people of colour) were doing more digital coaching than the rest of coaches before Covid-19. Hypothesis 4 and 5 was confirmed prior to the outbreak of coronavirus. However, it was not confirmed during the pandemic.

Table 6. Preference for digital coaching by gender

Gender	Time	N	Mean (The proportion of digital coaching in the total coaching practices (%))	Median (The proportion of digital coaching in the total coaching practices (%))
Male	Pre-Covid-19	101	30.1	20.0
	During Covid-19	101	83.96	80.0
Female	Pre-Covid-19	226	40.27	20.0
	During Covid-19	226	86.64	80.0

H6: There will be a statistically different perspective on future trends in coaching by white coaches and coaches of colour.

H7: There will be a statistically different perspective on future trends in coaching by female and male coaches.

Hypothesis 6 and 7 were confirmed in some statements in the future trends in coaching. 104 significant tests were conducted in total for the future trends between different groups (race, gender). Since conducting too many tests heightened the chance of false positives (i.e., p-hacking), we involved the Bonferroni correction, meaning that the difference was only considered significant when the p-value was below alpha = 0.05/104 = 0.00048. A few significant differences were found according to this higher standard test for P value.

Firstly, female coaches and coaches of colour were more convinced that coaches have a role to play in addressing DE&I at work. White coaches rated the statement in average of 4.37 whereas coaches of colour had a mean of 4.64. Female coaches (Mean=4.5) rated this statement higher than male coaches (Mean=4.23). The differences between races and genders were confirmed to be statistically significant using a Mann-Whitney test, U (48359, $p<0.00048$) and U (90467, $p<0.00048$).

Secondly, female and coaches of colour were more convinced of the importance of supervision and accreditation. White coaches rated an average of 4.11 that they believe organisational clients will expect coaches to have an accreditation from a professional body. Coaches of colour (Mean=4.4) rated significantly higher than white coaches, U (47252, $p<0.00048$). Female coaches (Mean=4.51) were also more convinced of the importance of regular supervision (Mean=4.31). A Mann-Whitney test indicated that this difference was statistically significant, U (91947, $p<0.00048$).

Thirdly, we also investigated the differences in different regions and found that coaches from areas more exposed to climate change were more convinced that coaching could help improve climate change. Coaches from South America (Mean=4.37) rated significantly higher scores than those from other regions (Mean=3.55) in the statement that coaching could help to improve climate change.

In summary, hypothesis 6 and 7 was partly supported.

Table 7. Perception of future trends in coaching and race

Statement	**Average rating of white coaches**	**Average rating of PEOPLE OF COLOUR coaches**
From my experience, during Covid-19, coaching can help improve client's wellbeing	4.72	4.69
Team coaching is a growth area for organisational clients	4.32	4.49
Organisational clients will expect more digital coaching using software like Zoom and Teams.	4.37	4.41
Organisational clients will look to digital coaching platforms as a mechanism for delivering large coaching projects.	3.96	4.15
Organisational clients will expect coaches to engage in regular supervision	3.74	3.86
Organisational clients will expect their coaches to have a coach accreditation from a professional body	4.11	4.4
Coaching should aim to be on a par with other professions such as therapy and accounting in terms of the standards of professional training	4.46	4.43
Coaching should be better informed by research	4.4	4.46
Regular supervision is essential for professional coaches	4.47	4.35
The coaching profession should aim to become more inclusive and diverse	4.32	4.51
I believe coaches have a role to play in addressing diversity and inclusion at work	4.37	4.64
I believe coaches have a role to play in addressing climate change	3.53	3.73
I believe using AI will have a positive impact on coaching for clients	3.14	3.55

