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Leon Antonio Jackson

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, jacks601@unlv.nevada.edu

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THE ROLE OF ADAPTIVE CAPACITY ON THE SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS OF FORMER D-I AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE ATHLETES: A MIXED-METHOD STUDY

By

Leon A. Jackson

Bachelor of Science in Business Marketing
Indiana State University
May 2004

Masters of Education in Education Leadership
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December 2011

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Greenspun College of Urban Affairs
The Graduate College

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This dissertation prepared by

Leon A. Jackson

entitled


is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy – Workforce Development and Organization Leadership
School of Environmental and Public Affairs

Cecilia Maldonado, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Chair

Monica Lounsbery, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Member

Sterling Saddler, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Member

LeAnn G. Putney, Ph.D.
Graduate College Faculty Representative

Kathryn Hausbeck Korgan, Ph.D.
Graduate College Interim Dean
ABSTRACT

African-American male student-athletes who played a revenue-generating sport enter the labor market having relatively poor social networks, low grade point averages, few marketable skills outside of sports, restricted work experiences, and marginal subject matter knowledge; most of which are the result of their participation in sports (Singer, 2008). Therefore making the transition more difficult than even the average African-American male (Edwards, 1980). The purpose of this study was to: (1) Determine the factors that predict subjective career success for former D-I African-American male athletes who played a revenue-generating sport, and (2) Explore how former D-I African-American male athletes, who played a revenue-generating sport and realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market. This convergent parallel mixed-method study used survey research as well as semi-structured interviews to explore what factors contribute to the realization of subjective career success for former African-American male athletes. Stepwise linear regression was used to explore the relationship between the independent variables and the single dependent variable, subjective career success. The analysis showed that the only variable to produce a statistically significant outcome was adaptive capacity (full scale) (R=.386). The themes generated from the interviews with eight subjectively successful former athletes confirmed the quantitative results.
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DEDICATION

To those who were ever told, you are not good enough, smart enough, or just not worthy because of where you come from, what you have, what you don’t have, who your family is, or whatever faults you may have, this is dedicated to you, because they’ve lied to us!
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Each year thousands of African-American male athletes exit colleges around the country; a fraction of whom having earned degrees unprepared to realize subjective career success, because they are entering a labor market unprepared for objective career success (Beamon, 2008). Subjective success describes the feeling of being successful (Heslin 2003) and is essential for realizing objective success (Heslin, 2005). Objective success is the possession of observable indicators generally used to measure success, such as money, job prestige, job titles (Heslin 2005; Able & Spurk, 2009). Researchers continue to seek opportunities which mitigate the barriers to entering, ascending, and sustaining participation in the general labor market experienced by athletes, especially given the difficulties often compounded by their race.

Several factors associated with successful transitions from sports participation such as, parent educational level, reason for termination, number of years removed from participation, and athletic identity, were identified by the researcher. The variable adaptive capacity was also included, as it describes the extent to which an individual is able to encounter new and/or challenging circumstances and exit the life event a more dynamic and knowledgeable person. A dynamic person is then capable of using these life events as a source of inspiration, empowerment, and useful information (McCann & Selsky, 2012). Adaptive capacity is an area of interest when discussing the post-participation success of African-American student-athletes, as Taylor and Ogilvie (1994) indicates that some of the primary aspects of adaptive capacity such as, coping skills, social support, and planning are essential in the quality of adaptation to athletic retirement, including occupational transition outcomes. In other words, the higher the level of adaptive capacity, the easier it is to transition effectively out of a life event to be productive in a
new physical, psychological, and/or spiritual environment. The transition out of competitive college athletics, particularly collegiate basketball and football, can be a life event that presents challenges for some athletes. For African-American male athletes, these challenges can be long lasting. These challenges are the product of the very demanding schedule that comes with playing collegiate sports and the specialization in athletics from a very young age. Since sport participation at this level demands a great deal of time and attention (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006), African-American male athletes participating in collegiate sports often have low G.P.As, a lack of a social and professional network, and perpetuate the notion that they will play professional sports professionally (Singer, 2008). Thus, the effects of playing collegiate sports further complicates the transition to the labor market for African-American males.

This study therefore explores the role of adaptive capacity, parent educational level, reason for termination, number of years removed from participation, and athletic identity on the transition to the labor market, for former African-American male athletes. In addition, this study captures what some former African-American males players, who currently regard themselves as subjectively successful, have done to manage the transition out of sports and into the general labor market.

**Background of the Problem**

According to Beamon and Bell (2006), African-American males from a young age are conditioned to value sports over academics, despite academic success offering a greater chance of realizing objective career success (Carnevale, Rose, Cheah, 2011; Johnson & Eby, 2011). The latter ultimately positively impacts subjective career success (Cesinger, 2011; Abele & Spurk, 2009). African-American male athletes are targeted by renowned colleges and universities for the purpose of playing basketball and football (Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013). Harrison
(2000) states:

At first glance, the dominant role of blacks in collegiate sport would seem to provide further evidence that sport is indeed an elevator to success. A closer look, however, reveals that universities have been far more concerned with exploiting the athletic talent of the black community than with nurturing its academic potential. Affirmative action programs on behalf of minority college students are currently under attack across the nation. Yet, affirmative action programs that give preferential treatment to athletes remain sacrosanct. The message this sends out is that America's colleges and universities are more concerned with producing winning sports teams than with seeking out and educating future black lawyers, doctors, and corporate executives. (p. 36)

Despite the high regard and public adoration received by while participation in collegiate sports, most players have to adjust their dreams and goals once eligibility has ended to seek gainful employment. Eligibility ends as a result of injury, choosing not participate any further, graduating, or being regarded as not skilled enough to play professionally (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). Upon exiting sports, for the first time in their lives these athletes are viewed as just African-American men (Harrison, 2000, p. 37).

As a result of committing so much time to the sport, these athletes often end up with a lack of marketable skills, limited work experience, inadequate subject matter knowledge outside of sports, a small professional network, low career maturity, and often degrees in non-lucrative disciplines (Edwards, 2000). These factors are considerable impediments to the career potential for African-American males (Johnson & Eby, 2011). Many African-American males struggle to secure and sustain employment in the general labor market even with degrees, valued skills,
experience, and solid social networks (O’Sullivan, Mugglestone, & Allison, 2014). These students leave school with limited options despite having generated millions of dollars for administrators and coaches, often referred to as the “The New Plantation” by Hawkins (2010, p.41).

Despite the negative gains, many African-American males who participate in sport at the college level, it is also reported that sport cultivates essential traits coveted by employers. Many of which should assist in the transition from sport to the labor market, and is reported to foster career success (Braddock, Royster, Winfield, & Hawkins, 1991; Thomas, 2008; Galli & Vealey, 2008). Two traits found to be cultivated by sport participation are agility and resilience (Thomas, 2008). Agility is defined as the capacity for moving quickly, flexibly and decisively, when anticipating, initiating and taking advantage of opportunities and avoiding any negative consequences of change (McCann, Selsky, & Lee, 2009, p. 45). Resilience describes the dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity (Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker, 2000, p. 543). The knowledge and skills gaps developed as a byproduct of athletic participation, which influences the employment prospects, makes this an issue workforce development professionals should explore.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this convergent parallel mixed-method study is two-fold: (1) To determine the factors that predict subjective career success for former D-I African-American male athletes who played a revenue-generating sport, and (2) To explore how former D-I African-American male athletes, who played a revenue-generating sport and have realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market. The outcomes of this study will offer suggestions to those who have the greatest influence (i.e. the
student, the family, the institution, and NCAA) on African-American male student-athletes that will help guide decisions prior to, during, and after participating in collegiate sports. Decisions relating to meeting eligibility, retention, and completion are particularly important for this group who graduates at a rate much lower than any other population (Harper, Williams, and Blackman, 2013).

**Significance of the Study**

Sellers, as cited in Harrison & Lampman (2001, p. 128) state, “the post athletic career adjustment of African-American student-athletes is a topic worthy of study, in itself, without other comparison groups to provide texture.” The nature of this study is guided by a question posed by Harrison Jr., Harrison, & Moore (2002, p. 130) who ask, “If identities are narrow and monolithic for African-American youth (particularly males) inside the vacuum of sport, then how might these same perceptions reflect their outside sport or occupational choices?” This study will add to the knowledge pertaining to African-American athletes and their ability to transition out of sports. Edwards (2000) outlines some of the implications of an effective transition from collegiate athletics to the labor market for African-American males, having stated, “the ultimate resolution to this situation must be the overall institutional development of black communities and the creation of greater opportunity for black youths in the broader society” (p. 12).

**Research Questions**

This study used a convergent-parallel mix-method approach, commissioning a quantitative survey methodology as well as qualitative case study methodology to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation,
reason for termination, parent educational level, and athletic identity predict subjective career success for African-American males who played FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level?

2. How did African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for a FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball program and realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market?

The results of the two research strands are to be considered independently as well as jointly, where the outcomes are considered equally when rendering the final meta-inference (Creswell, 2014).

