

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Dorian Smith for the degree of Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies in Education, Sociology, and Human Development and Family Studies presented on December 7, 2016

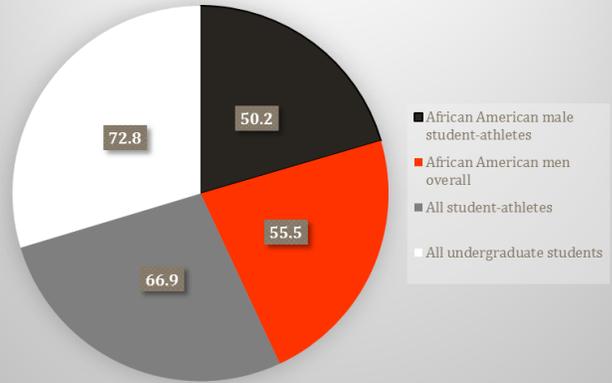
Title: Closing the Gap: Using Theory to Analyze the African American Division 1 Football Player Graduation Gap.

Abstract approved:

Matthew W. Nyman

African American male students are a small portion of the student body at NCAA Division 1-A schools, but they make up a large portion of population of college football players. African American male college students are also one of the most at-risk student populations on campus in regards to retention. They graduate at a lower rate than their white teammates. This study examines the graduation gap and employs theory as a lens to better understand the problem. I use the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) to help the reader understand how an athlete's surroundings may have an effect on their action and motivation. I employ the self-determination theory (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991) in terms of supporting intrinsic motivation. I analyze a program at a Division 1-A university that is meant to increase retention and GPA for football players to see whether African American student athletes are properly supported. Research has found that African Americans face different barriers than white student athletes on predominantly white campuses. The results of this study can help athletic programs to create programming to better support their African American student athletes.

Six-year Graduation Rate Percentage



©Copyright by Dorian Smith
December 7, 2016
All Rights Reserved

Closing the Gap: Using Theory to Analyze the African American Division 1 Football Player
Graduation Gap

By
Dorian Smith

A THESIS

submitted to

Oregon State University

In partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Master of the Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies

Presented December 7, 2016
Commencement June 2017

Master of the Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies thesis of Dorian Smith presented on December 7, 2016

APPROVED:

Major Professor, representing Education

Director of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program

Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Dorian Smith, Author

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank God who makes everything possible.

I would also like to sincerely thank my committee for the great deal of support. Dr. David Bernell's patience, knowledge and support helped me believe in my academic ability and encouraged me to push through difficult times. I was blessed to have him as my graduate council representative. Dr. Mary Arnold who took a chance to work with me and helped me to become a better writer and clearer thinker. Without her diligence, patience and vision, I would not have been able to begin this study. Dr. Dwaine Plaza's guidance, experience and passion were paramount in molding this study and my perspective as a father and graduate student. Dr. Matthew Nyman was monumental in my completion. Getting to know him was a true highlight of my experience as a graduate student. His guidance and diligence in the writing process helped me to grow as a student and father, I would also like to thank Dr. Shelley Dubkin-Lee for being so supportive, funny and honest. I am extremely grateful to have worked with this committee.

I would also like to thank my wife Sara Smith for being loving and supportive. Thank you for putting up with the long hours, early mornings. You gave me my daughter, which is the greatest gift I could ask for. I am in Awe of how strong you are every day. I love you and her more each day.

I would also like to thank my mother Loretta Davis for raising me as a single mother. Your work ethic and never ending support inspires me to achieve. My grandparents showed me how to

love by remaining married 75 years. Thank you for raising me and my cousins, and taking all of us to our sporting events.

I would also like to thank Oregon State University football for giving me the opportunity to attain my undergraduate degree, and supporting my graduate education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	2
Causal factors and the Ecological Systems Theory	2
Ecological Barriers to Academic Success for African American Male Student Athletes at Predominately White Campuses	5
Microsystem.....	5
Perception of Academics	5
Special Admission Process: Barriers as explained by theory	7
First Generation College students and family support.....	8
Mesosystem.....	9
Teachers and Deficit Models for Students	9
Being African American at a Predominately White college/university (PWCU).....	11
Macrosystem.....	14
How identity affects to the Macrosystem.....	14
Athletic identity	14
Racial identity	17
Self-Determination Theory	19
Introduction.....	19
Why self-determination theory	21
Tenets of the Self-Determination theory.....	23
Competence.....	23
Relatedness.	23
Autonomy.	23
How motivation is associated to the self-determination theory	24
Application of Self-Determination Theory to Academic Programs for African American Athletes	25
Desired Program Outcomes	25
ANALYSIS.....	26
Using SDT to understand Beyond Football program.....	26

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Beyond Football Program (BYF).....	26
• Student affairs professionals.....	32
• Faculty	32
• Academic advisors/ Academic counselors for student-athletes.....	33
• Coaches.....	33
• Athletic administrators and directors.....	34
• Beyond Football Program.....	35
References.....	38

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
Table 1.14-year student athlete graduation success rates (NCAA Research Staff, 2015)	20
Table 2. Comparison of the beyond football program and the self determination theory	28

Introduction

African American male students are a small portion of the student body at Division 1-A schools, making up less than 4% of the student population (Harper, Williams & Blackmon, 2013). African American male college students are also one of the most at-risk student populations on campus in regards to retention rates as well as having the lowest graduation rates of any other demographic (Beamon, 2014). In a longitudinal study of graduation rates, Harper, Williams and Blackmon (2013) found that graduation rates over a six-year span from 76 NCAA Division I-A colleges and universities was only 50.2% for African American male student-athletes and 55.5% for African American men overall compared to 66.9% of all student-athletes, and 72.8% of all undergraduate students. Additionally, 96.1% of NCAA Division I colleges and universities graduated Black male student-athletes at rates lower than student-athletes overall.

Further investigation and development of programs or interventions to address retention and graduate rates for black student athletes represents an interesting social justice issue around the balance between huge revenues realized by Division 1 sports programs and the low retention and graduate rates for African American student athletes who constitute the majority of football and basketball players. African American athletes at Bowl Championship Series (BCS) universities represent the majority of the participants in revenue generating sports (mostly football and basketball), but graduate at a lower rate than their white teammates. While African American student athletes only represent 2.8% of full-time undergraduate students at ACC, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac 12, and SEC conferences, they make up 46% of football and 61% of basketball teams (Harper, Williams & Blackmon, 2013). Part of this issue is that the amount of money

student-athletes in major football conferences generate for athletic programs outweighs the amount of money given for scholarships.

To understand the reason why African American football players at Division-1 universities have a graduation gap, one must understand that African American student athletes' experiences on predominantly white campuses are different than their white teammates that graduate at a higher level. Research suggest that African American student athletes face different ecological barriers at predominantly white colleges and universities than their teammates that have an effect on their motivation for academic success (Beamon, 2014; Melendez, 2008). The next section will examine how researchers have applied ecological systems models in examining and addressing barriers to retention and graduation for African American student athletes.

Literature Review

In the literature review, I will examine the African American football player graduation gap at Division 1 universities, and employ theory as a lens to better understand the problem. I use the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) to help the reader understand how an athlete's surroundings may have an effect on their action and motivation. I employ the self-determination theory (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991) in terms of supporting intrinsic motivation.

Causal factors and the Ecological Systems Theory

Capuzzi & Gross (2014) discussed behaviors and causal factors that that lead to risky behavior in youth. Capuzzi & Gross (2014) posited that if all youth possess the potential for "at-riskness", then it is difficult if not impossible to identify a direct cause and effect relationship to behaviors and causal factors that lead to risk for all youth (Gross & Capuzzi, 2014). Instead,

Capuzzi & Gross (2014) suggested that causal factors in the individual's environment have the ability to effect at-risk behavior, and one must be aware of the environmental risks in order to create an effective prevention program. Capuzzi & Gross (2014) stated that "effective counseling prevention programs must be tailored to meet the individual needs of each student at risk of dropping out" (p. 425), and students that are at risk benefit from interventions that use Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory (Abrams, Theberge, & Karan, 2005; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Conyne & Cook, 2004) as cited in (Capuzzi & Gross, 2014).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) described the ecological systems theory as a model for how personal development is impacted by a range of environmental factors. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model provides a framework to analyze factors that may affect African American Division 1 football players' academic success, specifically how an individual's choices may be influenced by environmental factors. The ecological systems theory places importance on environmental factors that influence casual factors affecting adolescent's actions, beliefs, and behaviors, (Esteban & Ratner, 2010) and included four systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Cala & Soriano, 2014):

