



Black, Asian & Minority Ethnics (BAME) HR Inclusion Project **REPORT**

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The Brief from HPMA London Academy:

In response to HPMA London Academy's brief to commission a service that highlights inequity within the HR arena and provide a robust report on findings, with recommendations to improve inclusion in the promotional and development opportunities for BAME workforce professionals across London.

Key Purpose and Objectives

The overall purpose of this work is as follows:

- To review and investigate the experience of BAME workforce professionals working for London NHS Trusts and make key recommendations on actions to improve the promotional and developmental opportunities for BAME staff.
- To consider the experience and views of BAME workforce professionals in accessing promotional and developmental opportunities
- To understand issues and the barriers experienced by BAME workforce professionals in accessing promotion and developmental opportunities
- To make recommendations to key partners including the HR Directors Network, the Deputy HR Directors Network, the Leadership Academy, NHS Employers and the HPMA London Academy on actions to remove barriers to promotional and developmental opportunities for BAME workforce professionals

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Executive Summary

There is a significant concern around the progression of BAME HR Professionals within the NHS. We believe that addressing this issue is business critical. Everyone should have equality opportunity to progress to reach their full potential regardless of their identity, background, or circumstances.

It is evident that there is a need for change which has been overlooked and, although there has been some shift, there is no real evidence to suggest that great effort has been made to make any changes significant.

It is important for NHS Trusts to fully embed positive changes across all Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion initiatives. The moral case for change is evident, it will eliminate barriers to progression for BAME staff, allowing diversity of thought and perspectives enabling people of different backgrounds to shape organisational strategies.

The NHS being the largest employer of BAME staff, with 30% being doctors, 20% are nurses and 17% of all directly employed staff are from BAME backgrounds. Research shows, the NHS treats BAME staff less favourably than white staff, in their recruitment, promotions, discipline and career progression. (Race Equality Foundation, 2015)

Data for the NHS workforce as a whole for England; shows a continuing pattern of discrimination within the recruitment process. There was no improvement in the last year for which data is available on both:

- Workforce Race Equality Standard Metric 2 (Relative likelihood of white applicants being appointed from shortlisting compared to BAME applicants); and
- Percentage of staff believing that their Trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion by region: 2017 - 2018

Moreover, the WRES report shows that performance on London against Metric 2 and Metric 7 was worse than any other region in England.

High profile government initiatives have set guidance for action on racial diversity. HPMA London Academy are determined to address these issues with a view to embedding a culture of equity and inclusivity.

By breaking down the barriers that have long inhibited BAME staff from progressing, HPMA London Academy are pioneering the way ahead with this research initiative.

Methodology

Whilst exploring the concept of tackling obstacles and challenges faced within equality, diversity and inclusion for BAME staff in HR, our findings confirm that there is limited research more generally on both HR in the UK and on the experience of BAME staff in the NHS as a whole. The obstacles are broadly of two kinds:

- Obstacles to the development of individuals
- Institutional obstacles

We know that HR staff are the custodians of good people practice, including on equality, diversity and inclusion. It is very challenging for BAME HR staff to be confident and convincing advocates when their own treatment falls short of the standards expected more generally of NHS employers. The NHS People Plan should be the bar against which the obstacles to their development are judged.

The Purpose of the Research:

- To gather data and get a better understanding of the characteristics of the Black and Asian Minority Ethnic HR population
- In understanding their characteristics lead a culturally sensitive dialogue so that HPMA London Academy could better support the cohort
- To provide insight into how the HPMA London Academy can best design strategies to address the progress of the BAME population in HR

Theoretical Considerations

Research is not neutral and is indeed paradigm led. We have been able to support the dialogue in a meaningful way; Specifically.

Use of BAME Senior Stakeholders:

We spoke with the most senior stakeholders in that population to get an understanding of the issues. This included What are the main barriers, what myths and stories exist within that population and the wider organisation, suggested areas for exploration.

Assumptions

By investigating within the population rather than contrasting experiences across different populations, we made some assumptions that bias exists. Whilst HPMA London Academy wanted a quantitative element alongside a qualitative element, the research design means we cannot compare any of the evidence to the wider population.

Sensitivities

It is important to lead a culturally sensitive dialogue and ensure the population was not subjected to evidencing their experience. Racism in the workplace exists, it is illegal under the Equality Act 2010, and it is a form of attack which could be PTSD invoking to involve black and ethnic minority people in the process of dismantling racism. Working on the premise that some conscious or unconscious bias allowed us to dig deeper into more meaningful artifacts.

Research Design

Given the desire for HPMA London Academy, to fully engage with the target audience, the main objective of this research was to:

- Have a better understanding of who the HR BAME Community were
- Understand some of the reasons behind the lack of promotion and progression of HR Leaders beyond band 8
- Whilst there was some intimation that a programme may be devised, by partnering with us we intending to encourage a more holistic view of some of the reasons for BAME progression beyond the historically pathological approach that development programmes have taken
- Conducting the research in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic meant we had to mindful of some of the sensitivities that the community was facing by virtue of navigating some of the race-based inequalities

Interviews with Senior Stakeholders

We spoke with 5 BAME senior stakeholders to determine the key issues for the survey. The stakeholders were members of the reference group.

Interview Format:

- Introductions and understanding of research interests
- Confidentiality parameters and guidance around note taking
- Explanation of intent to use interviews to guide further survey research
- Explanation of semi structured methodology with room to explore what emerges.
- Use of a Developmental, Cultural and Structural framework that was applicable to the HR BAME Community at all levels
- Reverse the research objective: What can be leveraged from the group of BAME HR Professionals.

Common Themes: Wanting to understand what is important to this group in terms of career priorities.

“As an organisation we are not great at how we approach talent but it’s possible”

“We get it right for Junior doctors, so it is possible to inject more of a nurturing energy”

There was an agreement that any intervention or programmes should include sponsors who can help navigate the organisation.

Differences: In some of our interviews, there was a sense that the main reason for not progressing was a lack of confidence. Whereas, in at least one interview there was a sense that qualifications are not the issue and that many of the professionals are held back due to external or systemic issues.

There is an issue around people *“playing small”* or *“hiding who they really are”* as they attempt to fit in.

Our summary:

There is a likely mix of these issues, and a better talent management strategy that is evidence-based would resolve these two different perspectives. We conducted a low-level content analysis and identified several themes that we reviewed whether it would be best to explore in the focus group or survey.

The issues were:

- Career aspirations and career motivations
- Confidence and skills development

- Response to a development programme
- Structural issues; recruitment, secondments
- Networks and effectiveness

Stretch development

Developing People: Improving Care (2016) identifies stretch opportunities (acting act, secondments, project involvement) as the most crucial ingredient in successful career progression. Both the survey and focus groups suggested that this is a significant obstacle for BAME HR staff in London.