**Theoretical Framework**

McCann and Selsky’s (2012) conceptualization of adaptive capacity serves as the theoretical framework for this study. Adaptive capacity refers to the ability to be both resilient and agile. Interest in agility and resilience as characteristics found in exemplary people has grown exponentially in recent years, with these traits being linked to the versatile, productive, and progressive nature of these individuals (Thomas, 2008). Agility and resilience are illustrated in the literature as two completely separate concepts, yet it is uncommon to see one without mention of the other (Richardson 2002; Mitchinson & Morris, 2012; Thomas, 2008). McCann and Selsky (2012) were the first to formally bring the two concepts together to form a much stronger and comprehensive construct in adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity is defined as “the ability to process new experiences, to find their meaning and to integrate them into one’s life” (Bennis & Thomas, 2002, p. 18). Adaptive capacity is also written as A/R (agility/resilience) in the McCann & Selsky (2012) literature.
According to McCann and Selsky (2012), adaptive capacity (agility + resilience) is comprised of five sub-constructs purposefulness, awareness, action-orientedness, resourcefulness, and networked. Being purposeful describes the ability to establish a set of core beliefs and holding to them no matter the environments encountered. Awareness describes the constant quest of understanding the environments that are being encountered through actively scanning and sense-making processes. Being action-oriented refers to innately being proactive and open to change. Resourcefulness speaks to the ability of effectively and efficiently using resources to gain access to additional resources. Finally, being networked speaks to the ability of establishing and foster meaningful and beneficial relationships at various levels (McCann & Selsky, 2012). The High AR theoretical framework is what will be used to guide this study. A diagram of how these sub-constructs work together to form adaptive capacity is provided above in Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1:** The Five Essential Capabilities of High AR. Note: Adopted from McCann, J., & Selsky, J. W. (2012). “Mastering Turbulence: The Essential Capabilities of Agile and Resilient Individuals, Teams and Organizations”, (p. 14).
Definition of Key Terms

This section highlights key terminology referenced throughout this dissertation to provide a common understanding of these concepts.

**Actioned-Oriented:** Characterized by feeling confident and competent in taking initiative, acting or reacting as necessary to gain advantage, avoid collisions, or minimize setbacks (McCann & Selsky, 2012, p. 47).

**Adaptive Capacity (AR, agility/resilience):** Defined as the ability to process new experiences, to find their meaning and to integrate them into one’s life (Bennis & Thomas, 2002, p. 18).

**African-American/Black:** The terms African-American and Black are synonymous in the current study to refer to Americans of African ancestry (Lloyd-Jones, 2009).

**Athletic Identity:** The degree to which one recognizes him/herself as an athlete (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993).

**Agility:** Defined as the capacity for moving quickly, flexibly and decisively in anticipating, initiating and taking advantage of opportunities and avoiding any negative consequences of change (McCann, Selsky, & Lee, 2009, p. 45).

**Aware:** Characterized by active learners with curiosity about the larger world, open to change and able to make sense and act in ambiguous environments (McCann & Selsky, 2012).

**Career Maturity:** The extent to which an individual has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to make intelligent, realistic career choices (Levinson, Ohler, Caswell, & Kiewra, 1998, p. 475).

**Career Success:** Perceived consensually by persons evaluating others' careers, generally using objective criteria such as job title, salary and promotions (Kotter, 1982; Gattiker & Larwood, 1986; Stumpf & Rabinowitz, 1981).
**Contest Mobility:** Ascension in work or personal life due to performance on job related tasks (Thomas et al., 2005; Turner, 1960).

**Division I:** The highest designations within the NCAA indicating that an institution meets the financial (ticket sales, seating capacity, and athlete financial aid offered) as well as competitive obligations established for a member. Is divided into three sub-sections (Football Bowl Subdivision, Football Championship Subdivision, and non-football institutions). The highest level of play for basketball at the college level regarded is D-I, as there are no subdivisions. (NCAA, 2014).

**Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS/D-IA):** The highest Division I football subsection. Pertains to an institutions football post-season aspirations, refers to an institution’s eligibility to participate in the annual bowl games. Also refers to the level of competitiveness that an institution is capable of in the areas of ticket sales, seating capacity, athlete financial aid available, and sport participation. This subsection is comprised of 128 institutions, divided into nine conferences, with three institutions being independent (NCAA, 2014).

**Football Championship Series (FCS/D-II):** The second highest Division I football subsection. Pertains to an institutions football post-season aspirations, refers to an institution’s eligibility to participate in the annual championship playoff games. Also refers to the level of competitiveness that an institution is capable of in the areas of ticket sales, seating capacity, athlete financial aid available, and sport participation. This subsection is comprised of 128 institutions, divided into nine conferences, with three institutions being independent (NCAA, 2014).

**National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA):** An organization established to oversee sports participation at the college level (NCAA, 2014).
Networked: Characterized by positive, active relationships maintained within the immediate family, work group, and community to sustain a sense of connectedness, meaning, and support (McCann & Selsky, 2012).

Objective Career Success: Career advancements that which can observed by others (Thomas, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005).

Other-referent Success: The extent to which individuals base their ideas of success on the opinions, observed successes, and observed failures of others as it pertains to objective matters (Heslin, 2005).

Purposeful: Characterized by positive self-concept with a physically and psychologically healthy presence capable of sustaining them in highly ambiguous, stressful work situations (McCann & Selsky, 2012, p. 42).

Resilience: Defined as the dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity (Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker, 2000, p. 543).

Resourceful: Characterized by an entrepreneurial approach in securing resources, talent, and support, required to meet a goal, despite setbacks (McCann & Selsky, 2012, p. 50).

Revenue-generating Sport: Collegiate sports that generate revenue (Edwards, 1985). For the purpose of this study revenue-generating sports refer to Men’s Basketball and Football (Edwards, 1985).

Self-referent Success: Success as it compares to the individual’s personal standards for himself/herself and others (Heslin, 2003).

Sponsored Mobility: Ascension in work or personal life due to support from a decision maker (Thomas et al., 2005; Turner, 1960).
**Student-Athlete:** A student-athlete is a student whose enrollment was solicited by a member of the athletics staff or other representative of athletics interests with a view toward the student’s ultimate participation in the intercollegiate athletics program. (NCAA Manual [rule 12.02.6], 2013, p. 60).

**Subjective Career Success:** That which cannot be observed by others, yet judged by an individual’s own perception of his/her success (Thomas et al., 2005; Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008).

**Chapter Summary**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I is used to introduce the rationale for undertaking this study. Within this chapter the researcher provides: (1) overview, (2) background, (3) significance of the study, (4) the research questions, (5) theoretical framework, (6) definition of key terms. Chapter one provides a rational for engaging in the research at hand, while granting the researcher a platform for introducing essential aspects of the problem being investigated. The purpose of this chapter is to lay the foundation to be elaborated on in the review of relevant literature which follows.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature reviewed and cited in this section provides the foundation for this research by outlining the factors and related constructs associated with the transition from sport to the labor market for African-American males. The purpose of this study is to: (1) To determine the factors that predict subjective career success for former D-I African-American male athletes who played a revenue-generating sport, and (2) To explore how former D-I African-American male athletes, who played a revenue-generating sport and have realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market. This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational level, and athletic identity predict subjective career success for African-American males who played FBS/D-I football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level?

2. How did African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for a FBS/D-I football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball program and realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market?

This chapter will cover issues pertinent to the African-American male experience and participation in the labor market and collegiate sports, in addition to individual agility, individual resilience, adaptive capacity, and career success as it relates to this population.

The African-American Male Experience in the Labor Market

It is documented that there is no other group in America that experiences the systemic barriers to labor the market like those encountered by African-American males (Wozniak, 2011;
Johnson & Eby, 2011; O’Sullivan, Mugglestone, & Allison, 2014). These systemic barriers include, yet are not limited to, difficulties gaining entry into the labor market, challenges maintaining employment, impediments to promotions, lack of essential credentials for upward mobility, and lower wages (Baldwin & Johnson, 1995). These systemic barriers become evident when looking at African-American male participation in the labor market and other societal institutions.

It is reported that one in five African-American men, age 16-64 are inactive in the labor market (ABFE, 2014). Furthermore, Welch (1990) reports that for every five African-American men ages 20-24 who is in school or active in the labor market, one is in jail. Holzer (2009) indicates that African-American males are “the group most likely to drop out of high school and least likely to attend (and graduate) college; their achievement as measured by grades and test scores, are the lowest; and they are more likely to become incarcerated” (p. 52). These findings suggest that many African-American males would have a difficult time maintaining as well as obtaining worthwhile employment. As of August 2013, the unemployment rate of African-American men 20 years and older was 13.5 percent, compared to 6.5 percent for White males in the same age range (The Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). “Blacks are the only racial or ethnic group for whom women represent a larger share of the employed than do men - more than half (53.8 percent) of employed Blacks in 2011 were women” (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012). The challenges that African-American males experience are not only visible as they seek entry into the labor market, but their marginalization continues even after they are able to secure employment.

offers to cultural differences in human capital and occupational differences, while work experience only accounts for $0.01 of the $3.17 variance. Baldwin and Johnson further state, that $0.67 of that difference in wage is occupational distribution, explained as, “reflecting the concentration of Black men in lower wage occupations” (p. 310). Basic skills do influence wages and a large fraction of the Black-White wage gap reflects a skill gap that pre-dates labor market entry (Johnson & Neal, 1998). According to Loury & Garman (1995), “college educated Whites earn more than [college educated] Blacks” (p. 295). The struggles of the African-American male are often maligned because of their low human capital, social capital, and limited specialized knowledge and skills in high wage paying industries, which almost validate the current state (O’Sullivan, Mugglestone, & Allison, 2014; Rosser-Mims, D., & Palmer, G. (2009).