- "The "microsystem" includes the roles, relationships and activity patterns developed by a person in his or her relationship with their environment (e.g. school, work, family)."
- "The "mesosystem" is the relation between two or more microsystems in which the person is actively involved." (e.g. school, mass media)
- "The "exosystem" or those environments in which the person in the process of becoming is not so actively involved, but do affect his/her development." (university culture on academics, NCAA policy)

- “The “macrosystem” includes the relationships, both in form and content of the lower order systems (micro-, meso - and exo-) that exist or may exist at the sub-culture level or the culture as a whole, together with any belief system or ideology that supports these correlations.” (Cala & Soriano, 2014)

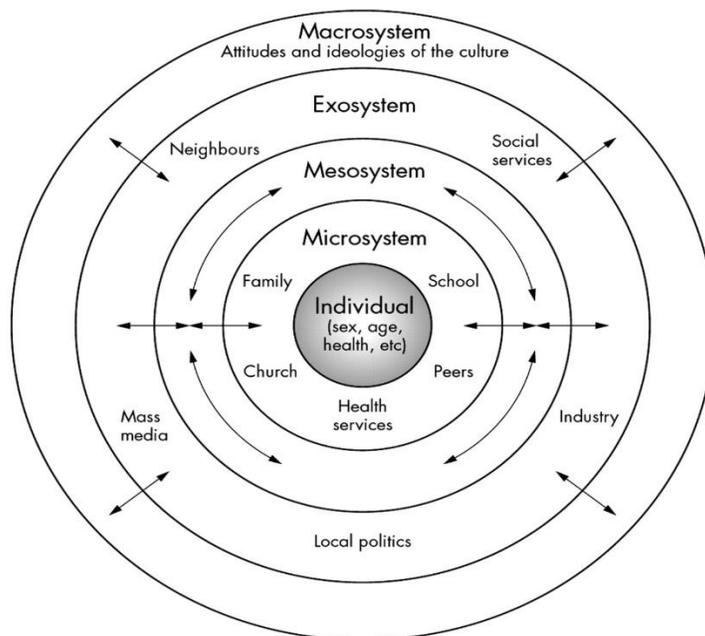


Figure 1 (McLaren & Hawe, 2005)

In the following sections of this chapter Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory will be used to better understand the barriers and causal factors African American Division 1 football players face before they arrive on campus, and when they are students at a predominantly white college or universities (PWCU).

Ecological Barriers to Academic Success for African American Male Student Athletes at Predominately White Campuses

Microsystem

Perception of Academics

Academic self-concept and perception of academics are a part of a student's microsystem and below I discuss details about how perceptions may influence African American student participation and success in university classrooms.

Students' perceptions of academics are affected by the norms of campus, team culture and societal structure. Research on African American student's perception of academics and academic self-concept is important to developing and evaluating a program that motivates academic success. Some research supports the negative connection between sport participation and academic achievement of African American male student athletes (Edwards, 1984; Morris & Adeyemo, 2012; Coleman, 1961; McWhorter, 2000). That research is mostly anecdotal and qualitative.

The negative perception of academics and academic self-concept are issues of competence that African American student athletes face in classrooms before and during their time in college. African American student athletes face the paradox of choosing between focusing their energy on athletics over academics from those within their microsystems (family, peers, schools) before they enter a university, there is the pervasive stereotype of the Black "dumb jock" (Edwards, 1984; Morris & Adeyemo, 2012). The Black dumb jock is not a new stereotype. In the article "The Black 'Dumb Jock': An American Sports Tragedy", activist and sports sociologist Dr. Harry Edwards (1984) condemned the African American community for participating in the exploitation of their own children by encouraging them to participate in the sports establishment that is dominated by

whites (Blackman & Brooks, 2011). Edwards (1984) believed that sports participation was overemphasized to African American youth and asserted that “Black dumb jocks” were created systematically by communities, educational institutions and among Black athletes themselves by accepting low academic expectations and overly encouraging athletic pursuits (Blackman & Brooks, 2011). Edwards (1984) also argues that the aspiration for upward mobility lead African American student athletes to choose between placing the majority of their time focusing on being a star athlete rather than a star student.

Coleman’s (1961) study of athletics in high school similarly argued against schools and communities encouraging sports participation over academic pursuits. Based on previous research, Coleman (1961) argued that athletics is valued far more among high school students than intellectual achievement, and that the schools and communities actually encourage this hierarchy valuation. Coleman (1961) postulated that schools should create and support alternative intellectual programs that that are more conducive to the aims of the school.

John McWhorter (2000), is an African American scholar who presented a culture-based argument to explain academic underachievement in African Americans. McWhorter (2000) postulated that there is a "cult of anti-intellectualism" among African Americans where students that have an intrinsic motivation for learning, and high academic achievement are labeled as "acting White". The argument made to corroborate the "cult of anti-intellectualism" among African American students is that there is an ideology of victimhood throughout the African American community, and that students constantly see themselves as victims. McWhorter (2000) believes that the victimhood ideology separates African American students by creating and supporting the belief that they will always be victims of racism and discrimination. That belief causes them to

become ethnocentric and segregate themselves from activities such as education, which they perceive as White. He goes on to argue that the fissiparous nature that African American students display has resulted in the dissociation of intellectual activities and academic excellence from African American students, which has led to widespread underachievement of African American students (McWhorter, 2000).

Special Admission Process: Barriers as explained by theory

A second microsystem process that impacts academic perception and identity for African American athletes is the special admission process. The special admission process provides an opportunity for African American student-athletes to gain access to higher education, while allowing universities to increase revenue by admitting elite players that will help their athletic programs win games, thus leading to more national attention and higher admission numbers (Brown 1996). In general, if a high school student does not prioritize school, they may fall behind in their classes, receive a lower grade point average (GPA) and under perform on standardized tests, which makes it harder for them to enter colleges and universities. This may not always be the case for student athletes. According to research by Anderson (2010), student athletes on many occasions are admitted into universities under a special admission process even though they have lower a GPA or test score that the university allows for their admission process. An Orlando Sentinel article pointed out that student athletes at 27 Division I universities had student athletes benefit from the special admission process at a 10 times higher rate than the traditional student; and from 2004-2006, University of Alabama football players were 43 times more likely to receive the special admission process (Anderson, 2010). The special admission process affects student-athletes macrosystem because it creates a culture or belief system that athletic prowess outranks

academic performance, and universities lower acceptance requirements to accept highly coveted recruits.

First Generation College students and family support

Another microsystem component is the important role of families in terms of impacting African American student athlete success. African American students are more likely to be a first generation student than their white and Asian American counterparts, and are also more likely to be from a lower socioeconomic status background (Fischer, 2007) . Students that have less social support and a lack of understanding of the formal structures of the university graduate at a lower rate (Saunders & Serna, 2004). This can cause challenges for parents and children because neither group can communicate effectively with the university, which may lead to parents lack of involvement, a lack of essential knowledge for success and an increase in the isolation a student feels on campus.

Family resilience is also an important factor in supporting student athletes. Sheridan, Sjuts, and Coutts (2013) define family resiliency as a “concept by which families meet these challenges in a positive and adaptive manner allowing them to fulfill their primary function of socializing children” (pg. 157). The four types of family-centered approaches to resiliency are: Intervention efforts that are based on family needs, using existing family strengths and capabilities to mobilize family resources, making sure social networks are used as social support and, use behaviors that promote acquisition of competencies (Sheridan, Sjuts, & Coutts, 2013). This is intervention technique can be leveraged to help lead special admits to academic success. Coaches can make sure social networks are used as social support to promote the acquisition of competencies, and behaviors associated with academic success.

Mesosystem

The mesosystem is the relation between two or more microsystems in which the person is actively involved and also impacts student success. Some researchers have used interventions within the mesosystem to create positive outcomes for at risk youth. In the following section, I will describe some interventions that address ecological barriers faced by at risk youth and used the roles relationships and environmental factors in the microsystem and exosystem to lead to positive outcomes.

The mesosystem can be positively affected by creating a what is referred to as a “conjoint behavioral consultation (CBC)” (Sheridan, Sjuts, and Coutts, 2013). A CBC brings together different parts of the microsystem (family, school, sports, church, support groups) with neighbors and social systems that are part of the exosystem in an effort to support the needs of the student. One aim of this process is to build consistent outcomes for positive youth development through implementation of the 5c’s model of positive youth development (competence, confidence, connection, character and caring), which are used to measure development across middle adolescence (Bowers, et al., 2010). Luthar’s (1991) conjoint behavioral consultation included teaching students and parents coping strategies to deal with the increase in school work and viewing resilience as a protective process. This technique illustrates all four aspects of family centered approaches as defined by Sheridan, Sjuts, and Coutts (2013).