Ambition

The available survey evidence strongly suggests that BAME staff in general are as ambitious or more ambitious than their white colleagues (BITC surveys) so the absence of ambition does not explain the difficulty in BAME staff developing their careers in HR in London.

Survey Sample Size: 166

We believe the total population is approximately 750 and so, had a response rate of around a quarter of the total. We were happy that the survey had captured a significant part of the targeted population. We did however, open the survey again, to incorporate the people who had attended the event on the 9th September but had not completed the questionnaire. This was the same scenario with individuals who attended the two focus groups after the event.

Observations and Interpretations of the Questionnaire:

Dispelling Myths around Ambition

In our conversations with stakeholders we are aware that a cultural perception exists around the cohorts' appetite for progression and willingness to push themselves forward.

94% of respondents see it as important to progress in their career. 81% see it as a priority right now. 82% would go for opportunities if they could. 61% have sought out opportunities compared to 16% who have not.

Frustrations

As expected, the research revealed a number of frustrations that were further unpacked in the focus groups (see Focus Groups for breakdown).

52% Feel that they will not progress in their career, compared to 15% who do not feel this; and 31% who were not sure. 44% do not see themselves changing career bands despite their efforts. 54% believe that some sort of bias is occurring, compared to 49% of the surveyed population, who have attempted several times to progress throughout the organisation, compared to 26% who did not agree with the statement that they had attempted to progress in the organisation.

Appetite for Development

58% believe that additional courses would be useful. There were some perceptions from senior stakeholders that skills may not be the issue. When it comes to progressing. There may be other biases that are likely to be at play, but an investment in addressing take up for qualifications and HR related skills should not be overlooked.

BAME Network and Cultural Sensitivities

64% of the population see a HR BAME network useful for progressing in their careers, 64% would find it useful for confidence 64% useful for providing a safe space. This is positive news for the newly formed HR BAME network that it has a space in supporting the cohort.

That being said, 27% were not sure about the BAME network being useful for progress, confidence and providing a safe space. In addition, 18% said they did not or would not participate due to how they may be perceived.

It is important to note they may be referring to the general BAME group, since the HR BAME Network has only recently been established (Summer 2020). There is some understanding about why HR Staff may not feel comfortable exploring issues of unfairness in a broader staff group with colleagues that they are supporting at present. It is also important to not treat all individuals in the same way. It is important to note the individuals will experience, process and interpret their external environment uniquely.

There are themes of course, but we should be mindful of treating the BAME population as a monolithic group with unifying characteristics. Some are uncomfortable acknowledging race or inequality in the workplace, others internalise racism and believe these experiences are due to internal failings, and others may genuinely be having a differing experience whereby race is not at the forefront of their minds.

Management Support

This area in particular needs caution, as we would need a control group to compare this population to the non-BAME population and the wider NHS staff population. However, in line with previous research, there are no clear messages about individual managers, rather that attention needs to be paid towards processes.

The experiences were fairly spread with 17% strongly agreeing and 21% agreeing that their manager supported their career compared to 27% who were not sure and 17% who disagreed and 15% who strongly agreed.

Similar trends can be seen when it comes to looking at whether the respondent's manager was a barrier to progressing their career. 21% strongly agreed and 17% agreed whereas 19% neither agreed nor disagreed and 26% disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed.

Respondents were of a similar direction when it comes to getting honest and constructive feedback

The Culture

61% described the culture putting them off wanting to explore opportunities. Yet 57% expected colleagues to be warm and welcoming as they progress, 23% were not sure and 17% disagreed.

Structural Bias

Respondents described considerable concerns with some of the organisations' structural processes.

Recruitment

We did not explicitly investigate whether answers related to personal experiences or from experiences held within their roles as HR practitioners. It is clear from the responses, that many referred to personal experiences (see further details in Focus Group section).

Some of the respondents vocalised:

"Quite often the adverts are made on a need to know basis, because senior managers would have already had their candidate in mind. Such privileges are not common with BAME staff unless, you are the management gossiper."

"Application process can identify your background even when personal details are not seen at shortlisting stage. For example, if you studied abroad."

"I don't think jobs are advertised correctly. They are put out internally now, but this is recent. In the past we were not made aware of other roles available in even our own department."

"Currently the opportunities are available, but it is difficult to get through the bias that is present. Some internal opportunities are already earmarked for certain individuals."

"The opportunities are mostly ear marked for someone in the team or in the organisation. Selection process is usually unfair and bias - selection is usually based on prototype/similarity attraction."

"Overlong application forms compared to CVs does not encourage involvement and therefore accessibility. You need to know how the NHS process works to do it well. It is

also a 'who you know' environment, and some senior HR professionals do practice the 'old boys' network' approach"

"We know that studies show those with non-white sounding names do not progress past application stage when up against white candidates. I have sat on interviews where allowances have been given to offer white applicants a role but not the same allowances are given to BAME candidates. Interviewers and recruiting managers are the biggest barriers especially for senior roles."

"I struggled with supporting statements of 1500 words initially, having never done so while in the private sector. There needs to be better and focused support towards colleagues who need this support to progress. Lack of diversity champions on interview panels consistently across the NHS. I attended two external interviews with NHS organisations that did not have diversity champions. A very white interview panel that put me at unease! I want the selection panel to make efforts to get my name right!"

Secondments

Similar concerns were seen within the process of secondments

"It is a sign of appreciating good staff and people who performed well in their career, but quite often without the influence of senior managers you won't the job in the end, even when the individual would have acted-up in that capacity on few occasions."

"I've done many secondments in my career which have helped me progress, but I really had to fight hard to get that opportunity. Other colleagues were treated differently in that aspect."

"As mentioned, new (white British) employees have been given more responsibilities from the very beginning. "

"I applied for an internal secondment role in HR but didn't get selected and there was no feedback. As I submitted my application, word was out about who would get the role. It's disappointing when HR cannot get these basics right"

There were some positive experiences captured:

“I didn't act up officially, but I always offer and do more than my current role and its requirement. While it does sometime means taking on extra work, but it brings attention of the senior managers to me and my work. I am also fortunate that all my managers (previous and current) are very good at highlighting my work, don't claim reward of it and give me due credit.”

Focus Groups

Background:

We established five focus groups to understand in more detail the findings from the project questionnaire, sent out to BAME HR professionals within the HPMA London Academy Network of some 2,500 HR professionals.

Having open honest conversations is key, and this was achieved initially through the interviews with senior BAME professionals, which helped to shape the questionnaire.