Despite the desire to make a significant income, African-American males are less likely to pursue majors in industries that generate high wages (Loury & Garman, 1995). Loury and Garman (1995) also reported that, “each 1 point in GPA raised white earnings by 9.5% and Black earnings by about 25%” (p. 297). Wise (1975) explains that one’s choice in major significantly impacted the long-term return on the investment in college, regardless of color, a sentiment that is consistent with the work of (Carnevale, Rose, & Cheah, 2011). According to Robst (2007), career-degree match is also an indicator of career success, as it speaks to the usability of the human capital investment made by the individual in the form of formal education. “The economic status of African-American males will continue to be a dilemma until they are able to secure an education and are given a chance to compete for jobs in the labor market” (Blake & Darling, 1994, p. 406), a belief shared by O’Sullivan, Mugglestone, & Allison (2014). Many African-American males aspire to play sports professionally, because of the unique financial and social incentives, thus this study will look to get the prospective of those
who have not played sports professionally, and qualitatively explain how they were able to realize subjective career success.

**The African-American Male Student-Athlete**

A major vehicle for African-American males to obtain access to formal education and the credentials found to increase the potential of having greater success in the labor market has been sports. The African-American male’s experience as a participant in athletics at all levels closely mirrors what African-American’s have experienced politically in broader society, as their participation was not openly welcomed by many and there are often questions as to their ability to be cerebral in their performance (Singer & May, 2011). The turmoil and issues experienced by African-Americans on a daily basis can be witnessed, played out on highly publicized competitive stages, a platform that is made readily available through sport (Mills, 1989). The African-American community has frequently and by most accounts effectively used entertainment, and sports in particular, to gain entrance into some of the most influential circles, allowing them to then affect change from within (Sammons, 1994). The use of athletics as a viable means to realize the financial, social, and societal successes has only increased for African-American males (Harrison, 2000).

The general purpose for seeking to participate in sports at the college level has shifted from using sports as a vehicle to achieve success in the labor market through acquiring a degree from a renowned post-secondary institution, to a rationale founded on the idea that success will be gained through play as a professional athlete (Harrison & Lampman, 2001). With this mindset, the formal education offered for their participation has become obsolete to this group (Lomax, 2000). In desiring and expecting to defy the odds of matriculating into the professional ranks, the efforts of many African-American male student-athletes has resulted in the emergence
of countless damning behaviors and attitudes (Harrison, Harrison, & Moore, 2002). These behaviors and attitudes are developed due in part to systemic barriers, the limitations these men place on themselves about their place in society, employment options, marketable skills, and the value they place on education, among other things (Hodge, Harrison, Burden, & Dixon, 2008). Because of their commitment to sport, these young men are seeing even fewer benefits beyond graduation, in addition to not being able to access many of the fundamental privileges that being admitted into a post-secondary institution could and should afford a young person even after generating millions of dollars for their institutions (Harrison, Harrison, & Moore, 2002). As sports is said to be the only reason that many African-American males pursue admission and maintain enrollment in college, this study will seek to understand if former players feel they would have been better off or worse off had they not played collegiate sports.

**The African-American Male Student-Athlete in Revenue-Generating Sports**

Revenue-generating sports are those sports offered at colleges and universities that are able to generate a profit; typically this is limited to men’s basketball and football (Benford, 2007; Beamon, 2008; Edwards, 1985). The literature highlights the following issues as drivers for the participation in sports as a means to garnering success, (a) the image and expectation of Black men, (b) the African-American community, and (c) the development of human capital (Hodge, Harrison, Burden, & Dixson, 2008).

**Image and Expectations**

Harrison (1998) asserts the general public has become accustomed to seeing African-American males as athletes, criminals, or entertainers. According to Harrison, Harrison, and Moore (2002) “in most cases, being African-American denotes an identification, either directly or indirectly, with specific sports activities” (p. 122). This coincides with Eitle and Eitle (2002),
who explained that “Blacks were 1.6 times more likely to engage in interscholastic football and 2.5 times more likely to engage in interscholastic basketball than their White peers” (p. 130) at the high school level. While African-American males are a very small percentage of the student body at most institutions of higher education, they make up the vast majority of the students who play basketball and football (Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013). Despite the number of individuals who enter college wanting to play sports professionally, Meggyesy (2000) states that less than one percent of Division I athletes are able to secure a spot on a professional roster.

Despite these unlikely odds of realizing their dream to play sports professionally, most African-American male student-athletes who play basketball and football at the D-I college level have aspirations to play professionally (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006). To sum up the implications of the unrealistic expectations, Edwards (1980) makes the following statement:

It would appear, then, that not only the past history and contemporary circumstances but also the future prospects of the Black athlete and the Black masses are inextricably intertwined and interdependent. And from this undeniable fact there is no escape for either – by way of sports or any other route. As things now stand, the overwhelmingly majority of Blacks who seek to fill the shoes of O.J., Dr. J, Reggie J., and “Magic” J. in all likelihood will end up with no “J” at all – no job whatsoever that they are competent to do in a highly technological modern society. Thus big-name athletes who tell Black kids to practice and work hard and one day you can be just like me are playing games with the future of Black society. And as I have repeatedly stated over the last dozen years, Blacks have a principle responsibility to understand that sports must be pursued intelligently and that Afro-America’s involvement with sports is no game. (p. 242)
This commentary outlines the connection between the advancement of the African-American community and that of African-American student-athletes, as there is a dire need to have effective vehicles in place to assist these student-athletes in their transition from sports participation to the labor market in a career that can offer them the financial stability, status, and upward mobility to view themselves as successful. Yet, for this particular group, involvement in collegiate sports perpetuates the belief that they will play professionally, and consumes their thoughts, which hinders their ability to take full advantage of what college is supposed to offer (Singer, 2008). The mechanisms sought to remedy this phenomena must be enacted with an understanding of the cultural implications of sport, where sports are recognized as a major driver in the African-American community and serves as one of the few known motivating factors as well as a means of self-identification for African-American males (Singer & May, 2011).

The Community

If African-American male student-athletes are to accomplish success beyond the playing fields, some of the hardest impediments to overcome will be those imposed upon them by their own community. A large number of African-American males who participate in NCAA sanctioned basketball and football come from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds (Harrison, Harrison, and Moore, 2002). In many studies, SES is measured using items pertaining to parent educational level (Yan, 1999; Caro & Cortés, 2012; Marks, McMillan, Jones, & Ainley, 2000; White, 1982). SES is an indicator of both behavioral and educational outcomes (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann, 2009), and African-American students in particular (Yan, 1999). The absence of successful role models in low SES areas, due to the exodus of objectively successful African-American men impact how young African-American men view personal and career success (Lomax, 2000).
One of the potential barriers to the success of these student-athletes is the prospect of getting involved in the penal system in some capacity. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation (2006), 10.1 percent of African-American males age 18-29 are in prison. Edwards (2000) adds, “One-third of all the deaths in this group nationally are homicides (usually perpetrated by other Black males), and suicide ranks only behind homicides and accidents as a cause of death” (p. 10). As the number of African-American males who are incarcerated and commit suicide continue to rise, the number of African-American males in institutions of higher education continues to decline (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006). Thus, as the influence that participation in sport has on the positive overall image and the positive self-image of African-American males it is important that communal, societal, and institutional bodies learn to harness this passion for sports to design effective means of encouraging progressive ideas, attitudes, and behaviors.

For African-American males, athletics offer one of the few positive representations of African-American males (Harrison, Harrison, & Moore, 2002). Sport provides a much needed outlet for African-American males; Sammons (1994) posits that “sports, like jazz and blues, is an integral part of African-American life, serving a multitude of functions from psychic relief to cultural medium to vehicle of oppression” (p. 210). Yet, it is imperative that African-American males must come to know that accomplishments outside of sports are valued and respected as well (Hodge, Harrison, Burden, & Dixson, 2008). African-American male student-athletes must realize earlier in the process that their education will play an integral part in their success in life and employment opportunities post-graduation. Yet, according to Vermillion & Spears (2012), career opportunities for this group after graduation ranked ninth in order of importance, behind coaching staff, amount of financial aid/scholarships offered, support services offered to
student-athletes, availability of resources, opportunity to win conference or national championships, availability of anticipated major, social atmosphere of team, and athletic facilities.