Teachers and Deficit Models for Students

Educators can also be a barrier to a student’s academic success. Some educators have low expectations for African American and Latino students, which can negatively affect student learning outcomes. Theories of suspected anti-intellectualism in African American students have

been published (McWhorter, 2000) in peer reviewed journal articles. Research like that of McWhorter (2000), along with racism could result in implicit bias in teachers and professors which may impact a student's mesosystem by negatively affecting the student's everyday school life (mesosystem) and their education system/ policy (exosystem).

McKown & Weinstein, (2002), found that African American children were more likely than their white classmates to report that teachers underestimate their ability, and they were less likely to benefit from overestimates. The effects of teacher expectations on achievements were found to be constant or even increase with age (McKown & Weinstein, 2002). Teachers expectations are important to the success of students. Students that receive lowered expectations from teachers and professors may receive differential treatment resulting in less praise, more disciplinary action from teachers (Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2014). Students receiving differential treatment from teachers may begin value athletics over academics because of the negative experiences they receive in the classroom.

Reyes, Elias, Parker, & Rosenblatt (2013) believe that social and emotional learning (SEL) for educators and students can target those expectations and create programs to counter their feelings towards the students. It can also help students to recognize the low expectations from educators and give them skills to endure through these situations of low expectations. This is important because African American students may believe the low expectations for their education, and internalize those beliefs, which may lead to valuing athletics over academics.

It is important to understand that a person's exosystem (social systems, mass media, politics) is affected by research. Some research could have a negative impact on the subject. Bowers, et al., (2010) found that some research on adolescent development has been based on a

deficit model, which determined an adolescent's merit by the negative activity they didn't participate in. The deficit perspective was prominent in developmental science, psychology, education, sociology, public health, and other fields throughout the twentieth century. The positive youth development perspective (PYD) grew in response to the deficit-based approach, and has expanded over the past two decades. Championed by Richard Lerner, the PYD perspective focuses on the strengths that youth (children and adolescents) possess and the positive outcomes we want to see from that youth. The PYD perspective includes a 5 C's model (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring) that posits development of the 5 C's leads to positive youth development (Bowers, et al., 2010). It could be assumed that families that understand the five C's can help their children to achieve positive youth development and academic achievement.

Being African American at a Predominately White college/university (PWCU)

This section addresses the issue African American student athletes face on their campuses (macrosystem) and in the classroom with their peers and professors (microsystem). Specifically, I will focus on the concept of relatedness, which is the sense of belonging an individual may feel within a community (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

The transition of African American student-athletes to a predominantly white college or university can cause stress for a variety reasons. In a study of the psychosocial experiences of African American football players at a predominantly white institution (PWI) in northeastern United States, Melendez (2008) found that African American student-athletes from urban city areas had specific developmental and social issues when transitioning into a predominantly white university setting. Feeling of isolation, athletic and academic stressors, experiences on campus, experiences in the city surrounding campus, and negative experiences on the team or with coaches

and teammates can act as barriers to a student athlete's personal growth and academic success (Melendez, 2008).

Lawrence (2005) concluded that African American student-athletes have different experiences than their white teammates while attending predominately white colleges and universities. Lawrence (2005) found that race played a major role on the lives of African American student-athletes, but it was not a major factor in the lives of their white teammates. The student athletes interviewed in Lawrence's (2005) study faced several overt incidents of racism including having bottles thrown at them, being confronted by racial slurs, and even being spat on. Black athletes were constantly aware how different their experiences were from their white teammate and coaches and reported experiencing powerful emotions of pain, frustration and confusion at the discrimination they faced. Reported cases of racially-charged events continue on college campuses. Incidents like "blackface" parties and noose hangings have made news recently at numerous PWI universities, forcing African American student athletes to face challenges beyond the typical academic tasks that white teammates face, which, in turn impedes their academic success (Costello, 2010; Feagin, Heman, & Imani, 1996; Strausbaugh, 2006; Teaching Tolerance, 2002; Van Kerckhove, 2007; Wade, 2011) as cited in (Beamon, 2014).

Many student athletes recognize the classroom as an unsafe place due to racial stereotypes and perceived negative perceptions by professors. Below student athletes from a study by Beamon (2014), discuss their experiences:

“. . . in the classroom they made a racist statement in which I was the only African American in the classroom and they tend to forget that I was in there, and once they realized I was in

there everybody faces turn red and I had a whole lot of apologies. But ya (sic) know that's a part of life, you have to accept it and move on."

"I'm a big dude . . . and I'm for real Black (laughing) so I kinda (sic) stood out all of the time . . . people knew I was an athlete so sometimes that worked to my advantage, not with professors; it's like all they could see was a big, Black, so I must be dumb".

Encountering discrimination on a college campus, from the student body, faculty and staff, fans at games, coaches and in the media (including social media), are all possible risks of being an African American student-athlete at a PWI (Engstrom, Sedlacek, & McEwen, 1995; Hyatt, 2003; Lawrence, 2005; Melendez, 2008; Simons, Bosworth, Fujita, & Jensen, 2007). African American student athletes also feel unsupported by staff and faculty. Simmons et al., (2007) interviewed 538 collegiate athletes about how they felt they were perceived by faculty and nonstudent-athletes. The results of the study found that African American student athletes reported feeling that they were perceived negatively by faculty at a higher rate than white student athletes. Twenty-nine percent of African American student-athletes in their sample reported being accused or suspected of cheating in class, compared with only 6% of their White teammates (Simons, Bosworth, Fujita, & Jensen, 2007). Below is an example of a student athlete who experienced negative perceptions from faculty:

"Um, me personally, I was usually like the only Black person in a lot of my classes and being an athlete and the only Black person in the class, that's two strikes against you. A lot of professors see athletes as a problem. They figure you not gone come to class, you not gone do your work, you know a hassle" (Beamon, 2014).

Macrosystem

How identity affects to the Macrosystem

Cala & Soriano (2014) define the macrosystem as the “relationships, both in form and content of the lower order systems (micro-, meso - and exo-) that exist or may exist at the sub-culture level or the culture as a whole, together with any belief system or ideology that supports these correlations” (Cala & Soriano, 2014). A student athlete’s racial and athletic identity are part of their macrosystem because their identity and perception are both part of the larger American culture and the smaller university culture. Research has shown that both athletic and racial identity impact African American student athlete’s academic success (Awad, 2007; Chavous, et al., 2003; Lockett & Harrell, 2003; Bimper Jr., 2014)

Athletic identity

Elite Division 1 African American student athletes are challenged with developing both as highly-engaged college students and full-time elite athletes, which makes their developmental college experience different than those of their peer students (Bimper Jr., 2014). Bimper Jr. (2014) found that higher measures of athletic identity predicted lower grade point averages (GPA). Bimper Jr. (2014) posits that student-athlete’s development and level of maturity is connected to the extent and importance they place on their identity as an athlete and the intersection with individual thought, behavior and events related to social factors. Higher levels of athletic identity have been linked to many other outcomes including a detachment from academics (Adler & Adler, 1985), better athletic performance, expanded social network (Horton & Mack, 2000) psychological adjustment issues related to career transition (Grove, Lavalley, & Gordon, 1997) and, difficulty retiring from sport participation (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2004) .

Harrison, Sailes, Rotich, & Bimper Jr., (2011) surveyed 109 NCAA Division I football student athletes from a large PWI in the southeast to investigate the relationship between athletic and racial identity using Brewer, Raalte and Linder's (1993) Athletic Identity Measurement Scale. Harrison et al. (2011) found that African American Division 1 football players reported having much higher levels of athletic identity than their white teammates. In addition, African American athletes reported higher levels of intrinsic focus on their sport, feeling that sport is central to their lives, and of being perceived as an athlete only by their peers (Harrison et al., 2011).

Higher levels of athletic identity could lead to role conflict, which occurs when a person feel a contradiction between separate roles. That contradiction results in one of the roles being compromised. In regards to the student-athletes, a student-athlete may have their role as a student compromised by high expectations as a student athlete (Fuller, Harrison, & Bukstein, 2016). As a result, African American student athletes that view sport participation as central to life, and being a student as an interference or a hurdle they have to jump in order to participate in their sport may suffer academically and have a less positive well-being (Settles, Sellers, & Damas, 2002).

In a qualitative study Singer (2008) found that some African American student athletes felt that the physical, psychological, and emotional demands of being a college athlete inhibit them being a college student. Former student athletes were quoted sharing the sentiment that sports participation is an interference to their academic potential:

“You got to study; you got practice; you are tired and the average college student is you know, two classes a day and maybe has a job. But after about, I don't know, depends on what time their classes are, but if they have classes in the morning then they are done for

the rest of the day. They have time to do their homework. Their body is not tired” (Singer, 2008).