After deep analysis of these questionnaire responses, we drew from these, the highest percentage areas of respondents' concerns, to further explore these under specific themes within the focus groups. The respondents came from all ranges of HR job roles and bands. We created three far-reaching questions under separate themes, to further investigate a deeper understanding of peoples' thoughts and overall concerns within their respective roles and responsibilities.

Focus Groups on 9th & 17th September 2020

The respondents for the focus groups, were invited to attend a virtual platform, which was regarded a culturally safe space so, individuals could speak freely without fear of recriminations from others.

Before commencing with the focus groups, a Synergised Solutions facilitator set the scene and stressed that it was a space for BAME HR professional only and, anyone who was non-BAME, could not remain and participate in the focus group. The purpose and process of the focus groups was outlined by way of a presentation, thus allaying any fears or concerns that they may have had.

Participants were split into breakout rooms; each group was systematically formed with participants at various levels and job bands, ensuring there were no individuals from the same Trust and, there were representatives at various attainments within their roles and expertise.

Theme: Lived Frustrations

Question 1: What are the consequences of working in an environment with persistent frustrations at things that are outside of your control?

There was a lot of input which was unified by all participants, they found the frustrations they had encountered and endured within their respective working environments, physically and emotionally draining. This in turn, affected their confidence in their roles and the frustrations they were feeling, also impacted their overall performance. Demotivation is one of the key responses that was highlighted within question 1.

Some of the key responses shared were:

"I received a lot of negative reaction around IT challenges I was facing from senior colleagues and, I felt the reactions were inherently biased in my colleagues."

"Although there is talk about supporting ED&I initiatives, when it comes down to challenging behaviours and what has been vocalised, it is not addressed. This is disappointing and very frustrating."

"The WRES 9 - voting board members and the WRES concept itself cited 0.01% changes since 2014, that is very frustrating as nothing has changed or made a difference."

"WRES 7 - continued progression of opportunities within the NHS for BAME, whether there have been any changes and, that is evident there has been no changes that is why we are having these conversations."

"As there is a lack of inclusion for BAME staff becoming directors or senior clinicians, it is a surprise that there is a significant amount of complaints being made against BAME staff."

"BAME staff putting forward ideas and it being ignored completely, and then a white counterpart saying exactly what the BAME staff had just said and, it gets praised and the suggestion is moved forwards to an initiative."

"Trusts need to be culturally aware of BAME needs and understand that one-size does not fit all in the development programmes and how they support all staff."

“They felt work had been dumped on them and felt they were being scape-goated and feeling demoralised and mentally and physically drained.”

“Over-worked and feeling unable to push back - have to learn to say no and push back more.”

“Communication is poor and managerial communication is critically poor, with lack of disseminating information effectively.”

“Feeling of them and us environment.”

“Inherent bias and poor behaviours also, the tone in which BAME staff are spoken to against their white counterparts - leaves them feeling ostracised by their line managers.”

“Being underpaid but, over-worked compared to white counterparts.”

“When speaking out about experiences of microaggressions and naming the perpetrators, nothing is done about it.”

“Why is the onus placed on the BAME staff member to make their working environment and experience better?”

Theme: Leveraging Opportunities & Innovations

Question 2: What initiatives have you seen that helps with progression and accessing opportunities within your Trust? If none - what unsuccessful programmes have you seen or attended?

The participants vocalised their experiences which were mixed. Some felt that there were no relevant development opportunities, whilst others felt that positive action had been taken to support them. Although, this was positive, it is felt that more could be done to support BAME staff members' progress.

Some of the key responses shared were:

“A range of listening events to inform our plans of actions, some of the data from the WRES reconciles and some of it doesn't at all.”

“Unconscious bias training doesn’t work, and it is felt that this is just a smoke-screen used to cover up biases.”

“Health & Wellbeing initiatives run by a BAME member of staff which is good and a positive experience because people engaged.”

“BAME staff being represented on interview panels, but not necessarily appropriately trained for the role. Some panels have diversity partners but, it is felt that this is more of a tick-box exercise.”

“There has been no improvement in my organisation, ED&I means lots of work but not effective outcomes. So, it is felt there is no real ED&I strategy to develop BAME staff within the Trust.”

“Our Trust runs assessment centres but, I believe there is bias in the way it is constructed.”

“I feel that our white counterparts are not doing their bit to be more supportive and understanding their white privilege. One member of staff asked why there wasn’t a White Men’s Network?”

“We have a visible BAME Network but, there is not much output from it.”

Some positive things that are happening in some Trusts are:

- Health and Wellbeing Support
- Career Conversations, which is about the individual and their needs
- Cultural Difference workshops

Theme: Learning Organisations & OD Interventions:

Question 3: What do you think are the hidden and/or obvious barriers to achieving a learning organisation?

A healthy discussion was had around perceived barriers - some of the key responses shared were:

“There is a feeling that Trusts hide behind unconscious bias training as, there is no evidence that real change has occurred.”

“Leaders need to look below the surface where the iceberg sits - there is a lot more going on beneath the surface that needs their attention and duty of care especially for BAME staff.”

“There are gaps in the Trust to BAME staff attaining career progression. The system does not promote progression for BAME staff. However, they feel they are impacted by the very system that is supposed help and support them.”

“Career development days does not work and is seen a tick box exercise.”

“WRES - 2 - Recruiting International Staff. As an HR professional involved in the recruitment process, there was a deep concern that staff are recruited with ‘unfulfilled promises’ and, find once they have been recruited, there seems to be no career pathway or progression for them.”

“There are a lot of people at board level, who will not put their heads above the parapet around supporting BAME staff or initiatives for fear of recriminations.”

“A lot of people management staff hiding behind the interventions that are out there, especially at a high level. They are reluctant to change and will say all the right things but, have no intention of progressing this forward.”

“Systemic racism and, not seeing representation of BAME professionals on the board of Trusts. This is not encouraging or empowering for BAME staff to aspire and work towards roles at this level.”

“Do HR practice their own processes?”

“Within the white paper in August 2020 by the CIPD. 9.65% of HR are BAME staff. That tells you that their own institution is not inclusive themselves. How can we feel included?”

“The appraisal system is culturally biased and needs to be changed.”

“Learning styles need to be addressed, people with neuro diversity and those who have come to live and work in this country are not supported or, their needs taken into consideration.”

“There is a high turnover of senior leaders so, there is no consistency in work and progression. There needs to be a standardised framework, which needs to be regulated by an external body.”

“There is a blame culture and staff feel they have no voice to address issues that impact them and other BAME staff.”