**Human Capital**

The investment that a person makes in education is a vital aspect of developing human capital. Human capital is comprised of marketable skills gained through formal education and labor market experiences (Tomaskovic-Devey, Thomas, & Johnson, 2005). It is assumed that these African-American males feel they are investing in human capital as though they are going to play professional sports, yet missing the opportunity to improve their human capital as a potential member of the general labor market (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006). This mentality, along with the limitations placed on them by the NCAA and their respective institutions, adds to the potential of human capital deficiencies to come to bare for this group upon graduation.

Tomaskovic-Devey, Thomas, and Johnson (2005) also assert that individuals who have attended higher quality post-secondary institutions are often thought to possess higher quality skills and an advanced ability to learn. However, according to Edwards (1980), this has not necessarily been the case with the African-American male student-athletes.

Furthermore, Tomaskovic-Devey, Thomas, and Johnson (2005) explain time spent in the labor market is essential to grasping fundamental practices such as taking orders, working with others, and learning the structure as well as culture in a given work environment. Yet, many African-American student-athletes feel that some of the skills said to be gained through labor market experiences can also be developed through participating in a sports, as reported by Potuto and O’Hanlon (2006). The limited exposure to the labor market these students are afforded has to suffice because the NCAA places acute time, pay, and association restrictions on employment.
opportunities of its student-athletes (NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaw 14.4.3.2, 2012) to thwart players receiving illegal compensation or unauthorized privileges. Thus, if there is a desire to see these young men achieve success upon graduation, scheduled structured learning opportunities are necessary. Despite being allowed to participate in internships (NCAA Division I Manual, Bylaw 14.4.3.2, 2012), student-athletes have to choose between voluntary workouts and working. With the majority of them anticipating to play professionally, African-American males spend more time voluntarily developing their sports related skills (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006), leaving less time for them to consider other developmental opportunities, should they not make a professional roster. Watkins (2006) estimates the value of the African-American male athlete to be over $250 billion, an amount that nearly surpasses the GNP of Russia and the market value of some of the most successful business in the U.S., however, the return for those who graduate and are not able to play sports professional is less than 5%.

Athletic Identity

The significance with which an individual uses athletic ability, accomplishments, and pursuits to contribute to their sense of self-worth is referred to as athletic identity (Wiechman and Williams, 1997). Brewer, Van Raalte, and Linder (1993) assert there are both positive and negative implications for having a high athletic identity. Some of the benefits of having a high athletic identity include: having a positive self-image, establishing a solid foundation upon which to build future success through setting goals and the pursuit of these goals. The primary negative effects of having high athletic identity is the potential for difficulty transitioning out of sport, due to lack of exploration of alternative career options (Sparkes, 1998) and academic disengagement (Lewis, 1993). The negative impacts of high athletic identity are often played out with African-American males at the college level, who are often so focused on their athletic endeavors that the
academic aspects of their participation suffers (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006), and often have a hard

time transitioning out of sport due to the inflated expectations of playing professional sports
(Sellers and Kuperminc, 1997). The effects of high athletic identity is reported to lessen as an

individual spends time away from their respective sport (Grove, Fish, & Eklund, 2004).

**Sports Career Termination**

Sports career termination is the final stage in a seven-stage process of an elite sports
career according to the work of Stambulova (1997), as displayed in Table 2.1. For

African-American male student-athletes, the journey goes from stage five (transition from
amateur sports to professional sports) to stage seven (the ending of the sports career). Sports
career termination research speaks to the barriers presented to those who have played sport and

their attempts to redefine their place in society as something other than an athlete (Taylor &
Ogilvie, 1994). There are two primary strands of research on this topic, the first is normative or

anticipated transitions athletes encounter and the second addresses the sources of termination,

which outlines the factors that influence the transition, and the ramifications of this sort of
change (Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008).

**Table 2.1. Seven Stages of an Elite Sports Career**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.)</td>
<td>The beginning of sports specialization</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.)</td>
<td>The transition to special intensive training in the chosen sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.)</td>
<td>The transition from mass popular sports to high-achievement sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.)</td>
<td>The transition from junior sports to adult sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.)</td>
<td>The transition from amateur sports to professional sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.)</td>
<td>The transition from the culmination to the end of the sports career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.)</td>
<td>The ending of the sports career</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Russia: A Post-Perestroika Analysis”, (p. 226).
Stambulova (2003) explains this shift as a crisis-transition, which she bases on Schlossberg’s (1981) idea of transition. Schlossberg (1981) described a transition as an event or non-event characterized by alterations to one’s self-concept and their worldview, which ultimately alters their attitudes, behaviors, and relationships. This change is often a difficult conversion, especially for African-American males, as athletics play such a major role in the development of identity, sense of purpose, and the decisions made regarding human and social capital from a very young age (Harrison and Lawrence, 2003).

According to Taylor & Ogilvie (1994), there are four reasons that a person engages in the process of transitioning from sport to the labor market, which includes: chronological age, deselection, injury, and free choice. All of these factors have different effects on the former athlete. Upon ending a sports career, the means by which their career was halted impacts their ability to make a successful “rebirth” as a member of the labor market (Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008). The research explains that voluntary termination (free choice) leads to the potential of a more positive transition, whereas deselection, chronological age, and injury all can result in lower self-respect, a greater likelihood of expressing feelings of anxiety, anger, and depression (Cecić Erpič, Wylleman, & Zupančič, 2004). For this study chronological age is represented by the construct “graduation,” as chronological age is a measurement of time and graduation is also an indication of time. Of the factors that influence this transition, athletic identity and components of adaptive capacity are two of the most important indicators of a successful positive transition from sports to the labor market (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Stambulova, 2003; Lavalle, Gordon, & Grove, 1997). The effects of sports career termination are reported to lessen over time (Stambulova, 2003).
Individual Agility

If a person is to effectively transition out of sports and into the labor market, he must become agile. McCann, Selsky, & Lee (2009) offer this understanding of agility, “The capacity for moving quickly, flexibly and decisively in anticipating, initiating and taking advantage of opportunities and avoiding any negative consequences of change” (p. 45). In the literature, agility is typically spoken of as a broad business concept, referring to the ability to maneuver within a given realm, market, and/or industry (Sherehiy, Karwowski, & Layer, 2007). When applied to an individual, agility is largely regarded as learning agility, yet sometimes it can be read as flexibility or even adaptability. Learning agility is a relatively new term and its foundation is grounded in the work of Dewey, Piaget, and Lewin (DeRue, Ashford, & Myers 2012).

Michael Lombardo and Robert Eichinger (2000) initially sought to explore how those observed as high potential leaders use that which is learned from experience; a concept introduced as learning agility in 2000. Ormrod (2011) explained learning as “the long-term change in mental representations or associations as a result of experience” (p. 180). Learning translates into advances in a given knowledge and/or skill set, and is accomplished through assimilation or accommodation. Assimilation is accomplished by altering what had previously been obtained (Butterfield & Nelson, 1989). Accommodation, on the other hand, is the process of removing anything that is rendered inaccurate, obsolete, or inconsistent with new information (Butterfield & Nelson, 1989). Lombardo and Eichinger (2000) defined learning agility as, “the willingness and ability to learn new competencies in order to perform under first-time, tough, or different conditions” (p. 323). As a result of their study, Lombardo & Eichinger (2000) were able
to distinguish four different types of agility: people agility, results agility, mental agility, and change agility, as outlined in Table 2.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Table 2.2. Types of Agility</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>People Agility</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results Agility</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mental Agility</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change Agility</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In their original study, Lombardo & Eichinger (2000) first sought to find evidence of people’s ability to grow, learn, and change during their careers; secondly, they wanted to provide evidence that measuring learning from experience, acumen, and agility was feasible. Their study of “high potential” individuals used a questionnaire, which was similar in nature to that of an instrument developed by the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL). Lombardo and Eichinger’s questionnaire focused on the learned adaptability of 55 managers. In this study, the researchers surveyed associates of these managers as well as the manager’s supervisors to obtain information regarding the growth and development of these managers. Johnson and Scott (2012) assert that “Learning agility is not only about pattern recognition, it also requires people to decipher events based on their underlying meaning rather than more obvious concrete characteristics” (p. 310).

DeRue, Ashford, & Myers (2012) provide a model of learning agility that consists of four primary areas, individual difference, cognitive processes, behavioral processes, and contextual as
well as environmental factors (Figure 2.1). Within the segment of the model entitled, Individual Differences Related to Learning Agility, there are three sub-constructs: goal orientation, cognitive and metacognitive abilities, and openness to experience. Goal orientation denotes an individual’s motivations to learn, for the purpose of mastery or reward. Cognitive and metacognitive ability in this framework refers to the individual’s ability to learn. Finally in this section, we have openness to experience, which is used to describe one’s capacity to be creative, inquisitive, and authentic. The next segment of the model is labeled cognitive processes, which addresses the mental development that naturally ensues as one engages in a new experience. The series of thought processes that are consciously and unconsciously engaged in upon arriving in a new situation are regarded as behavioral processes within the model. The contextual and environmental factors are understood to be anything within the environment that can affect how information is received, processed, and applied to varying circumstances.