“They don’t put in the time that we put in. I’ll say that if most student-athletes had a scholarship and was just a student they would have a 3.0 and 4.0 ’cause (sic) they know what it takes, you know what I’m saying, from all that time they do with athletics, you know what I’m saying. If we took maybe half the time for athletics and put that more into the school work then guys, the graduation rate would be higher, you know what I’m saying.” (Singer, 2008).

The former African American Division 1 student athletes quoted above are examples of role conflict. The interference with athlete’s role as a student, is negatively impacted by their role as an athlete, which can lead to psychological distress (Settles, Sellers, & Damas, 2002). The views of the athletes above, and the concept of role conflict is part of a bigger issue of athletes being coerced by coaches, athletic departments, and fans to identify with athletics over academics (Singer, 2008).

Fuller, Harrison, & Bukstein, (2016) cited Bell’s (2004) interest convergence principle to explain the exploitation of student athletes. Bell’s interest convergence principle is constructed on the idea that institutions and individuals in power don’t always act in the best interest of underrepresented groups. In this case the encouraging African American student athletes to overinvest in athletics, which led to role conflict (Fuller, Harrison, & Bukstein, 2016). Research from these studies is important because it provides researchers and athletic programs with information that supports the fact that there is a problem with a particular group of student athletes, a problem that requires attention.

Racial identity

“The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife- this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He wouldn't bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face”. (Du Bois, 1903)

One can surmise that if African American students live with a double consciousness in their macrosystems, one as an American and the other as an African American, it becomes difficult to develop a unified identity and keeps them aware of the discrimination and macroaggressions that others with privilege may not be aware of. Given that African American student athletes also reckon with their identity as athletes suggests they live with a triple consciousness on predominantly white campuses and universities. Race, compounded with the fact that they are student athletes, separates African American student-athletes from their white teammates and African American peers. This triple consciousness can have major implications on their identity development within the microsystem. African American student athletes have to maintain ethnic identity while actively participating in organized sport and the larger Eurocentric campus society (Wiggins, 1994).

The concept of African American student athlete racial identity has been studied by researchers (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001; Wiggins, 1994) in order to determine whether having a higher level of racial identity benefits student athlete's academic development. The multidimensional model of racial identity (MMRI) (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998) defines racial identity as "the significance and qualitative meaning that individuals attribute to their membership with the black racial group within their self-concepts" (Sellers et al. 1998, p.23). Historically, a strong affiliation with the African American community has been linked to having a strong value for learning and education, a motivating value that results from an awareness of African Americans' past and current struggles for educational access and opportunity (Perry, 1993; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001; Weinberg, 1977) as cited in (Chavous, et al., 2003; Perry, 1993).

Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfusers, & Harpalani (2001), examined longitudinal data from 562 African American students using the Racial Identity Aptitude scale to determine whether their academic performance would increase if they adopted Eurocentric value orientation. The scale measures the evolution of Black identity from the *pre-encounter stage* where students have "White salience values, attitudes, and identification with anti-Black stereotypes (p.26)", to the *internalization stage*, where students develop an "internalized and proactive Black salience identity that also acknowledges the positive aspects of other cultural traditions (p.26)" (Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001). Using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Spencer et al. (2001) found that high Pre-Encounter scores were connected to decreased academic achievement, while high Internalization scores were associated with higher with academic achievement.

Though racial identity has been found to be a contributing factor to academic achievement in African American students (Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001), it may not be the answer for African American male student athletes. Cokley (2001) compiled data from 258 African American undergraduate liberal arts students (92 males, 165 females, 1 unidentified, aged 18 to 57) at two southern historically black college/universities (HBCU). Cokley (2001) used the Racial Centrality Scale (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997), which is an 8-item scale that measures one of three dimensions of racial identity, the Academic Self-Concept Scale (Reynolds, 1988), which is a 40-item scale that uses a 4-point Likert-type scale to measure the amount of confidence an individual has in their academic abilities, and the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand, Pelletier, Blais, & Briere, 1992), which is a 28-item scale that measures intrinsic motivation (IM) and extrinsic motivation (EM) as well as amotivation (AM) by the way students respond to the question “why do you go to college?” (Cokley, 2001). In the study, Cokley (2001) found that African American females had a positive correlation between racial identity and intrinsic motivation but African American males had a negative correlation between racial identity and intrinsic motivation. That information led Cokley (2001) to conclude that black males become disillusioned by the educational process and attach their racial identity to activities like sports where there are more black role models (p. 485).

Self-Determination Theory

Introduction

Athletic departments across the country have academic support programs for student-athletes that are staffed with sport-specific academic counselors. The primary goals of these programs include: connecting student athletes with campus resources; providing one-on-one

support for student-athletes and; making accessible academic services such as arranging tutors, proctoring exams, traveling with teams and providing information and support to individual athletes (Oregon Sate University, 2016). Some athletic departments also have separate programs that engage student athletes in the broader community. Despite these efforts, the disparity between graduation rates for African American and white football players indicate that individual programs have failed to find adequate solutions to balance the graduation rates (Figure 2).

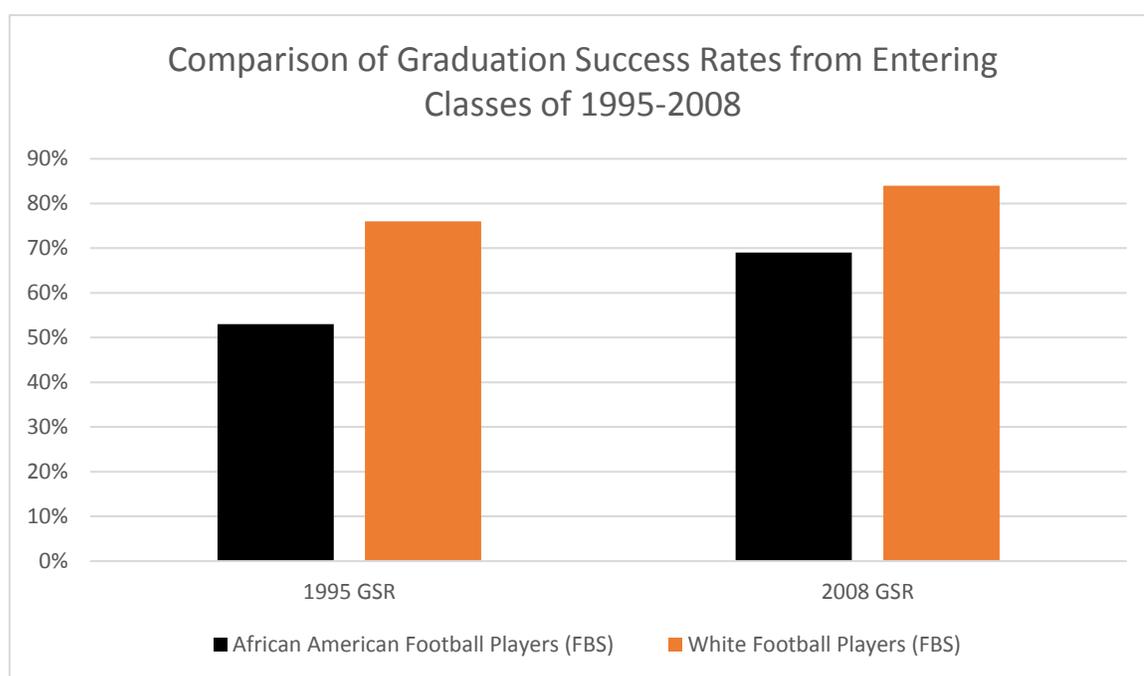


Figure 2 .14-year student athlete graduation success rates (NCAA Research Staff, 2015)

I posit that a truly effective program to improve the dropout rates of African American male football players at Division I programs should take a holistic approach to academic performance. A successful program should employ the ecological systems theory

(Bronfenbrenner,1979) to understand the barriers student-athletes face on PWCU's, as well as employ the self-determination theory (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991) to motivate student athletes to pursue academic success. Service-learning can also be a useful pedagogical tool when used in the framework of the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and the self-determination theory (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991) to teach African American student-athletes about complex social issues by engaging them in local environments and allowing them to learn by applying course materials to real events (Vaccaro, 2009). Research suggests that a program based on the self-determination theory could help to motivate African American male student-athletes to persist through the educational and ecological challenges at predominately white colleges and universities, and help to develop the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of student athletes to pursue academic achievement (1978K. O., 2003). Capuzzi & Gross, (2014) suggest that an "effective counseling prevention programs must be tailored to meet the individual needs of each student at risk of dropping out" (p. 425). Research also suggest that students that are at risk benefit from interventions that use ecological systems theory (Abrams, Theberge, & Karan, 2005; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Conyne & Cook, 2004).