“In my Trust there are no varieties in our development or course offers. It is only HPMA London Academy courses or nothing.”

Courses that need to be considered:

- Confidence-building
- Overcoming Impostor Syndrome
- Reverse Mentoring

The questions posed at all focus group sessions, were thoroughly explored in their individual breakout rooms and, once all participants had returned to the main forum, they shared their experiences from their session and discussions.

From what has been evidenced in the research piece of the report, it has clearly shown that there are parallels between the questionnaire and the conversations had in the focus groups.

Overall Conclusions

Before delving into our overall conclusions, we would like to acknowledge HPM London Academy's efforts to bring this crucial conversation with BAME HR professionals to fruition. We believe by doing so, it has enabled HPM London Academy to take the first steps towards highlighting and tackling the disparity of career progression for BAME HR professionals within the Health and Social Care arena.

Environment:

Overall, the participants have articulated concerns around feeling disenfranchised, fearful at times and, with one respondent sharing that when she put herself forward to be part of the focus group, her line manager tried to dissuade her from getting involved and being part of this initiative.

Other respondents have made comments of feeling stressed and anxious within their working environments. Many have expressed that they are finding it hard to get their voices heard around key issues which directly affects their emotional health and wellbeing and then impacts them in their respective job roles.

Barriers to Progression:

Evidence from the questionnaire and the focus groups has evidenced barriers to progression. The key themes that kept coming up during conversations around this was barriers to more senior roles. One person said assessment centres were felt to be biased, whilst another respondent said there was a lack of visibility of new vacancies within their Trusts.

During our group discussions which followed the breakout room sessions, participants unanimously agreed and vocalised that they felt there were cliques within their Trusts. These cliques were generally made up of their white colleagues.

The revelations shared by the focus groups, speak to the need for a more inclusive and transparent working environment for all. There is a perception that BAME staff do not wish to progress and apply for more senior roles in their careers. However, evidence through the questionnaire and the focus groups have identified that no matter how many times they apply for more senior roles, they are less likely to be successful in being selected and appointed.

Recruitment:

There were concerns around the process of International recruiting, where their current qualifications and extensive experience from their home countries, were not valued or respected and, were asked to undertake further qualifications in the UK to enable them to be considered for a substantive role in the NHS. There is also strong feeling around support not being given to BAME staff in completing job applications, whereas there is ample support given to their white counterparts.

From the discussions, it was felt that interview panels are made up predominantly of white employees. However, there were occasions when one BAME panel member was present on a recruitment panel. There are, however, concerns around how much support the BAME panel member is given to fulfil their role in conducting an effective recruitment process.

The topic of secondments was consistently raised in the focus groups. This demonstrated deep concerns about BAME staff not being given the opportunities afforded to their white counterparts to act up into more senior roles permanently. If BAME staff are in a seconded role and, an opportunity arises, they are not considered for the permanent role even though they have been working in the role for a considerable period. This was evidenced, when a participant shared in the focus group their experience around a seconded role. They were not appointed to the role at the end of the secondment period but, had to train and support the person who was appointed.

Senior Management:

It was felt that senior managers were reluctant to lead on BAME issues or sponsor initiatives that would improve working lives of BAME staff within their Trusts. There are challenges around the consistent change of leadership, which directly impacts the continuity of progressive changes that would benefit and support career progression of BAME staff. Senior management should not shy away from spearheading initiatives that create more cohesive working environments, where everyone is valued and respected.

In conclusion, there is clear evidence to suggest that bias plays a factor in career progression of BAME HR professionals. It is important to address the environment in which the BAME HR professionals operate, which will require a review of policies, procedures, current interventions, leadership support and a concrete plan of action.

Recommendations

To ensure an inclusive and equitable working environment is at the forefront on any new initiative HPMA London Academy plans to embark upon, it is imperative, they look at developing a robust and sustainable development framework; to support the immediate and long-term goals around the development and progression of BAME HR professionals.

There is a need for supportive and supplemental programmes that fully develop and enhance the skills, goals and aspirations of the BAME HR professional group; enabling them to play a significant part in HPMA London Academy's vision of being a fully inclusive organisation.

The NHS People Plan Review (P25) requires that:

“by October 2020, employers, in partnership with staff representatives, should overhaul recruitment and promotion practices to make sure that their staffing reflects the diversity of their community, and regional and national labour markets. This should include creating accountability for outcomes, agreeing diversity targets, and addressing bias in systems and processes. It must be supported by training and leadership about why this is a priority for our people and, by extension, patients. Divergence from these new processes should be the exception and agreed between the recruiting manager and board-level lead on equality, diversity and inclusion (in NHS trusts, usually the chief executive).”

Individual Development and Positive Action

Emotional & Cultural Intelligence: Support with Emotional and Cultural Intelligence would look at how both these practices might help to shape a more effective way to communicate within employers, encompassing sensitivities, civility, and compassion. It would give individuals the capability to grow and develop their skills in a more people centred way.

Mindful Meditation: Can provide a space for open and honest discussions, facilitated by a qualified mediator. The objective of this initiative is to improve the communication with line managers and their staff or peer to peer discussions.

Confidence & Emotional Resilience Building: Evidence within the report suggests the importance of getting support to build confident and empower individuals to be the best that they can be. This could be done as a seminar or workshops.

Career Coaching for Results: To assist those looking to take the next step in their career suggesting techniques such as networking, finding a positive sponsor, raising their external profile.

Reverse Mentoring: Could be a positive way to support senior leaders in understanding their staff and getting the best out of them as well as giving staff confidence to raise their sights. By walking a mile in each other's shoes enables reverse mentor and mentee to understand challenges and explore concepts through their mentoring discussions.

The following suggestions are headlines which will need to be developed by the NHS, perhaps in collaboration with the CIPD, the professional body to which most HR staff either belong or aspire to.

HPMA London Academy People Development

More focused positive action is needed to lay out career paths and improve the confidence of BAME HR staff approaching interviews, appraisals and stretch opportunities for them to progress.

Career Development: To support individuals on how to apply for posts, navigate the promotional boards, how to get the best out of 'acting up' opportunities, which will lead to gaining substantive posts.

Stretch Opportunities: One of the most crucial parts of career development (*Developing People: Improving Care 2016*) and transparency in access to and support for is a prime essential. It is clear, that this is often not felt to currently be the case.

In the light of our findings, it will be essential that emerging best practice specifically applies to the recruitment and career progression of HR staff, notably:

- In appraisals and career development
- In the design of jobs and their essential criteria
- In ensuring systematic positive action, especially in respect of stretch opportunities
- In shortlisting and selection processes
- In the appointment and decision-making process, with follow up support across onboarding practices and procedures

This would require that employers apply to HR staff the standards HR is expected to be the custodian for the NHS as a whole.

