

Does Division I college athletics need the NFL's Rooney Rule?

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The purpose of this study was to analyze the perspectives of Black male coaches regarding their underrepresentation in Division I athletics. The participants were seven Black male assistant coaches from a Division I flagship university in the Midwest region of the United States. The research method was descriptive-qualitative. The primary data sources were face-to-face semi-structured interviews and e-mail follow-ups. The data were analyzed using a generative coding strategy and two emergent themes were uncovered. These themes were: (a) disadvantaged and (b) how things are. The first implication is that athletic directors and university presidents need to be proactive and hire more Black coaches to change the underrepresentation of Black male coaches. The second implication would be for the implementation of the NFL Rooney rule for all NCAA athletic departments. It would be a move in the right direction towards leveling the playing field for job opportunities in Division I coaching.