Why self-determination theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) theorizes that humans have an inherent motivational drive to master their social environment through self-determined actions (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2002, 2008). Self-determination theory makes the distinction between self-determined and controlled types of intentional regulation (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, Ryan, 1991). The goal of self-determination is to get people motivated to perform actions on their own volition instead of through coercion. In an educational setting, SDT should establish a value and interest for education for student's, promote a confidence in student's ability and increase capacity for learning under the

own volition (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991). Self-determined motivation has been linked to positive educational outcomes such as such as academic motivation (Cokley, 2003) and effort toward achievement (Ryan & Connell, 1989).

Harrison, Martin, & Fuller (2015) studied the academic motivation and academic experiences of high achieving African American male college athletes in revenue generating sports, and the role of their peer on their academic achievements. The authors used self-determination theory as a framework to understand the motivation of the high-achieving athletes and the influence of peers on academic achievement. Since 2002, multiple scholars who analyzed self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015;) have posited that the main basis for self-motivation is the existence of three basic psychological needs: “(a) competence, (b) autonomy, and (c) relatedness.” (Deci E. L., 2002, pp. 182-183)). The three basic psychological requirements for self-motivation also address some of the ecological barriers that researchers have found that African American student athletes face on campus at predominantly white colleges and universities such as isolation (Melendez, 2008) which leads to a lack of relatedness, feeling unsupported by faculty (Simmons et al., 2007; harper) or stigmatized as a dumb black jock (Edwards, 1984), which in turn, leads to a lack of academic competence and engagement.

Harrison, Martin, & Fuller (2015) found self-determined actions were crucial to the success of African American student athletes, especially for high achieving African American student athletes who display a great deal of autonomous motivation. In addition, ecological factors such as the campus community, athletic departments, coaches, and peers impact individuals’ self-determined behavior. Relatedness was a major factor in increasing intrinsic motivation (Harrison,

Martin, & Fuller, 2015). African American student-athletes in Harrison, Martin & Fuller's (2015) study discussed how their self-determined motivation was influenced by peer support (relatedness) when their peers were positive about academic achievement.

Tenets of the Self-Determination theory

Competence.

Competence is the first tenet of the self-determination theory and is achieved when student athletes feel capable in the campus environment and the classroom. Student athletes should feel confident in expressing and exercising their academic and social capabilities.

Relatedness.

Relatedness is the next tenet of the self-determination theory and refers to the sense of belonging as an individual and as a community member, and not being favored but being cared for, as well as also caring for others (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

Autonomy.

Autonomy is the next tenet of the self-determination theory refers to self-guidance throughout the decision making process and an individual acting in accord with his or her interests and values (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015). An autonomous individual can have his or her actions influenced by external sources but the influence will align with values and interests already integrated within the individual (Ryan & Deci, 2002). One example of autonomous motivation is class attendance, an individual who attends class because they believe it is morally right for them to attend class and they want to further their education is self-determined and is acting autonomously with an intrinsic influence. An individual who is attending class because they are being checked that day is exhibiting controlled behavior.

How motivation is associated to the self-determination theory

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are the two types of motivation associated with the self-determination theory when it is applied to academic achievement (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991). The two types of motivation lead to autonomous behavior. Intrinsic academic motivation is when a student is interested and participates in academic behaviors because they want to learn and includes three types (Deci et al., 1991). The first type is to *know*, which refers to doing something because they love to learn new things. The second type of intrinsic motivation is *accomplishing*, which refers to doing something in order to enjoy the experience of seeing it through to the end, and learning something along the way. The third type of intrinsic motivation is *experience*, which refers to doing something academic for the enjoyment one receives from learning something new. If someone takes a class outside of their major because it is interesting and they enjoy learning new things, they are intrinsically motivated.

Extrinsic academic motivation is when a student participates in academic activities because they see the action as an end to a mean. Deci et al., (1991) also divided extrinsic academic motivation into four types. *External regulation* is when students perform actions because of the risk of punishment associated with not performing the action, or the reward associated with performing the action. For example, in university sports programs a student who attends class because there are class checks and mandatory extra physical conditioning associated with missing class is an example of external regulation. *Identified regulation* refers to students performing academic actions because it has value. An example of identified regulation is a student athlete who is not a star player performing well academically to become an academic All-American or to get an all-academic award for players in their conference. *Introjected regulation* refers to students engaging in performing actions because they are expected to act in

that manner. For example, a student-athlete who puts in extra hours of practice and film study though it may have a negative effect academically because players who have been successful on the field have done it in the past. *Integrated regulation* is when identified and introjected regulation work together harmoniously to create a full sense of self causing the individual's behavior to be an expression of self, and what they see as important and valued (Deci et al., 1991). For example, a student athlete may have role conflict (Fuller, Harrison, & Bukstein, 2016) when his identification as an athlete conflicts with his identification as a student causing both areas to suffer. With integrated regulation, an individual with role conflict will perform well enough academically to perform in their sport. Though integrated regulation sounds similar to intrinsic motivation, it is different because it is characterized by the activity being personally important for a valued outcome; whereas intrinsic motivation is characterized by the individual's interest in the activity itself (Deci et al., 1991).

According to research from Ryan & Connell (1989), students that are extrinsically motivated experience more anxiety and difficulty coping with academic failures than intrinsically-motivated students. Intrinsically motivated students are more likely to have better academic performance and persist academic challenges to stay in school (Deci et al., 1991).

Application of Self-Determination Theory to Academic Programs for African American Athletes

Desired Program Outcomes

The desired outcome for a program is to increase the retention and graduation rates of African American male football players at NCAA Division I colleges and universities. GPA is a marker used to measure academic achievement, and retention and graduation rate for athletes with high

GPA's are typically high. Promoting an intrinsic motivation in African American male football players to achieve academically is another expected outcome of a program that employs self-determination theory. A program that uses the self-determination theory should lead to the desired outcomes by addressing the three basic psychological requirements for self-motivation: Competence, autonomy and relatedness (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015). Below is a program that has led to positive outcomes for football players at a Pac- 12 university. I will examine if the tenets of self-determination theory were employed, and whether the program addresses ecological barriers that African American student athletes face on predominately white universities in their approach to increasing student-athlete's academic success.

ANALYSIS

Using SDT to understand Beyond Football program

I will use a table to compare the three tenets of self-determination theory against the three tenets of the beyond football program to see whether the program is designed to promote autonomous motivation towards academic success for African American student-athletes. I will also examine the Beyond football program to see whether it addresses ecological barriers African American Division 1 football players face on predominantly white campuses according to the self-determination theory.

Beyond Football Program (BYF)

The program Beyond Football (BYF) that is currently used at a Division 1 football program in the Pacific Northwest. The graduation rate of African American student-athletes at the university is 11% higher than that of the general African American male student body at this particular university (Harper, Collin D. Williams, & Blackman, 2013). The program's main goals are to produce early interventions designed to increase individual student athlete GPA's, which has a general aim of increasing retention and graduate rates. A second goal is to improve the whole football team's GPA per term.

The Beyond Football program was developed in 2013 with a primary goal of developing the personal and professional aspirations of student-athletes. The Beyond Football program is based on three principal tenets: Empower, engage, and prepare. The program provides specific programming, classes, and seminars to provide life-changing experiences to student athletes in an effort to increase leadership, increase retention, and prepare student-athletes for a productive life after football (Oregon State Football, 2016).

The specific goals of the BYF are to increase volunteer hours, team GPA, boost the retention rates of special admit students, and eventually increase the employment rate of football players who leave the program. Though BYF is separate from the academic counseling the student athletes receive from the academics or student athletes (ASA) department on campus, BYF assesses its outcomes by data collected from ASA. Football players are required to participate in two community service events, two workshop Wednesdays, one professional development event, one athletics department event, and one campus/personal development event (Oregon State Football, 2016). Below, the Beyond Football programs three tenets are compared to the tenets of the self-determination theory in table 1.

Program/Theory	Tenet	Description
Beyond Football Program	Engage	Fostering and understanding of community and global needs and a culture of volunteerism and civic engagement (Oregon State Football, 2016).
Self-Determination Theory	Relatedness	Refers to the sense of belonging as an individual and as a community member, and not being favored but being cared for, as well as also caring for others (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015)
Beyond Football Program	Empower	Connecting student-athletes to business professionals, thought leaders and experiences that will expand their worldview, way of thinking and networking, after completing individual motivational interviews with student-athletes. (Oregon State Football, 2016).
Self Determination Theory	Competence	Student athletes feel capable in the campus environment and the classroom. Student athletes should feel confident in expressing and exercising their academic and social capabilities.
Beyond Football Program	Prepare	Identifying the student-athletes unique interests, skills and passions and determinnig a professional direction and course for success (Oregon State Football, 2016).
Self-DeterminationTheory	Autonomy	Self-guidance throughout the decision making process and an individual acting in accord with his or her interests and values (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015).