Table 8. Perception of future trends in coaching and gender

Statement	Average rating of male coaches	Average rating of female coaches
From my experience, during Covid-19, coaching can help improve client's wellbeing	4.65	4.75
Team coaching is a growth area for organisational clients	4.26	4.39
Organisational clients will expect more digital coaching using software like Zoom and Teams.	4.32	4.4
Organisational clients will look to digital coaching platforms as a mechanism for delivering large coaching projects.	3.98	4.0
Organisational clients will expect coaches to engage in regular supervision	3.62	3.81
Organisational clients will expect their coaches to have a coach accreditation from a professional body	4.04	4.22
Coaching should aim to be on a par with other professions such as therapy and accounting in terms of the standards of professional training	4.38	4.49
Coaching should be better informed by research	4.39	4.42
Regular supervision is essential for professional coaches	4.31	4.51
The coaching profession should aim to become more inclusive and diverse	4.25	4.39
I believe coaches have a role to play in addressing diversity and inclusion at work	4.23	4.5
I believe coaches have a role to play in addressing climate change	3.42	3.64
I believe using AI will have a positive impact on coaching for clients	3.18	3.22

Discussion

Discrimination in coaching community

The data from this study provide biographical information on the diversity of the coaching community. Prior to this study, data on race and sexual orientation had never been collected by any professional group in the coaching field. Our research starts to explore this gap by providing information on the diversity of the coaching community globally in terms of gender, race, and sexual orientation and difference practices, opinions and fees.

Firstly, we found that women make up a higher percentage of the coaching community than most other workforce employment. This finding was consistent with the results in previous studies (e.g., Passmore et al., 2017). Female coaches not only make up the vast majority of the coaching population, but also have been increasing at a steady rate since 2015 (ICF, 2019). Passmore et al. (2021) discussed potential reasons to explain this phenomenon, based on a supply and a demand perspective. The coaching industry has a high degree of time flexibility and relational characteristics, which are by nature more friendly to female employment. In addition, an interview study by Gray and Goregaokar (2010) suggested both male and female clients may prefer female coaches. This suggestion was supported by data from over 10,000 coach-client selections on a digital coaching platform study. The data revealed that just under 80% of female clients and 65% of male clients selected a female coach.

The reason for higher participation rates in coaching may be that more women view coaching as a safe, flexible and well-paid profession making it convenient given that women continue, in most economies, to undertake the majority of family care (Passmore et al., 2021). While women were already carrying the majority of the world's unpaid care labour before the Covid-19 epidemic, a new study reveals that the crisis and its following shutdown response has resulted in a significant rise in this burden (Power, 2020). Working women take on more household work during the pandemic for a variety of complex reasons, such as working from home, school closures, and babysitting shortages. These trends are likely to perpetuate the gender imbalance in the coaching industry.

Secondly, people of colour are under-represented in the coaching industry when we analysed the data at a national level, specifically UK and US. The descriptive data from the current study matches recent research undertaken by Roche and Passmore (2021). Their study provided qualitative data from people of colour participants' that they were both under-represented in the coaching industry and were under-valued as coaches due to structural racism. Moreover, additional biographical information provides side-by-side confirmation of the representativeness of the sample in this study, including data on gender compared to previous studies, and sexual orientation compared to national census data. We can therefore conclude that the participants in this survey were representative of the wider population in both the United Kingdom and the United States and this survey confirms the view that people of coaches are underrepresented in the coaching community in these specific countries. It was not possible to make claims about other countries as the response rates were too low, however we may assume that similar under-representation is present across the EU. We can interpret this phenomenon of being underrepresented in terms of supply and demand. On the supply

side, the expensive coach training courses have prevented generally some members of racial minorities from entering the industry. From a demand point of view, people of colour are underrepresented in the C-suite level and as a result have fewer networks to draw upon and may be perceived by some clients as lacking the necessary experience to coach at a senior level.

As we noted under representation of People of colour coaches may result from both supply and demand factors. On the supply side, the cost of training may be one factor. On the other hand, one of the issues raised by large coach service providers is that fewer people of colour apply, and these coaches frequently lack senior executive coaching expertise. What isn't recognized is the relationship between wider social exclusion and recruiting tactics that don't account for systemic racism's socioeconomic inequities (Roche & Passmore, 2021).

We encourage positive action by coaching providers and professional bodies to undertake their own monitoring of representation among their coach bench, monitor fee rates recognise and adopt a positive stance towards training, providing people of colour coach training programmes to expand the participation within the coaching industry, provide mentoring to people of colour and under-represented groups to ensure coach benches and the wider coach community reflects the diversity in the global population or region in which they operate.