Given the crucial importance of the HR community in ensuring the strategic goals of the People Plan are delivered, it would be useful if a follow up report looking at the experience of HR BAME staff - including sharing best practice is commissioned in 12 months' time.

The recommendations and proposed initiatives are in line with the objectives outlined above. It is therefore imperative, that the next steps after this first research piece on BAME HR professionals, be action focused and given the same sense of urgency as other such research and survey initiatives within the NHS arena.



APPENDICES

Literature Review

Slow Progress on Ethnic Diversity of FTSE Boards

https://www.ey.com/en_uk/news/2020/02/new-parker-review-report-reveals-slow-progress-on-ethnic-diversity-of-ftse-boards

Equity in excellence or just another tax on Black skin?

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31536-1/fulltext?dgcid=raven_jbs_etoc_email](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31536-1/fulltext?dgcid=raven_jbs_etoc_email)

HR Magazine Race in the Workplace

<https://www.hrmagazine.co.uk/article-details/hr-and-race-in-the-workplace>

Marketwatch Most white people don't believe racial discrimination exists

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/the-people-who-handle-racial-discrimination-complaints-in-the-workplace-are-divided-on-how-big-of-a-problem-it-is-2020-08-03>

Race Matters

<https://hbr.org/2001/04/race-matters>

HR Magazine -BAME Equality held back by toxic cultures

<https://www.hrmagazine.co.uk/article-details/bame-equality-held-back-by-toxic-cultures>

Snowy White Peaks of the NHS, Roger Kline, Middlesex University, London

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Life in the shadows of the snowy white peaks: race inequalities in the NHS

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The Lancet: advancing racial equality

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Progress made on race equality in NHS workforce, but slowly

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Questionnaire

HPMA PILOT SURVEY for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic HR Professionals

If you are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic Background (BAME) we are asking you to kindly complete the below survey, it should take approximately 15 minutes. All of your responses are anonymous, and the results will be collated independently by Synergised Solutions. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Information@synergisedsolutions.com.

The HPMA London Academy has worked closely with the HR Directors Network and the emerging London Talent Board in developing a talent framework for the workforce profession. Significant progress has been made in establishing leadership development programs for aspirant workforce leaders but there remains an underrepresentation of BAME workforce leaders and over representation of White employees in the most senior HR and OD leadership positions.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to better understand the reasons for this by engaging with BAME workforce colleagues and hearing views and experiences from individuals regarding development and promotional/career progression. We have enlisted our partners' Synergised Solutions to help us understand this.

This survey will focus on the minority ethnic workforce although research is clear that reasons for over representation of white individuals and under representation of minority ethnic individuals extend to structural and systemic inequalities and privileges that cannot be addresses solely through depending on the agency of minority individuals.

Please note this survey is one small facet of the work we are doing and will be conducting focus groups. Please also advise us if you have an interesting in participating in these.

Responses need to be completed by the 12th September

1. I Am from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic Background **Yes/No**
2. Overall, I am satisfied with the pace and progress of my career development

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. In general, it is important for me to significantly progress in my career

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. It is unlikely that I will progress in this organisation

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. Growing my career at this stage is not a priority

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. I am frustrated with my career progression

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

7. Despite all of my efforts, I don't envisage moving bands/grades

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. If I had the opportunity for more high-profile work, I would go for it.
(e.g. Highly visible, acting up)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

9. I have sought out “stretch opportunities” or roles that might be considered “acting up”.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

10 I have been approached to take up a role that would be considered acting up or a stretch opportunity.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

11 Beyond any essential development I do not believe additional courses will help me progress in my career.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

12 I believe I already have the main skills to be promoted, there’s something else going on? E.g. bias or unfair treatment

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

13 If I had the opportunity to choose development solutions I would enrol on the following: Choose which program you would choose as number 1 and then, your second choice and so on

A program for BAME professionals in my field	
Additional skills-based training	
Coaching on how to develop in the organisation	
Coaching on my personal skills	
A mentor or sponsor who would push me further in the organisation	
Coaching for my line manager on how to work with diverse talent	

Coaching and support for leadership on how to accelerate diverse talent” in the “opportunities” section	
Opportunity to "Act up" or take onboard a stretch role	
I would not choose any of these options	

14 I have attempted several times to progress within the organisation

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

15 How many times have you applied for a promotion?

16 How many times have you been successful?

17 Is there anything else you want to say to help us understand the over representation of White employees and the under representation of Black and Asian minority ethnic employees in the most senior HR & OD leadership and what can be done about it?

18 I would find a BAME Network specific to my profession useful generally when it comes to: (a) Progressing within my career

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

19 I would find a BAME Network specific to my profession useful generally when it comes to: (b) Improving my confidence navigating the organisation

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 20 I would find a BAME Network specific to my profession useful generally when it comes to: (c) Empowering me and providing a safe space for support

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 21 How I might be perceived in the broader organisation (e.g. my reputation) is a factor for why I do not wish to personally participate in the BAME network

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 22 My manager is a champion in supporting my career

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 23 A lack of my managers' support is a barrier to progressing my career

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 24 I often feel my manager is not giving me honest feedback

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 25 I often feel my manager is not giving me constructive feedback

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 26 The culture of the environment in some spaces puts me off wanting to explore opportunities

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 27 Based on my impressions of the organisation, as I progress, I expect to “fit in”

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 28 Based on my impressions of the organisation, I expect colleagues to be welcoming, supportive and positive to me as I progress in the organisation

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

- 29 We would like to know the role that the following processes play in progressing your career: **Application Process**

E.g. accessing opportunities, the selection criteria, the interviewers, the overall approach?