Table 1. Comparison of the beyond football program and the self-determination theory

The first tenet of the BYF is “Engage”. The goal of the engage tenet is to promote the understanding of community and global needs to the student-athletes by having them complete community service and participate in civic engagement events. The creators of the program posit that engagement in community service will foster an intrinsic motivation for lifelong civic engagement. The program tracked 1,145 volunteer hours completed by the football team over 38 events during the 2015-2016 academic year. The tenet from the self-determination theory that is most similar is relatedness which refers to the sense of belonging as an individual and as a

community member, and not being favored but being cared for, as well as also caring for others (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015).

The empower tenet of the BYF program assesses students athlete's motivation during individual interviews with the programs director conducted once a year in spring term. The director of the program meets individually with student athletes and asks them to set academic, personal and sport related goals for the upcoming year. Programing for the year upcoming year is created from the data received during the interviews. The "workshop Wednesday" series was created by the program director to help the athletes feel competent in achieving their goals. The Wednesday workshops series includes guest speakers on various topics including resume building, financial literacy, and building a personal brand. There were also three voluntary meetings over two terms specifically to empower the student-athletes by covering healthy masculinity, mindfulness, and mental health.

The self-determination tenet that most closely resembles the empower tenet in the BYF program is competence. Competence is when student athletes feel capable of expressing their academic and social capabilities in the campus environment and in the classroom. The workshop Wednesday series works to build competence in the student-athlete's social life. Addressing concepts of masculinity is an important issue that can help African American student-athletes to be successful undergraduate students (Harper, 2004). The workshop series addresses some of the ecological barriers the student athletes discuss in individual interviews with the program director, but it can be more helpful to African American student-athletes by addressing the barriers researchers found that they are facing on predominately white colleges and universities, such as

dealing with discrimination in town and on campus (Beamon, 2014), and develop workshops that directly respond to those barriers.

The prepare tenet of the BYF program is meant to identify the skills and interests of the football players based on the qualitative data from the interviews with the program director, and create a successful map towards professional success (Oregon State Football, 2016). The prepare tenet also uses the workshop Wednesday series to provide voluntary professional development to the football players. The workshops included learning how to prepare a resume, financial literacy, creating a personal brand, the reality of the NFL, and media training. The football players also attended a diversity career symposium and visited to Nike headquarters for professional development.

Autonomy is the tenet from the self-determination that is closely related to prepare. Harrison, Martin and Fuller, (2015) define autonomy as self-guidance throughout the decision-making process and an individual acting in accord with his or her interests and values. The prepare tenet does that by creating programming based on qualitative data taken from interviews with football players that have identified needs. The program takes the student-athletes majors and career goals into consideration when creating programming with the assumption that they will be intrinsically motivated to attend the workshops. The assumption looks to be valid, because the workshops are well attended. The student athletes that do attend the workshops are doing so out of their own will and with an intrinsic motivation.

The BYF Program does not explicitly state being rooted in the self-determination theory, but has similarities to the self-determination theory, for instance having three major tenets (engage, empower and prepare) that align with the three aspects of self-determination theory.

However, the BYF program does not appear to address the ecological barriers that affect African American academic success. Research (Lawrence, 2005; Melendez, 2008) has shown that African American football players at predominantly white colleges and universities face different challenges than their white teammates like isolation and racial stereotypes that affect their level of relatedness on campus and in the community. Therefore, the BYF Program falls short of reaching its full potential of supporting African American student-athletes by not addressing ecological barriers.

I would like to see programs like BYF address the issues of prejudice on campus, academic self-concept, isolation between the African American student athlete population and the general student athlete population. Unfortunately, those problems are too large for one football program to tackle. Many ecological barriers are athletic department, and university issues. Below, I will offer suggestion to faculty members and athletic administrators on how to address ecological barriers African American football players face on college campuses.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the current study, I found that African American student-athletes encounter different experiences on predominantly white colleges and universities than their white teammates (Beamon, 2014; Simons, Bosworth, Fujita, & Jensen, 2007; Melendez, 2008). The ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and self-determination theory can work in concert to create a guideline for a program to that promotes autonomous motivation in African American football players. I would like to offer the following recommendations for intercollegiate athletics professionals who work with African American male student-athletes:

- **Student affairs professionals**

I recommend that student affairs professionals create opportunities for student athletes to participate in orientations such as bridge programs that introduce all student athletes to the academic culture of the campus, encourages them to participate in peer groups and student organizations outside of athletics in order to broaden their college experience and, enhance their cultural awareness (Harper & Quaye, 2007) . I also recommend that bridge programs have specific sessions developed to address ecological barriers that African American student athletes have faced historically on their individual campuses such as issues of competence, relatedness and racism. Programs should include dialog with survey information from students and faculty of color at the university about their experiences on campus.

Participation in high impact, experiential learning activities such as bridge program, student organizations, and service learning opportunities like Beavers Without Borders at Oregon State University (<https://www.ourbeavernation.com/my-1-story/beavers-without-borders/>) all work to change student's perspectives on education, culture, and identity. I suggest that student affair professionals work in concert with academic advisors and coaches to create an environment where participation in these activities are part of the student athlete experience that all student athletes are expected to participated in.

- **Faculty**

In order to increase retention in African American males at their individual universities, faculty members should be aware of their place within the African American student's ecological system and work to understand how their interactions with student athletes can impact the perception of the black dumb jock stigma (Edwards, 1984), which can negatively

impact feeling of competence for African American student athletes. Also, African American male faculty members should create initiatives or intentional programming to create more mentor relationships with African American male student-athletes in an effort to increase the sense of relatedness of the student athlete to the academic (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015).

- **Academic advisors/ Academic counselors for student-athletes**

Academic advisors and academic counselors for student-athletes are accountable to the coaching staff to keep players eligible to play and also accountable to the student-athletes to advise them in the major and course selection. Harrison, Martin, & Fuller (2015), found that student athletes felt more autonomy and a higher sense of motivation when they had more control over their major and course selection. Therefore, academic advisors/counselors should work with student-athletes to advise them to find student groups/organizations that may help them to discover their passion as a new student taking prerequisites. Advisors should then support student-athlete's ambitions when selecting majors, and advise them in their course selection instead of choosing classes for them. Doing so should lead to an increased sense of autonomy, and foster a positive relationship with the process of higher education.

- **Coaches**

I encourage coaches and administrators to promote academic success as much as possible and in as many places as possible in an effort to increase autonomy. A head football coach at Oregon State University promotes academic success in team meetings by having student athletes with 3.0 GPA's and above stand while their teammates cheer for them. The head coach also acknowledges when student athletes receive A's on test during breaks at practice. This is

important because Harrison, Martin, & Fuller (2015), found that African American student-athletes academic motivation, aspiration and sense of relatedness are impacted by their teammate's perception's of academics.

- **Athletic administrators and directors**

I recommend that athletic administrators facilitate streamlined communication between academic counselors, coaches and programs like Beyond Football to create a holistic system that develops autonomous motivation in African American student-athletes. I also suggest that athletic administrators research critical race theory to gain a better understanding of systemic racism and how African American male student-athletes are affected by cultural perceptions of race on and off campus since many athletic administrative positions are overrepresented by whites (The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport , 2012). That understanding should help administrators understand some of the ecological barriers that African American football players face on campus.