Learning agility has become a key trait employers look for in their employees, as many industries are currently experiencing frequent change at a rate much higher than the past; known as a hyper-turbulent environment (McCann and Selsky, 2012). Hyper-turbulent environments are characterized by constant dramatic change, thus it is imperative for individuals to embrace the need to continuously evolve or as McCann & Selsky (2012) posits, participate in the “race for agility” (p. 37). Yet, it is equally necessary for a person to develop their individual resilience in conjunction with agility, because if not balanced out with resilience, agility can result in fragility (McCann & Selsky, 2012). Mitchinson & Morris (2012) offer a different perspective from McCann and Selsky (2012), having suggested that those who are more agile are also innately resilient.
Individual Resilience

Resilience, much like agility is a term that is often used, yet not always readily defined or applied effectively. Research on resilience has evolved from a list of traits and characteristics commonly found in resilient people, and are used to aid in the identification, development, and application of resilient characteristics. Despite the depth that has been added to resiliency research, there remains some level of vagueness in the application and context of resilience (Cumming, Barnes, Perz, Schmink, Sieving, Southworth, Binford, Holt, Stickler, & Van Holt, 2005); as a result, there is potential for it to be misinterpreted or misused. Resilience is defined as, the ability of an individual to positively adjust to adversity (Jackson, Firtko, & Edenborough, 2007). Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000) use the term “resilience” to imply that a) there was an encounter with a potentially harmful threat or adverse condition and b) the individual persevered to improve his/her state of affairs. Resilience is said to be the most important
characteristic of successful individuals, even more so than education (Coutu, 2002). In Table 2.3, Richardson (2002) provides the chronology of the three primary waves of resiliency research.

### Table 2.3. Three Waves of Resiliency Inquiry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Wave:</strong> Resilient Qualities</td>
<td>Phenomenological descriptions of resilient qualities in individuals and support systems that predict social and personal success</td>
<td>List of qualities, assets, or protective factors that help people grow through adversity (i.e. self-esteem, self-efficacy, and support systems, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Wave:</strong> The Resiliency Process</td>
<td>Resiliency is the process of coping with stressors, adversity, change, or opportunity in a manner that results in the identification, fortification, and enrichment of protective factors</td>
<td>Describes the disruptive and integrative process of acquiring the desired resilient qualities described in the first wave; a model that helps clients and students choose between resilient reintegration, reintegration, back to the comfort zone, or reintegration with loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third Wave:</strong> Innate Resilience</td>
<td>Postmodern multidisciplinary identification of motivational forces within individuals and groups and the creation of experiences that foster the activation and utilization of the forces</td>
<td>Helps clients and students to discover and apply the forces that drives a person toward self-actualization and to resiliently reintegrate from disruptions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the first wave of research on resilience, Werner and Smith (1982) conducted a study of children in Hawaii where they sought to identify traits that were common in those who were regarded as resilient. After completing this 30-year longitudinal study, they arrived at a set of characteristics that were common in children who were labeled as “at-risk.” Werner and Smith (1982) expressed that at-risk is recognized as generational low socio-economic status, raised in environments that experience perinatal stress, daily instability, and serious parental mental health problems. The factors that promote resilience include: being female, healthy, socially
responsible, adaptive, tolerant, achievement oriented, an effective communicator, and having good self-esteem (Warner & Smith, 1982). Werner and Smith (1982) also indicated that the child’s environments also contributed to the ability to be resilient. There was also a link established between the parent level of education and the child’s competence in scholastic activities. A key implication in these findings is the establishment of risk factors.

The second wave of resiliency research was designed to answer, “how are the resilient qualities acquired” (Richardson, 2002, p. 310)? A model of resiliency developed by Richardson (2002) depicts the method by which one becomes resilient, this process is outlined as a series of stages which can be initiated consciously or subconsciously (See Figure 2.2).

![Figure 2.2. The Resiliency Model. Note: Adopted from Richardson, G. E. (2002). The metatheory of resilience and resiliency. Journal of clinical psychology, 58(3), p. 311.](image)

Within the model, stressors, adversity, or life events are the drivers of this process. As one encounters a life event, which can vary in time frame as well as severity, an individual’s protective factors are activated for the purpose of sustaining the status quo, also known as homeostasis or the “comfort zone” (Richardson, Neiger, Jensen, & Kumpfer, 1990, p. 35). The
form that the protective factor may take is referred to as biopsychospiritual – the physical, mental, and spiritual form that a protective factor may take. Table 2.4 highlights the protective factors as identified by Richardson et al. (1990).

**Table 2.4. Psychospiritual Protective Process and Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Pursuit of a cause or purpose in life (giving of self)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Good self esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Good decision making skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Belief in a higher force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Internal locus of control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Self confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Good sense of humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Personal strengths and skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Value/behavioral congruence (behaving in accordance with one’s beliefs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Self-mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Independence of spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Psychological hardiness (control, commitment, and challenge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Ability to be a friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Positive futuristic vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Independence of spirit/autonomous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


If the protective factors applied or available are not able to maintain the status quo, then there is a period of disruption, which is characterized by the introspective emotions (i.e. hurt, loss, guilt, fear, perplexity, confusion, self-doubt, or questioning of one’s abilities). Eventually each person arrives at a crossroad and must decide how he/she will proceed and move accordingly. This happens in the reintegration phase of the process, as an individual looks to return to the previous or reestablish a new homeostasis (Galli & Vealey, 2008). Pursuit of homeostasis through self-destructive means (i.e. drugs, alcohol, violence, etc.) is known as dysfunctional reintegration. If an individual is able to return back to homeostasis, having lost important protective factors in the process, this results in reintegration with a loss. Reintegration back to homeostasis occurs when an individual neither gains nor loses protective factors when engaging in a life event. Finally, resilient reintegration describes when a person is able to not only overcome the stressor, but also to come out of it as a more dynamic person, with additional
skills, positive traits, and/or protective factors. Table 2.5 offers a collection of the skills and traits gained through resilient reintegration.

**Table 2.5. Skills and Characteristics Gained Through Resilient Reintegration**

1. Build upon protective skills listed in Table 1 but reflecting reintegrating functions
2. Good social problem solving skills
3. Ability to delay gratification
4. Resilient self-efficacy
5. Creative problem solving skills
6. Task oriented
7. Flexibility
8. Good reintegrating capacity (ability to bounce back from adversity)
9. Ability to do personal introspection and determine personal resources for coping
10. Self-motivation
11. Strong capacity for learning


Expounding on the work done on resilience, Rutter (1987) offers four mechanisms for dealing with adverse conditions: reduction of risk impact, reduction of negative chain reactions, establishment and maintenance of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and generating opportunities for success. The second wave outlines the resiliency process, whereas the third wave informs how to realize resilient reintegration.

The third wave of resilience inquiry is characterized by the establishment of a resilience theory. Resilience theory suggests that everyone innately possesses a spirit which seeks self-actualization, a desire to care and do for others, a supreme understanding of the world around them, and peace internally as well as in their daily life (Richardson, 2002). According to Richardson (2002), the third wave of resilience research was embarked upon to answer, “what and where is the energy source or motivation to reintegrate resiliently?” (p. 313). To answer this question, researchers sought answers from multiple interconnected disciplines, psychoneuroimmunology, philosophy, physics, psychology, Eastern medicine, and neuroscience,
along with others. According to Richardson (2002), resilience theory ultimately produced two postulates: 1) Environments and events are able to elicit an energy or power source in people. This power is able to carry a person from an instinct of survival to a place of self-actualization; a force also known as quanta, chi, spirit, God, or resilience. 2) Through the force (resilience) within man, each individual has the ability to heal, drive, and motivate. The third wave of inquiry suggests that everyone is capable of becoming resilient, but their innate force has to be provoked by an outside source. Braddock, Royster, Winfield, & Hawkins (1991) support sport as an ideal way to supply opportunities for teaching, applying, and observing the results of resilience theory.

Adaptive Capacity (High AR)

McCann & Selsky (2012) assert that focusing your efforts solely on building resilience or agility is a fatal mistake, as both are essential and comprise what Thomas (2008) recognized as adaptive capacity. Bennis & Thomas (2002) offer attributes that are common in outstanding leaders, which include adaptive capacity, defined as “the ability to learn – about yourself, about the world around you, about what it takes to adjust, and to make change” (p. 8). McCann and Selsky (2012) also refer to the coupling of these terms as High AR.