- 30 We would like to know the role that the following processes play in progressing your career: **Promotion**

E.g. secondments, acting up and stretch opportunities

- 31 We would like to know the role that the following processes play in progressing your career: **Managerial Support**

E.g. secondments, acting up and stretch opportunities

32 Any other process

33 All of the responses are held confidentially and will be anonymised for the purpose of this survey only.

34 Age

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45 - 54
- 55-64
- 65+

35 Band/Grade

36 Job Role

37 How long have you been in this role?

- Less than 3 months
- 3 months - 6 months
- Over 6 months - 1 year
- Over 1 year - 2 years
- Over 2 years - 5 years
- Over 5 years - 8 years
- 8 years - 12 years
- Over 12 years - 15 years
- Over 15 years
- Over 20 years

38 Trust Name

39 What is your ethnicity?

- Black Caribbean
- Black African
- Black other: Please describe
- Asian Indian
- Asian Chinese
- Asian Pakistani
- Asian Bangladeshi
- Asian Other
- Another race or ethnicity, please describe below

40 Is English your second language?

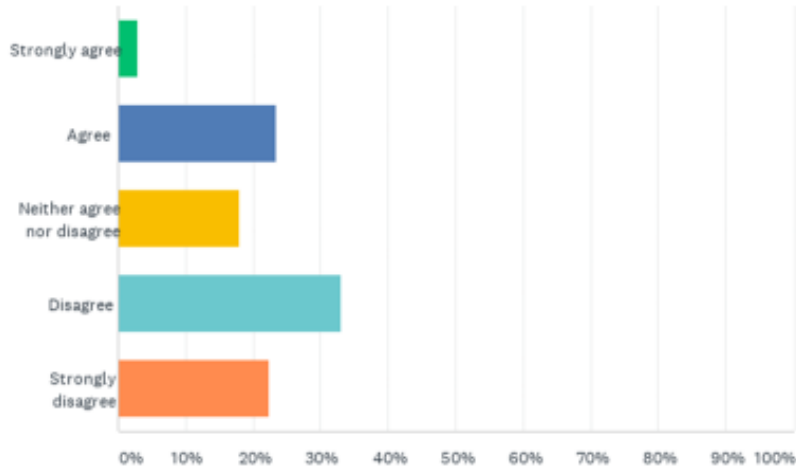
- Yes
- No

41 There are many opportunities to attend a focus group or to be interviewed by an independent consultant for this project. Let us know here if you would like to be considered for this.

Analysis Results for Focus Group Themes

Q2: Overall I am satisfied with the pace and progress of my career development

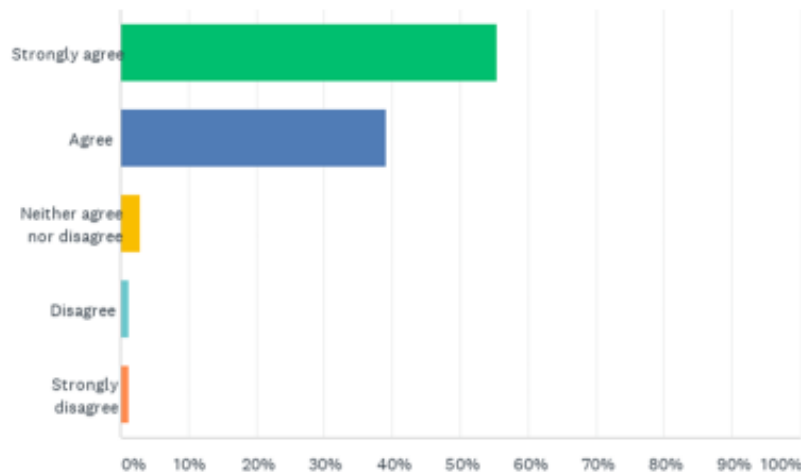
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q3: In general It is important for me to significantly progress in my career

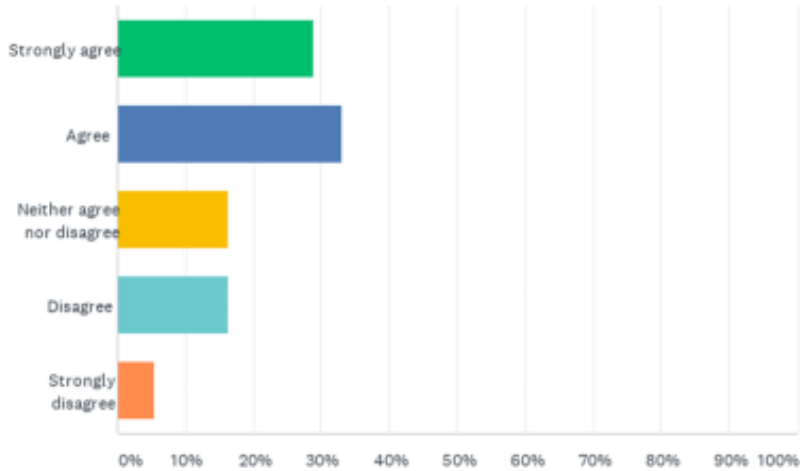
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q6: I am frustrated with my career progression

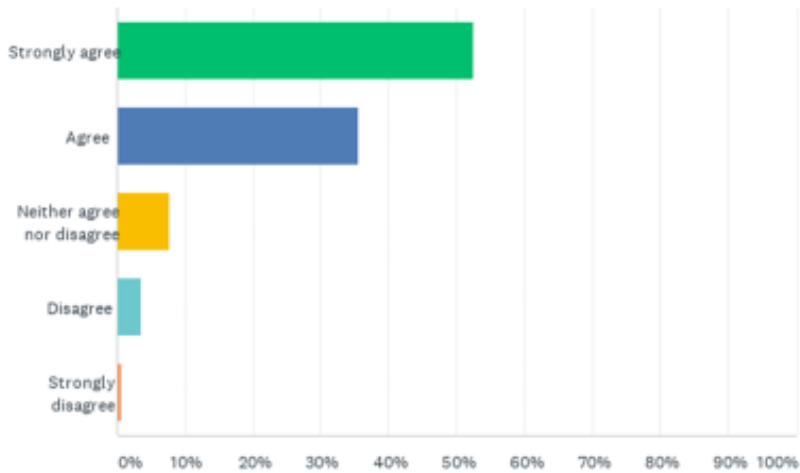
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q8: If I had the opportunity for more high profile work I would go for it.(e.g Highly visible, acting up)

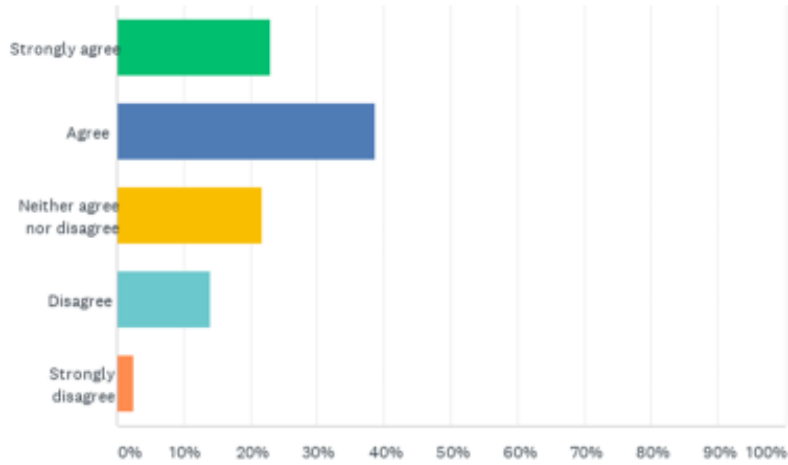
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Q9: I have sought out “stretch opportunities” or roles that might be considered “acting up”.