I also suggest that athletic directors consider adding social work and counseling graduate students to athletic staff to work with student-athletes who are a risk in their personal and academic lives. Social workers can help student athletes adress ecological barriers, and work towards developing self-determined motivation towards education. Social workers are primarily concerned with the well-being of individuals. Harper, Terry, & Twigs, (2009) found that social work professionals have recognized counseling strtagies like transcendent counseling that is specifically designed to help African American males. Social workers can employ transcendent counseling to promote autonomy in at-risk African American student-athletes. Transcendent counseling was developed as a theory for counseling African

American's in the 1970's (Harper & Stone (1974) as cited in Harper, Terry, & Twiggs, 2009). Transcendent counseling focuses on culturally relevant themes for African Americans, and is currently focused on six areas of living: "(a) survival, (b) holistic health, (c) human/ethnic relations, (d) knowledge about self and living, (e) meaningful and productive work or activity, and (f) self-regulation of body energy" (Harper, Terry, & Twiggs, 2009, p. 222). Transcendent counseling focuses on helping African American male clients to meet their basic needs and to prevents them from focusing on failure but rather encourage them to overcome challenges like academic disinterest, poor nutrition, drug abuse and unhealthy relationships (Harper, Terry, & Twiggs, 2009)

- **Beyond Football Program**

BYF could further benefit African American football players from programming targeted to intervene with negative ecological influences. I suggest BYF create programming specific to the ecological barriers that African American student-athletes face on campus, on the field and in the workplace. This can help to increase a sense of competence. Create volunteer opportunities in places where there are people of color. This can increase a sense of relatedness. Below are examples of programming that can benefit retention programs similar to BYF:

Summer Bridge Program

Summer Bridge programs help prepare underrepresented students for college the summer before they take classes in the fall Strayhorn (2011) measured how participation in the summer bridge program effected students' college preparedness. Strayhorn (2011) collected and analyzed survey data to measure preparedness for college in four areas: "academic self-efficacy, sense of belonging, academic skills and social skills" (p.144). His analysis suggested that participation in the summer bridge program positively effects academic self-efficacy and some academic skills

like understanding syllabi, the technology used in college courses and communicating with professors. Strayhorn (2011) also found that participation in a summer bridge program had little effect on student's sense of belonging to the university and social skills. This suggests further efforts by a program that uses the self-determination theory to create programs based on ecological factors to foster relatedness for student athletes. Below are examples of how a program for African American student athletes that uses the self-determination theory can address the three basic psychological requirements for self-motivation (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015) in a summer bridge program.

Relatedness

Relatedness refers to an individual's sense of belonging and inclusion as a member in a community. Unfortunately, for many African American student-athletes, feelings of isolation are common on predominantly white colleges and universities (Melendez, 2008). Summer bridge programs are a tool to create a community for students who are new to a college community. In order to build a sense of relatedness and prevent African American student athletes from feeling isolation the summer bridge program should be accessible to everyone, but have extra sections exclusively for African American student athletes that intentionally target ecological barriers those students-athletes will face on college campuses, like micro aggressions, and stereotyping (Beamon, 2014). Melendez (2008) found that African American student-athletes have a decreased sense of belonging in their college campuses, and part of the decreased in relatedness is due their relationship with non-athlete black students. African American student-athletes in Melendez's (2008) study mentioned feelings of being judged by their black peers in addition to not feeling fully accepted by the campus as a whole. Therefore, the exclusive sections for African American student athletes should start with a bridge program that introduces the students to the college

campus, and has a curriculum taught by a culturally sensitive staff that provides the students with tools to overcome the social ecological barriers that have been issues for students of color at the individual institution.

Competence and Autonomy

Autonomy refers to self-guidance throughout the decision making process and an individual acting in accord with his or her interests and values (Harrison, Martin, & Fuller, 2015). Summer bridge programs are built to prepare African American student-athletes for classroom success; they are an essential part of building competence. David T. Conley (2007), the director of the Center for Educational Methodology Policy Research at the University of Oregon, and CEO of the Educational Policy Improvement Center defined college readiness based on four key facets: “cognitive strategies, key content knowledge, academic behaviors, and contextual skills and knowledge” (24). Cognitive strategies enable students to learn content from a range of disciplines, this might include problem solving, reasoning, interpretation and analyzing information (Conley, 2007). Key content knowledge is the knowledge of content pertinent to college success. A successful summer bridge program should consist of math and writing placement tests to gauge the comprehension level of key content in order to place each student in the right classes. Conley (2007) defined academic behavior as a set of academic “self -management “skills (p.24). Some of the skills taught could be time management, classroom decorum, study hall structure, and confronting the imposter syndrome (Clance & Imes, 1978). Contextual skills and knowledge are important parts of college success (Conley, 2007). African American student athletes should learn about the issues their upperclassmen have faced in the classroom and labeled as barriers, such as observed negative perceptions by peers and learn skills that will enable them to interact with a diverse cross-section of peers, administrators and professors.

References

- Abrams, K., & Theberge, S. K. (2005). Children and adolescents who are depressed: an ecological approach. *Professional School Counseling 8* (2), 284-292.
- Adler, P., & Adler, P. A. (1985). From idealism to pragmatic detachment: The academic performance of college athletes. *Sociology of Education 58* (4), 241-250.
- Alfermann, D., & Stambulova, N. &. (2004). Reaction to sport career termination: A crossnational comparison of German, Lithuanian, and Russian athletes. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise 5*, 61-76.
- Anderson, A. (2010, January 2). Special admissions: Waivers benefit student-athletes. Orlando, Florida, United States of America.
- Awad, G. (2007). The role of racial identity, academic self concept, and selfesteem in the prediction of academic. *Journal of Black Psychology, 33* (2), 188-207.
- Beamon, K. (2014). Racism and Stereotyping on Campus: Experiences of African American Male Student-Athletes. *The Journal of Negro Education 83*(2), 121-134.
- Bell, D. (2004). *Silent Covenants: Brown V. Board of Education and the Unlawful Hopes for Racial Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bimper Jr., A. (2014). Game changers: The role athletic Identity and racial Identity play on academic performance. *Journal of College Student Development 55* (8), 795-807.
- Blackman, D., & Brooks, S. N. (2011). INTRODUCTION:: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE HISTORY OF SPORT—NEW PERSPECTIVES. *The Journal of African American History 96* (4), 441-447.
- Bowers, E. P., L, Y., Kiely, M. K., Brittan, A., Lerner, J. V., & Lerner, R. M. (2010). The Five Cs Model of Positive Youth Development: A Longitudinal Analysis of Confirmatory Factor Structure and Measurement Invariance. *J Youth Adolescence* , 720-735.
- Bowers, E. P., Li, Y., Kiely, M. K., Brittan, A., Lerner, J. V., & Lerner, R. M. (2010). The five C's Model of Positive Youth DEvelopment: A Longitudinal analysis of confirmatory factor structure and measurement invariance. *Journal of youth Adolescence*, 720-735.
- Brewer, B. W., Van Raalte, J. L., & Linder, D. E. (1993). Athletic identity: Hercules' muscles or Achilles heel? *International Journal of Sport Psychology 24*, 237-254.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development : Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge: US: Harvard University Press.
- Brown, R. W. (1996). The revnues assoiated with relaxing admissin standards at division I-A colleges. *Applied Economics, 28*, 807-804.
- Cala, V. C., & Soriano, E. (2014). Health Education from an Ecological Perspective. Adaptation of the Bronfenbrenner Model from an Experience with Adolescents. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 132*, 49-57.

- Capuzzi, D., & Gross, D. R. (2014). *Youth at Risk : A Prevention Resource for Counselors, Teachers, and Parents*. American Counseling Association.
- Chavous, T. M., Bernat, D. H., Schmeelk-cone, K., Caldwell, C. H., Kohn-wood, L., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2003). Racial Identity and Academic Attainment Among African American Adolescents. *Child Development* 74, 1076-1090.
- Chavous, T. M., Hilken Bernat, D., SchmeelkCone, K., Caldwell, C. H., KohnWood, L., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2003). Racial identity and academic attainment among African American adolescents. *Child Development* 74 (4), 1076-1090.
- Clance, P. R., & Imes, S. A. (1978). The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice* 15 (3), 241-247.
- Cokley. (2001). Gender differences among African American students in the impact of racial identity on academic psychological development. *Journal of College Student Development* 42 (5), 480-487.
- Cokley, K. O. (2003). What do we know about the motivation of African American students? Challenging the "anti-intellectual" myth. *Harvard Educational Review* 73, 524-558.
- Coleman, J. S. (1961). Athletics in high school. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 71 (3), 33-43.
- Conley, D. T. (2007). Rethinking College Readiness High schools need to graduate greater numbers of young people prepared for college and careers. But how should readiness be defined? *New England Board of Higher Education*, 24-26.
- Conye, R., & Cook, E. (2004). *Ecological counseling: An innovative approach to conceptualizing person-environment interaction*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Costello, M. (2002). *Noose on campus: Teachingtolerance.org*. Retrieved from <http://www.tolerance.org>: <http://www.tolerance.org/blog/noose-campus>
- Deci, E. L. (2002). Self-determination research: Reflections and future directions. In R. Ryan, *Handbook of self-determination research* (pp. pp.341-441). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.
- Deci, E. L., Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). Motivation and education: the self-determination perspective. *Educational Psychologist* 26 (3&4), 325-346.
- Du Bois, W. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press John Wilson and Son.
- Edwards, H. (1984). The Black Dumb Jock: An American sports tragedy. *College Board Review* 131, 8-13.
- Engstrom, C. M., Sedlacek, W. E., & McEwen, M. K. (1995). Faculty attitudes toward male revenue and nonrevenue student-athletes. *Journal of College Student Development* 36 (3), 221-227.
- Feagin, J., Pieman, V., & Imani, N. (1996). *The agony of education: Black students at White colleges and universities*. New York: Routledge.