McCann & Selsky (2012) acknowledge that level of adaptive capacity can and should be developed on four distinct levels within a given organization: the individual level, team level, organization level, and the ecosystem level. For this study, the researcher will focus on how this conceptual framework is applicable to the individual only. When applying the concept of adaptive capacity to an individual, the authors provide insight on how these measures are to be qualified in each of the five areas (see Table 2.6).
### Table 2.6. The Five AR Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Implications</th>
<th>Being Purposeful</th>
<th>Being Aware</th>
<th>Being Action-Oriented</th>
<th>Being Resourceful</th>
<th>Being Networked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holding positive, “well” identities grounded in core values and beliefs about who they are and where they want to be</td>
<td>Aware of the larger environment, actively scanning and engaging in sensemaking to form action hypotheses</td>
<td>Forward-leaning and open to change, with appropriate tools for quick movement, proactively or reactively, alone or collaboratively</td>
<td>Creatively and innovatively using resources with the capacity and skills to attract additional resources as needed</td>
<td>Building and sustaining valued relationships for leveraging opportunity or support when overwhelmed, eliminating the ones posing excessive risks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The AR model is the latest attempt to understand how life experiences can be used to develop a more dynamic person. If one is able to effectively harness both the agility and resilience competencies and thus able to realize unique opportunities for growth and development in the midst of challenges, they are then able to use those circumstances that offer rare learning experiences to fuel their individual career success. When these concepts are applied to the target population, the literature suggests that sport for African-American males serves as a positive mode of inciting their ability to be both resilient and agile, whereas their home environments may serve to build negative resilient and agile behaviors or attitudes. For this study, the researcher is interested in exploring if the adaptive capacity of African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport at a D-I institution is associated with their ability to realize subjective career success.

**Career Success**

According to Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swider, & Tipton (1985), people typically view their work in one of three ways, a job, a career, or a calling. Those who perceive their work as a
job, engage in the work solely for the benefits of a material variety (Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). Those who think of their work as a career, look to gain wealth, status, influence, and social rewards associated with their ascension through the organizational or occupational structure (Bellah et al., 1985). The individuals who feel that their work is a calling are internally driven and fulfilled due to the belief that what they are providing contributes to the greater good (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). Each of these work designations impact how one approaches work and how he/she perceive success in their work, which in turn influences how a person handles movement within a company, industry, and jobs. For African-American males, sport is often approached as a calling, in that they are willing to sacrifice apparent opportunities for advancement in order to pursue sports at all costs (Beamon, 2008). Thus, when a career termination event thrusts them into the labor market, they are forced to take on jobs and attempt to craft careers from the collection of jobs they are able to obtain.

Sturges (1999) indicates that there are two categories of career progression, the linear career and non-linear career. The linear career, is one where the individual ascends within a given organization or industry, and refers to the process of gaining upward mobility (Sturges, 1999). Non-linear careers, are those employment moves where the person seeks to develop a high level of skill and knowledge in a given area, which could mean vertical, horizontal, and even steps backward to securing the desired competencies (Sturges, 1999). Despite the means by which advancement is pursued, the ultimate goal in developing a professional track is to realize some semblance of success within one’s succession of jobs.

Career success is regarded as a succession of related jobs (Wilensky, 1961), the combination and sequence of roles (Super, 1980), work experiences (Arthur, Hall, and Lawrence, 1989), and even “the accomplishment of desirable work-related outcomes at any point
in a person’s work experiences over time” (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005, p. 179). The definition of career success has continuously evolved as major shifts in how products and services are developed, manufactured, as well as delivered to the public forced drastic changes in the meaning of work and thus the labor demands of organizations (Evans, Gunz, & Jalland, 1997). Career success is garnered through either contest-mobility or sponsored-mobility. Contest mobility describes how one moves up within an organization due to their performance in their job related tasks. However, sponsored-mobility refers to how one realizes success due to the perception that they are exceptional by individuals with the ability to promote them (Thomas, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005; Turner, 1960).

Research on career success indicates that there are two universally recognized types of career success, objective or extrinsic career success and subjective or intrinsic career success. Objective career success can be observed and judged by others (i.e. salary, promotions, titles, etc.) (Thomas et al., 2005). Subjective career success, on the other hand, addresses those things that cannot be viewed, nor judged by the masses, rather judged by the individual’s own perception of their success (Thomas et al., 2005; Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). It is also important to consider the longstanding goals of making it to the professional ranks, which impacts how former participants perceive success.

**Education and Career Success**

College education typically has positive and strong correlations with career success (Johnson & Eby, 2011). Howard (1986) identifies five aspects of the college experience that generally impacts career success, which include: level of education, grades, quality of undergraduate institution, major field of study, and extra-curricular activities. Howard (1986) as well as Carnevale, Rose, and Cheah (2011) report a drastic difference in the level of achievement
between those who have undergraduate degrees and those who have not earned a post-secondary degree. Grades were strongly associated with intellectual ability. Howard (1986) also identified that “good grades” (pg.) correlated with a conscientious work habit. According to Howard’s (1986) study of those who attended higher rated colleges were reported to be more intellectually inclined, motivated to advance, more conforming, and generally more effective, however, these differences did not manifest until around year 20 of the study. Outside of grades, other facets of the college experience produced a positive association as well, with college major being one indication of impending career success (Carnevale, Strohl, Melton, 2011).

When major of study was considered, results showed that humanities and social science majors performed much better than business majors and much better than those who pursued engineering, math and science degrees in achieving career success. The humanities and social science majors were ranked first, above business majors, math-science majors, and engineering majors respectively, because of its relationship to interpersonal skills. The ranking of leadership skills, oral communication, behavior flexibility, personal impact, and social objectivity paralleled the findings of interpersonal skills. Thus, the degrees that African-American male athletes generally obtained, position them to be better suited for career success (Howard, 1986), however this is rarely the case (Carnevale, Strohl, Melton, 2011). Though a key reason for pursuing a post-secondary degree is to help an individual become a viable member of the labor market through the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, the college experience also serves as an essential opportunity for networking and building social capital. The development of social capital and establishing a viable network on a college campus is done through involvement in extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, student organizations, and fostering relationships with peers and professional staff (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006).
Howard (1986) recognized that some areas of study and some extracurricular activities have significant positive relationships with career success with obtaining mid-level management positions, but not with advances thereafter. “Participation in student government, the school paper, and debate teams were most likely to relate to meaningful performance criteria, whereas participation in athletic activities showed no such relationship” (Howard, 1986, p. 545). At the center of career success is the ability to take what has been learned and apply it to new situations effectively, which is the primary function of adaptive capacity.

**Subjective Career Success**

For this study, the researcher focuses on the implications of the subjective aspects of career success, to contribute to answering the call for additional inquiry by Henslin (2005) for more theoretical research with a focus on diverse and unique populations. Subjective career success is defined as the reaction an individual has to their own career at a given point in time (Hughes, 1958). The research on subjective career success has its limitations. Due to the individualistic and vast nature of the construct, it is difficult to make broad generalizations, thus scholars have added depth to the theory by expanding the concept to include self-referent success (Gattiker & Larwood, 1988; Heslin, 2003, Heslin, 2005) as well as other-referent success (Turban & Dougherty, 1994; Janssen, 2001; Heslin 2003, Heslin, 2005).

Self-referent success is recognized as success as it compares to the individual’s personal standards for personal success and that of others (Heslin, 2003). Self-referent success is expressed in the literature as job or career satisfaction (Cesinger, 2011). In this study, subjective career success is understood as career satisfaction, Heslin (2003) outlines the following restriction presented with job satisfaction:

One limitation of using job satisfaction as an indicant of career success is that a
person could be highly satisfied with his or her current job, although dissatisfied with the career attainments that preceded it. Also, a person who thinks that he or she has a highly successful career does not necessarily consider it less successful if a job is started that is found dissatisfying. Finally, a person may hate what he or she is doing but be happy with the state of the career because of the prospects it brings. (p. 265)

The use of career satisfaction as the primary indicator of subjective career success requires one to observe longer spans of time, an extended scope of the implications (i.e. identity), and has the ability to suggest purpose or rationale (Henslin, 2005). Career satisfaction is the degree to which individuals feel their advancement as a professional is on pace with their personal goals, values, and expectations (Seibert & Kramer, 2001). Career satisfaction is often measured using the tool developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley (1990), who in their landmark study of African-American and White managers from three organizations hoped to identify significant associations between race, gender, organizational experiences (i.e. sponsorship/mentorship, organizational acceptance, perceived supervisory support job, and career strategies), job performance evaluations (i.e. relationship and ability), career outcomes (i.e. promotability and career plateau), and career satisfaction. They found African-American managers expressed less job satisfaction, as well as lower levels of acceptance compared to their White peers. African-Americans were also rated lower as it pertained to job performance and promotability, were more often at career plateaus, and were more likely to be dissatisfied with their careers than their White counterparts. Tools that measure job satisfaction have acceptable levels of internal consistency, however they may not necessarily offer the same strong indications when applied to diverse groups (Heslin, 2005).
The evolution of the self-referent construct has led to the identification of key associations between career satisfaction and goals (Abele & Spurk, 2008; Locke & Latham, 2002). Goal-setting theories are deeply rooted in the work on motivation. Goal-setting theory states, no matter what is happening subconsciously, how one approaches a work situation consciously affects performance, job satisfaction, and ultimately career satisfaction (Locke & Latham, 2002). According to Cesinger (2011) career related goals take the form of career advancement goals or private goals, and it is imperative to note the differences between the two. Career advancement goals are those that are pre-defined within the confines of a job description (Abele, 2002 as cited in Cesinger, 2011), while, Stief (2001) explains, private goals as those that are established by the individual and are more comprehensive as well as long-term (as cited in Cesinger, 2011). In their study, Able & Spurk (2009) reported that individuals with high career advancement goals are objectively more successful, yet less satisfied with their careers than those with low career advancement goals, this is due in part to the time it takes to achieve the higher career goals. This low career satisfaction was assumed to disappear over time.