Thirdly, the results of sexual orientation in this study appear to broadly reflect the statistical data on a national level such as in the US, UK, Australia and Germany. Estimates on gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender representation vary widely depending on the source and country. We compared the data for some of the countries in this study with the percentage of people of minority sexual orientation in that country's database. As a result, we did not find minority groups, such as LGBTQ, being under-represented in the coaching community. When compared to race and gender, this is not surprising as sexual orientation cannot be observed in the same way as gender or race.

In the results, we explored the differences in income, coaching formats and perceptions of future trends in coaching across gender, race and region. We extracted some insightful results for discussion. In this section, we discuss whether there is discrimination in the coaching community, in terms of hiring and income. Moreover, we explore the factors that affect coaches' income and combine different factors to define the maturity of coaches in varying markets. We classified each national market with a coaching market maturity rating. This rating can be used by coaches and coaching providers as a mechanism to inform pricing and fee rates in each market reflecting

economic strength and the development of coaching in that country, so for example the US is rated 6 on our 7-point scale, UK and Germany 5, while we rated the Indian and South African markets at 3.

Coaching maturity rate

We discussed that although coaches of different races and genders differ in average earnings, this difference was not significant. Our further exploration revealed that geographical region was a more significant factor affecting revenue. We then assume that the degree of advancement of the economy is responsible for the difference in coaching income.

Six countries were selected based on a reasonable response rate: 30 or more in this study. We chose The Big Mac index and gross domestic product (GDP) as two measures to assess economic difference. The Economist created the Big Mac index in 1986 as a light hearted way of determining if currencies are at their "correct" level, but it has since become widely regarded as a useful metric for international economic comparisons. GDP is a standard measure of the value added made in a country during a certain period through the production of goods and services. The correlation analysis proved that GDP, the Big Mac Index, and the hourly rate of coaching were significantly and positively correlated across countries. From this we can conclude that the degree of development of the economy is a significant factor in the income of the coach. Gender and race cause a small but insignificant factor in income difference.

Therefore, we defined the maturity of the coaching market through three positively correlated factors: GDP, the Big Mac index (The Economist, 2022), and the hourly rate of the coaches in this study (See table 8). The higher market maturity means we can expect higher hourly rates for coaches. The rates that can be offered in markets with different coaching maturity can be referred to the data in this study. We conducted further analysis and the correlation between our defined maturity and all three factors was significant. In conclusion, fee rates generally reflect the maturity level of the coach market in their respective markets.

Conclusion

We conducted an in-depth analysis of the diversity of the coaching population in this study, from various perspectives such as gender, ethnicity, and region. From a sample of over 1200 coaches across 79 countries, we explored perspectives on diversity of the coaching population. In the employment within the coaching industry, women are more highly represented while people of colour are underrepresented. As a result, we advocate for professional bodies, training providers, coaching providers and others to step forward to collaborate in encouraging more people of colour to come forward for training. Specifically, professional bodies need to think about offering coach training courses that target the people of colour with greater accessibility in pricing or bursaries, while coaching schools need to reflect on their syllabuses and marketing. In terms of the hourly fee rate charged by coaches, the main influencing factor was the maturity of the economy in the region where the coach was located, rather than gender and race. We defined the maturity of the coaching market based on the correlation between GDP, the Big Mac Index and the hourly rate of coaches in this study. This maturity standard can be used as a reference for pricing coaches in this market. Gender and race had an impact on the mean of pricing, but did not reach a statistically significant difference.

Table 9. The coaching maturity rating

Country	Maturity Rating	Per Capita GDP (US $) -2017	The Big Mac Index (US $) - 2022	Mean of ave fee (US$)
US	6	$59,939	5.81	$443.7392
UK	5	$39,532	4.82	$264.1982
Germany	5	$44,680	4.95	$190.0385
Czech	4	$20,291	4.11	$178.5667
South Africa	3	$6,120	2.58	$151.5926
India	3	$1,980	2.55	$152.3222

In summary the coaching industries is similar to many industries, positive action can help address aspects of underrepresentation, such as by people of colour, in the US and UK. Further, while not significant, average fee rates are lower for women coaches and coaches of colour in some economies can fees rates by these groups could see a reduction of this numerical imbalance.

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