- Fischer, M. J. (2007). Settling into college life: Differences by race/ethnicity in college involvement and outcomes. *The Journal of Higher Education* 78 (2), 125-161.
- Fuller, R. D., Harrison, C. K., & Bukstein, S. J. (2016). A study of significance of racial and athletic identification on educational perceptions among American male college athletes. *Race Ethnicity and Education* 23, 1-12.
- Gaines, C. (2015, 10 9). *Chart shows the simple reason why college athletes should be paid*. Retrieved from Business Insider: <http://www.businessinsider.com/pay-college-athletes-2015-10>
- Gross, D. R., & Capuzzi, D. (2014). Introducing the problem. In D. C. Douglas R. Gross, *Youth at risk a prevention resource for counselors, teachers, and parents* (pp. 3-23). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Grove, J. R., Lavalley, D., & Gordon, S. (1997). Coping with retirement from sport: The influence of athletic identity. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* 9 (2), 101-203.
- Harper, F. D., & Stone, W. O. (1974). Toward a Theory of Transcendent Counseling with Blacks. *Journal of Non-White Concerns in Personnel and Guidance* 2(4), pp. 191-196.
- Harper, F. D., Terry, L. M., & Twigg, R. (2009). Counseling Strategies with Black Boys and Black Men: Implications for Policy. *The Journal of Negro Education* 78(3), 216-232.
- Harper, S. (2004). The measure of a man: Conceptualizations of masculinity among high-achieving African American male college students. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 48, pp. 89-107.
- Harper, S. R., & Quayle, S. J. (2007). Student Organizations as Venues for Black Identity Expression and Development among African American Male Student Leaders. *Journal of College Student Development* 48(2), 127-144.
- Harper, S. R., Collin D. Williams, J., & Blackman, H. W. (2013). *Black Male Student-Athletes and Racial Inequities in NCAA Division I College Sports*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education.
- Harrison, C. K., Martin, B. E., & Fuller, R. (2015). "Eagles Don't Fly with Sparrows" : Self Determination Theory, African American Male Scholar-Athletes and Peer Group Influences on Motivation. *The Journal of Negro Education* 84(1), 80-93.
- Harrison, L. J., Sailes, G. R., & Bimper, A. J. (2011). Living the dream or awakening from the nightmare: Race and athletic identity. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 14 (1), 91-103.
- Horton, R. S., & Mack, D. E. (2000). Athletic identity in marathon runners: Functional focus or dysfunctional commitment? *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 23 (2), 101-110.
- Hyatt, R. (2003). Barriers to persistence among African American intercollegiate athletes: a literature review of non-cognitive variables. *College Student Journal* 37(2), 260.
- Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity. (2014). *Racial Disproportionality in School Discipline: Implicit Bias is Heavily Implicated*. Columbus: The Ohio State University.

- Lawrence, S. (2005). African American athletes' experiences of race in sport. *International review of Sociology of Sport*, 40 (1), 99-110.
- Lockett, C. T., & Harrell, J. P. (2003). Racial identity, self-esteem, and academic achievement: Too much interpretation, too little supporting data. *Journal of Black Psychology* 29(3), 325-336.
- Luthar, S. S. (1991). Vulnerability and resilience: A study of high-risk adolescents. *Child Development* 62(3), 600-616.
- McKown, C., & Weinstein, R. S. (2002). Modeling the role of child ethnicity and gender in children's differential response to teacher expectations. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 32(1), 159-184.
- McLaren, L., & Hawe, P. (2005). Ecological perspectives in health research. *Epidemiology & Community Health* 59(1), 6-14.
- McWhorter, J. H. (2000). *Losing the race : self-sabotage in Black America*. New York : Free Press.
- Melendez, M. C. (2008). Black football players on a predominantly white college campus: psychosocial and emotional realities of the black college athlete experience. *Journal of Black Psychology* 34(4), 423-451.
- Morris, J. E., & Adeyemo, A. O. (2012). Touchdowns and honor societies: Expanding the focus of black male excellence. *The Phi Kappa Delta Kappan* 93(5), 28-32.
- Oregon State University. (2016, August 02). *Academics for student athletes*. Retrieved from Oregon state university website: <http://oregonstate.edu/studentathlete/>
- Oregon State Football. (2016). *Beyond Football Advisory Board Update*. Corvallis: Oregon state University Football.
- Perry, T. (1993). *Toward a theory of African American school achievement (Report 16)*. Baltimore: Center on Families, Communities Schools and Children's Learning.
- Reyes, J., Parker, M. J., & Rosenblatt, J. L. (2013). Promoting Educational Equity in Disadvantaged Youth: The Role of Resilience and Social-Emotional Learning. In S. Goldstein, & R. B. Brooks, *Handbook of Resilience in Children* (pp. 349-370). New York: Springer .
- Reynolds, W. M. (1988). Measurement of academic self-concept. *Journal of Personality* 52(2), 223-240.
- Ryan, R. M., & Connell, J. P. (1989). Perceived locus of causality and internalization: Examining reasons for acting in two domains. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57(7), 749-761.
- Saunders, M., & Serna, I. (2004). Making College Happen: The College Experience of First-Generation Latino Students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 3(2), 146-163.

- Sellers, R. M., Rowley, S. A., Chavous, T. M., Shelton, J. N., & Smith, M. A. (1997). Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity: A preliminary investigation of reliability and construct validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73(4), 805-815.
- Sellers, R. M., Smith, M. A., Shelton, J. N., Rowley, S. A., & Chavous, T. M. (1998). Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2(1), 18-39.
- Settles, I. H., Sellers, R. M., & Damas, A. M. (2002). One Role or Two? The Function of Psychological Separation in Role Conflict. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87(3), 574-582.
- Shaun R. Harper, S. J. (2007). Student Organizations as Venues for Black Identity Expression and Development among African American Male Student Leaders. *Journal College Student Development*, 127-144.
- Sheridan, S., & Coutts. (2013). Understanding and promoting the development of resilience in families. In S. Goldstein, & R. B. Brooks, *Handbook of Resilience in Children* (pp. 143-160). Boston: Springer.
- Simons, H. D., Bosworth, C., Fujita, S., & Jensen, M. (2007). The athlete stigma in higher education. *College Student Journal* 41(2), 251-274.
- Singer, N. (2008). Benefits and detriments of African American male student athlete' participation in big-time college football program. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 43(4), 399-408.
- Spencer, M. B., Noll, E., Stoltzfus, J., & Harpalani, V. (2001). Identity and school adjustment: revisiting the "acting White" assumption. *Educational Psychologist*, 36(1), 21-30.
- Strausbaugh, J. (2006). *Black like you: Blackface, Whiteface, insult and imitation in American popular culture*. . New York: Penguin.
- Strayhorn, T. L. (2011). Bridging the pipeline: increasing Underrepresented students' preparation for college through a summer bridge program. *American Behavioral Scientist* 55(2), 142-159.
- The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport. (2012). *The 2012 Racial and Gender Report Card: College Sport*. Orlando: by Richard Lapchick.
- Vaccaro, A. (2009). Racial identity and the ethics of service-learning as pedagogy. In S. Y. Evans, C. M. Taylor, M. R. Dunlap, & D. S. Miller, *African Americans and community engagement in higher education : community service, service-learning, and community-based research* (pp. 119-195). Albany: SUNY Press.
- Vallerand, R. J., P. L., Blais, M. R., & Briere, N. M. (1992). The academic motivation scale: A measure of intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation in education. *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 52(4), pp. 1003-117.
- Van Kerckhove, C. (2007). *University of Arizona students celebrate MLK day with Blackface party*. Retrieved from http://www.racialicious.com/2007/02/12/university-of-arizona-students-celebrate-mlk-day-with-Blackface-party/#disqus_thread.

- Wade, L. (2011). *Race themed events at colleges (trigger warning)*. Retrieved from <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2011/09/23/individual-racism-alive-and-well>.
- Weinberg, M. (1977). *A chance to learn: A history of race and education in the United States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wiggins, D. K. (1994). The notion of double consciousness and the involvement of black athletes in American sport. In G. Eisen, & D. K. Wiggins, *Ethnicity and sport in north American history and culture* (pp. 133-156). Westport: Greenwood Press.