Another important aspect of self-referent success is that it can contain objective criteria (Heslin, 2005). In the case of the African-American male former student-athletes, one of the things that is highly anticipated is making the money that professional athletes make, yet income that is comparable to that of a professional basketball and/or football player is not something that is easy to achieve in the general labor market. There are very few fields that can offer such a high level of compensation, with the average National Basketball Association (NBA) player making 5.15 million dollars annually, and the average National Football League (NFL) player earning 1.9 million per year (Burke, 2012).
Though career satisfaction has received a great deal of attention in the past decade, this notion of self-referent success only tells half of the story as people rarely evaluate their individual success in a vacuum, yet the successes and ideas of others weigh heavily on their interpretation of success (Heslin, 2003; 2005). Thus, the gaps that are left, demonstrate the need to identify other-referent factors.

When assessing other-referent success, individuals want to see how their achievements parallel a given reference group, person, or set of standards established by or with others (Cesinger, 2011; Gattiker & Larwood, 1988). The exploration of other-referent success calls for one to consider objective measures (i.e. pay and position prestige) in a subjective manner. In other words, other-referent success describes the extent to which individuals base their ideas of success on the opinions, observed successes, and observed failures of others as it pertains to objective matters (Heslin, 2005); this is despite the fact that in many cases that which is observed is misleading (Lawrence, 1984). This notion is consistent with Festinger’s (1954) social comparison theory, which describes the tendency of individuals to evaluate their achievements by measuring their own “outcomes” against others. Mumford (1983) explains that people are compelled to compare themselves to their peers when vying for public acknowledgments such as raises and promotions, especially when there are no concrete parameters on how these rewards are disseminated. To this, Willis (1981) explains that when one desires to feel good about him/herself, people will measure their feats against someone who is less accomplished, because downward comparisons are much more assuring than an upward comparison. The African-American male experience in the workplace is a unique and complex tale marred by the social constructs of American society (Raphael, 2006).
### Table 2.7. Self-Referent/Other-Referent Success Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Objective Domain</th>
<th>Subjective Domain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objective/Self-Referent</strong> Examples:</td>
<td><strong>Subjective/Self-Referent</strong> Examples:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Referent</strong></td>
<td>• My financial and promotion aspirations</td>
<td>• My goals for work-life balance and fulfillment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Potential correlates:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A calling orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Potential correlates:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A non-linear career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other-Referent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Objective/other-referent</strong> Examples:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain</td>
<td>• My colleagues pay and my social standing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Potential correlates:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A job or career orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


### Chapter Summary

The experience of playing a revenue-generating sport at the collegiate level has become an area of concern, as it pertains to the success of African-American men in the labor market. Although sport has been used to create opportunity for African-American males, it has also been identified as a hindrance, in its own right (Braddock, 1981). And though some of the barriers placed on the African-American male precede sports participation (Horsford, 2011), the system currently in place certainly perpetuates the problem. The systems, rules, and lack of responsibility within an institution with the purpose of developing them as students and viable members of society, have resulted in many dropping out of school, obtaining degrees that are not highly sought by organizations, and/or not having the hard and soft skills needed to obtain and sustain employment. As adaptive capacity is further investigated, it is apparent that such a highly regarded trait, which if fostered, could potentially increase the likelihood of athletes being able to
realize individual career success and effectively transition into the labor market, be it objective or subjective, self or other-referent in nature. Both the High AR model and the crucible conceptual framework acknowledge that sport is a unique arena that allows one to experience both the failures and successes necessary to become resilient as well as agile. Thus, it is essential that mechanisms are developed and deployed to ensure the skills that are fostered in the sports environment are also cultivated to add additional depth to making a more viable candidate in his chosen vocation. If not, how are we to ever convince a young Black boy that college is a worthy investment in itself when he sees others who have gone on to college struggle to obtain employment, not enjoy their jobs, not be granted a competitive wage, or not see movement up the corporate ladder within companies?
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this convergent parallel mixed-method study was to (1) To determine the factors that predict subjective career success for former D-I African-American male athletes who played a revenue-generating sport, and (2) To explore how former D-I African-American male athletes, who played a revenue-generating sport and have realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market. Chapter 3 provides a description of the convergent parallel mixed-method research design which encompasses both a quantitative and qualitative research strand. This study examined the relationships between the independent variables: adaptive capacity, number of years removed from participation, athletic identity, parent educational attainment, reason for termination and the sole dependent variable in this study, subjective career success. A convergent parallel mixed-method design is characterized by the quantitative and qualitative strands embedded in the study, each holding equal importance in the study. Each strand was independently investigated with the goal of confirming or disconfirm the other (Creswell, 2014). The convergent parallel mixed-method design format is diagramed in Figure 3.1; it was expanded to resemble Teddlie & Tashakkori’s (2009, p. 153) more detailed depiction of the method, adjusted to meet the needs of this study.

Research Questions

This study used a convergent-parallel mix-method approach, commissioning a quantitative survey methodology as well as qualitative case study methodology to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational attainment, and athletic identity predict
subjective career success for African-American males who played FBS/D-IA football, 
FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level?

2. How did African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for a FBS/D-IA 
football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball program and realized subjective career 
success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market?
Figure: 3.1. Expanded Convergent Parallel Mixed-Method Design
Human Subjects Approval

Approval of this study was submitted through UNLV’s Office for the Protection of Research Subject (OPRS). UNLV’s IRB gave approval on May 6, 2015. The process of obtaining consent was initiated and managed online prior to allowing access to the survey. Participants who were interviewed received a copy of the informed consent either electronically or face-to-face. A copy of the IRB approval notice and the IRB-approved informed consent (quantitative and qualitative) can be found in Appendices J, F, and H respectively.

General Discussion of Participants

Because this study embodied both a quantitative and qualitative research method, two independent samples were obtained. For the quantitative component of study, individuals who met the following criteria were recruited to participate in the study. The criteria included: African-American males, who formally played for a FBS/D-IA, FCS/D-IAA football program, or a D-I basketball program, and had not played sports professionally. The significance of attending a Division I school for those who desire to play sports professionally cannot be understated, as play at this level is viewed as practically professional (Meggyesy, 2000). According to Kacsmar (2013), of the 1,947 individuals who played in the NFL in 2012, 1,691 (86.85%) were from FBS/D-IA programs, and 162 (8.32%) were from FCS/D-IAA programs, which means that over 95% of NFL players played D-I football. Of the 1,947 individuals in the NFL, 67% were African-Americans (Lapchick, Costa, Sherrod, & Anjorin, 2012). Former Division I college players made up 80.5% of the NBA at the beginning of the 2014-15 season, according to RPIRatings (2014). In this same time frame, African-Americans comprised 77% of NBA rosters (Lapchick, Donovan, Loomer, & Martinez, 2014).
According to Yin (2014), to offer an increased level of certainty, seven individuals who met the same criteria, with the addition of being subjectively successful (self-reported), were used for the qualitative aspects of the study. Using purposeful sampling, the researcher intentionally recruited individuals from various industries and income levels. Individuals who met the criteria for the qualitative strand were also eligible to participate in the quantitative survey, which offers a unique perspective into the issue being investigated, a practice that is validated by Wisdom and Creswell (2013).

**Convergent Parallel Mixed-Method Design**

The researcher adopted the convergent parallel mixed-method design format because of the complexity of the issue being studied and the dearth of information regarding the transition to work for this particular segment of athletes. The nature of this study called for a quantitative and qualitative understanding of the issues, with each aspect of the study being investigated to answer one of the two aforementioned research questions. Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) outline five primary reasons for engaging in a mixed-method approach: (a) complementary, the enhancement and clarification of results when related to another; (b) development, using the outcomes from one method to provide insight into the other, (c) initiation, the identification of paradox and essential differences; (d) expansion, to expand the scope of influence and application; or as is the case for this particular study (e) triangulation, the corroboration of outcomes yielded by the use of multiple methods. The major assumption when applying the convergent parallel mixed-methods approach to analyzing data is that the researcher anticipated the qualitative data would yield a different type of information than the quantitative data (Creswell, 2014). This design is a multi-strand design, indicating two separate strands of research. Each research strand is comprised of three primary sequential stages: the
conceptualization stage, experiential stage (methodological stage/analytical stage), and the inferential stage (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

Concrete observation involves outlining data collection procedures, which take place in the methodological stage. This study includes both surveys and interviews. The analytical stage involves the analysis of data; multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the survey data, whereas both thematic and cross-cases analyses were used to analyze the text from the interviews. During the inferential stage, the independent results from both strands are reported. In the final stage, the meta-inference stage, the data are combined to accomplish one of the five primary reasons for engaging in a mixed-method study.