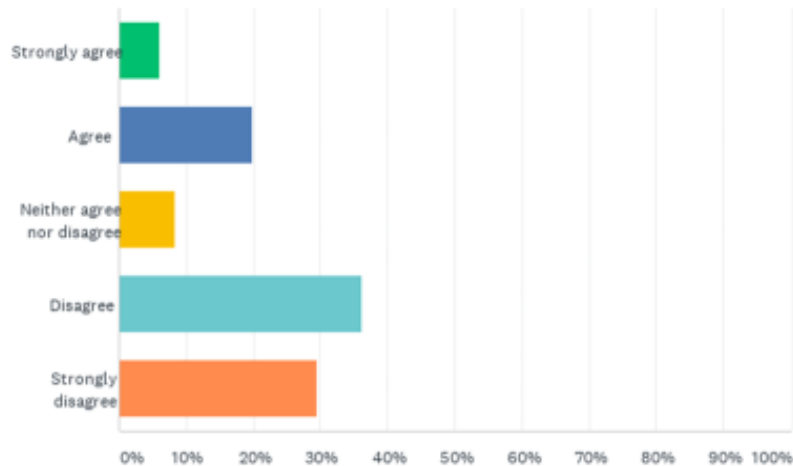
Answered: 165 Skipped: 1



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Q10: I have been approached to take up a role that would be considered acting up or a stretch opportunity.

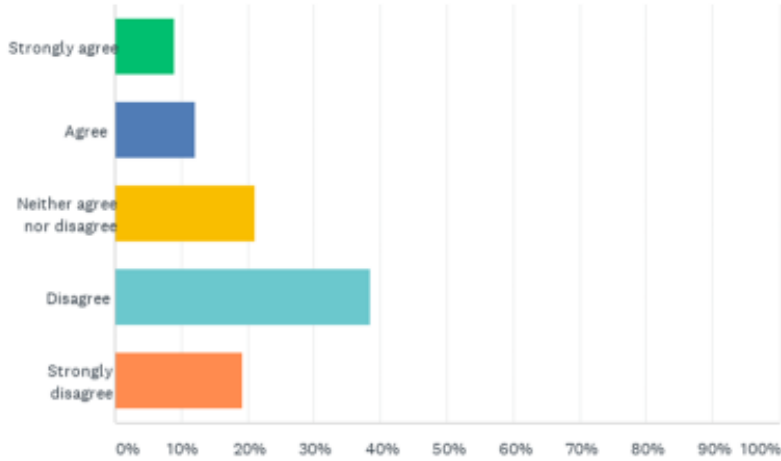
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q11: Beyond any essential development I do not believe additional courses will help me progress in my career.

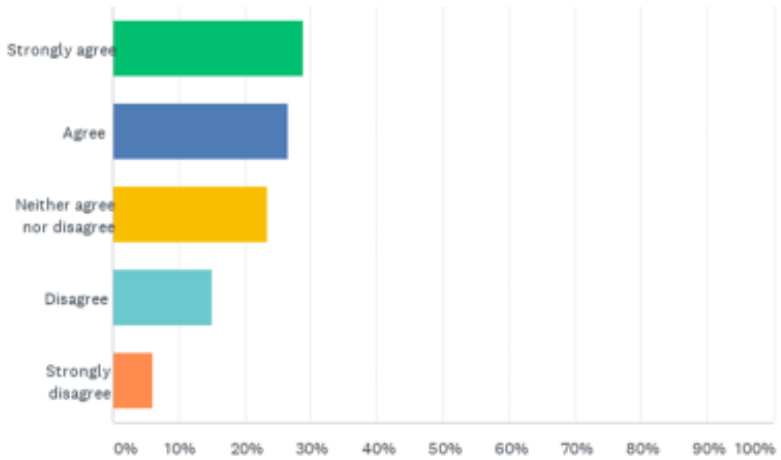
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q12: I believe I already have the main skills to be promoted, there's something else going on?e.g bias or unfair treatment

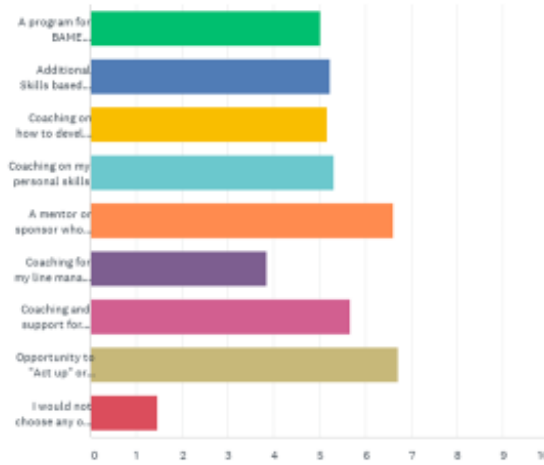
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Q13: If I had the opportunity to choose development solutions I would enrol on the following; Choose which program you would choose as number 1, and then your second choice and so on.

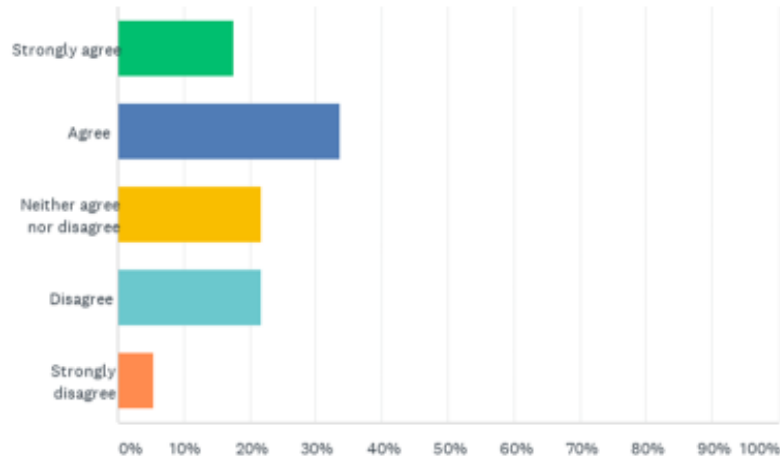
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q14: I have attempted several times to progress throughout the organisation.

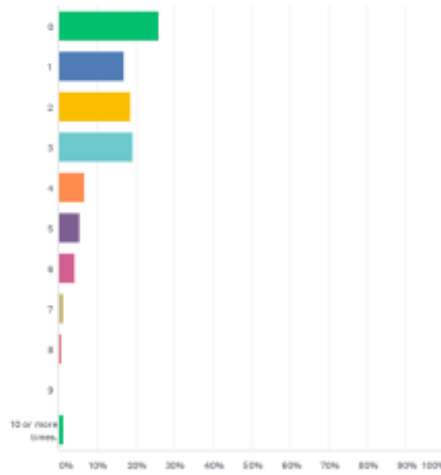
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q15: How many times have your applied for a promotion?

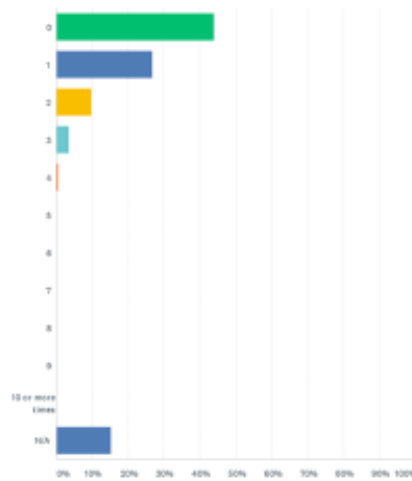
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q16: How many times have you been successful?

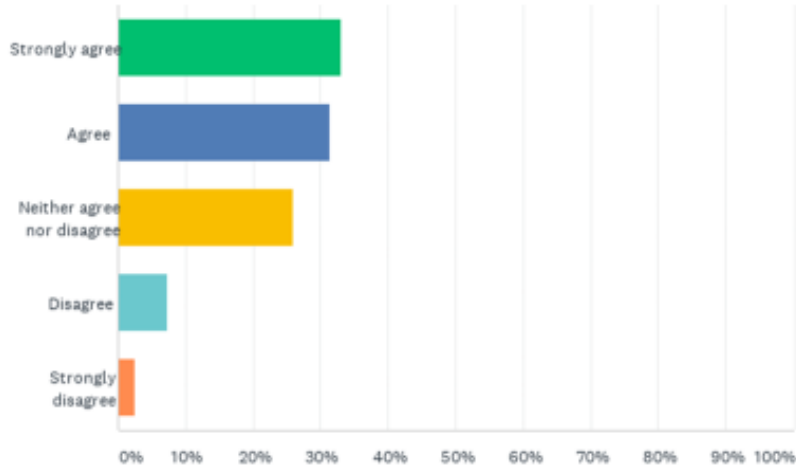
Answered: 164 Skipped: 2



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Q18: I would find a BAME Network specific to my profession useful, in generally when it comes to;(a) Progressing within my career

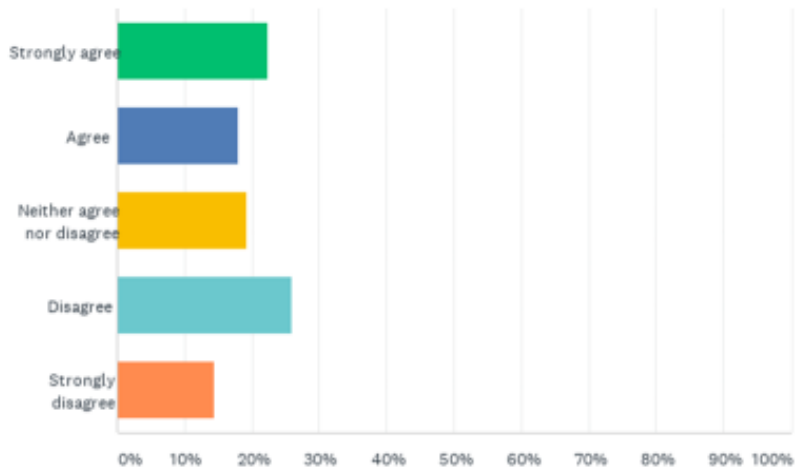
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q23: A lack of my managers' support is a significant barrier to progressing my career.

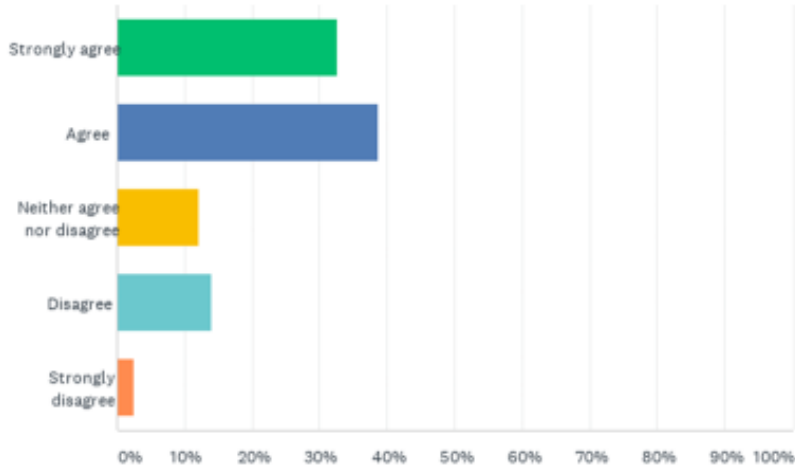
Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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Q26: The culture or environment in some spaces puts me off wanting to explore opportunities

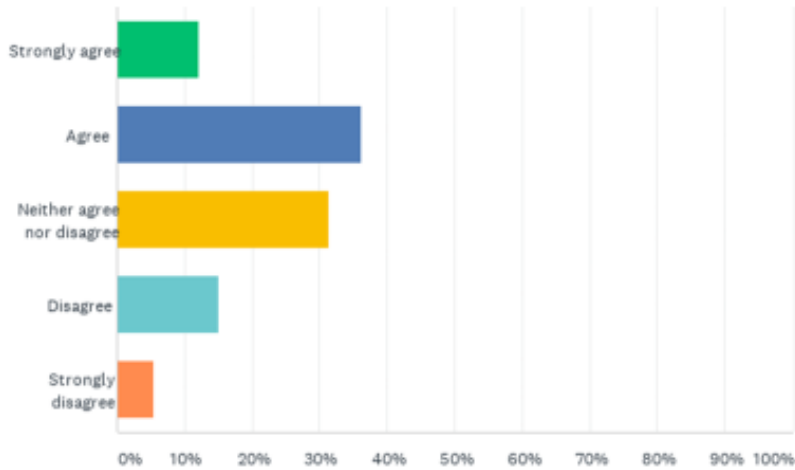
Answered: 165 Skipped: 1



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Q27: Based on my impressions of the organisation, as I progress, I expect to "fit in".

Answered: 166 Skipped: 0



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