Quantitative Design

Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is characterized by the use of numbers to describe data outputs, then using this data to examine the association between two or more variables in order to test a theory using mathematic formulas (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). A quantitative design was used because it allowed the researcher to: 1.) test hypotheses 2.) explore relationships, and 3.) predict outcomes (Shuttleworth, 2008, Firestone, 1987; Creswell, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). This quantitative strand uses a survey research design.

Survey Research

Survey research is characterized by the use of a survey for the purpose of producing quantifiable descriptions of trends, opinions, and attitudes of a population (Fowler Jr., 2009). A survey is the ideal approach when gathering data from a broad spectrum of people, when looking to measure one or more identified variables, and when looking to report generalizable outcomes (Check & Schutt, 2012). Because a survey was used to gather data for this study, the following
barriers must be mitigated in the data gathering and/or reporting processes (A) the potential for respondents to provide false information, (B) the possibility of being impacted by the respondent’s interpretation of questions or answer options, and (C) the need to distribute the survey to a number of potential subjects that is greater than the desired sample size to ensure an adequate return rate, are among the errors and biases that must be minimized (Wyse, 2012). Despite its shortcomings, survey research remains a strong and common avenue for investigating scholarly inquiries.

**Online Surveys.** The use of online tools to facilitate the disbursement and participation in research studies has become common practice today as the Internet has become a staple of modern life (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). The benefits of using online applications to facilitate survey research include: a reduction in cost, immediate access to data, personalization of correspondence between participant and researcher, the ability to widen geographic reach, mobile accessibility, as well as adaptability of the instrument (Leedy, & Ormrod, 2013). Along with these benefits, the researcher had to minimalize the effects posed by the barriers that come with employing survey research such as, the need for working email addresses, increasing the likelihood of resorting to blindly seeking participation, and lack of direct contact with participants (Fowler Jr., 2009). Qualtrics was used to distribute, facilitate, and manage the survey electronically.

**Instrumentation**

To answer the first research question, a 69-item survey was distributed (see Appendix B). This survey is a compilation of items developed and used in other studies (adaptive capacity, McCann & Selsky, 2012; athletic identity, Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1991; and subjective career success, Heslin, 2003) and several original questions, a practice which is supported by Bulmer, Gibbs, and Hyman (2006). The 69-item instrument is made up of three subscales and
eight supplemental demographic questions, some of which had been previously validated and the reliability measures reported in their respective studies (adaptive capacity - McCann & Selsky, 2012; athletic identity - Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1991; and subjective career success - Heslin, 2005). Table 3.1 outlines the primary independent variables and delineates the only dependent variable used in this study. The independent variables are: adaptive capacity, athletic identity, reason for termination, number of years removed, and parent educational attainment. Table 3.1 also recognizes subjective career success, as the only dependent variable in this study. Demographic items (61-67) on the survey provide clarification of the level of objective career success accomplished by the respondent, up to the point of their participation.

The three scales used in this study (adaptive capacity, athletic identity, subjective career success), were originally measured on a 5-point Likert scale, however for this study, the scale was expanded to a 7-point scale. The practice of rescaling items from a 5-point scale to a 7-point scale is common (Schraw, 2009). This adjustment produces the same mean score according to Dawes (2008), despite the 5-point scale being less accurate, due to its tendency to elicit interpolations, which negatively impact sensitivity (Finstad, 2010), a notion echoed by Cummins and Gullone (2000).

Table 3.1. List of Scales Used in the Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Measured Variable</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Question Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>Adaptive Capacity (IV)</td>
<td>A subject's ability to be both resilient and agile</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>Athletic Identity (IV)</td>
<td>The level to which a subject identifies as an athlete</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Reason for Termination (IV)</td>
<td>The means by which a subject’s sport career ended</td>
<td>Nominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Number of Years Removed from Participation (IV)</td>
<td>The number of years removed from college sport participation</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Parent Educational Attainment (IV)</td>
<td>The educational level achieved by a subject’s parents</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39-60</td>
<td>Subjective Career Success (DV)</td>
<td>How a subject measures success</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adaptive Capacity (AR) Scale

To measure adaptive capacity, a variation of the 25 items created by McCann and Selsky (2012) to measure High AR was used. The verbiage used in some of the questions was altered to fit the target population and the goals of the study. Many of the items used in McCann and Selsky’s instrument were empirically validated (AMA/HRI, 2006; McCann, Selsky, & Lee, 2009; McCann & Selsky, 2012). The researcher performed tests for reliability for the various scales, where the adaptive capacity (full) scale reported a Cronbach’s Alpha of .817 and the subjective career success (full) scale produced a Cronbach’s Alpha of .537. These outcomes fall within the desired range, as reported by George and Mallery (2003), who indicate that an acceptable range is between .9 and .5.

AR is comprised of five subcomponents: networked, resourceful, action-oriented, aware, and purposeful. The Cronbach’s Alpha for the subcomponents of adaptive capacity were reported as: aware = .618, purposeful = .506, action-oriented = .498, resourceful = .721, and networked = .744) Each of these outcomes fall within the desired range, as reported by George and Mallery (2003), who indicate that an acceptable range is between .9 and .5, except the adaptive capacity subcomponent action-oriented. The alternative hypothesis for adaptive capacity is stated in table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>Adaptive Capacity</td>
<td>H1</td>
<td>LEVEL of ADAPTIVE CAPACITY will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Athletic Identity Scale

The scale for athletic identity is a construct initially designed to measure the level to which an individual identifies as an athlete. Athletic identity was originally developed by Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder (1991), and consisted of 10 items. Table 3.3 states the alternative hypothesis for this variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>Athletic Identity</td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>ATHLETIC IDENTITY has a significant negative relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reason for Termination

The variable reason for termination is a single item measure. The options for termination as outlined by Taylor and Ogilvie (1994) include: (a) Injury; (b) Deselection; (c) Choice; and (d) Graduation. While there are other scales (Kedlic & Flemr, 2008) that measure reason for termination for athletes, this study utilized Taylor and Ogilvie’s classifications because they are broader in nature and more appropriate for this study. Cecić Erpič, Wylleman, and Zupancic (2004) state, “Athletes who experienced the most frequent and most intense negative life events had a more difficult career termination process than those athletes who had experienced a less negative non-athletic transitions” (p.56). Table 3.4 outlines the anticipated relationship between reason for termination and subjective career success, these assumptions were based on the work of Stambulova (2003) and Cecić Erpič, Wylleman, & Zupancic’s (2004), who suggested the reason for sports career termination impacts one’s ability to be subjectively successful outside of sports.
Table 3.4. Reason for Termination and Alternative Hypothesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Reason for Termination</td>
<td>H3</td>
<td>• REASON for TERMINATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Years Removed from Participation

Stambulova (2003) asserts that negative outcomes that are the result of how an athletic career ended are lessened over time and it has been reported that the impact of athletic identity is also lowered over time (Grove, Fish, & Eklund, 2004; Matin, Mushett, and Eklund, 1994). The variable number of years removed is also a single item measure and assessed using an open-ended question. This question was used to measure the impact of time away from collegiate sports has on the ability to realize subjective career success. The alternative hypothesis for this variable can be found in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5. Number of Years Removed from Participation and Alternative Hypothesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Number of Years Removed</td>
<td>H4</td>
<td>• NUMBER of YEARS REMOVED from PARTICIPATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parent Educational Attainment

A reoccurring theme in the literature regarding athletic career transition/termination (Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008), agility (Haller, 2010), resilience (Werner & Smith, 1982), and African-American sport participation (Lomax, 2000), is the impact that the family has on individual outcomes. The purpose for exploring the impact of family was to understand how the educational expectations of parents/guardians influenced the former African-American male athlete’s
perceptions of success. Parent educational attainment is a measured variable within this study, whose purpose was to assess the influence of the highest level of education of the parent has on the individual’s ability to realize subjective career success.

According to Hill and Lowe (1974), as well as, Williams and Williams-Morris (2000), one of the barriers to economic advancement, employment, and personal growth experienced by African-American males as a minority group, is that they come from low socio-economic status households. Socio-economic status is often related to the level of formal education of the parent(s) (Koivusilta, Rimpelä, & Rimpelä, 1999). Parent educational level is also reported to positively influence a student’s plan to enroll in college, maintain attendance, and tendency to graduate (Sewell & Shah, 1968), as well as their ability to achieve objective success in the labor market (Judge, 2009). The alternative hypothesis for this variable can be found in Table 3.6. Sewell and Shah (1968) indicated that the highest level of education attained by either parent had the greater impact on the student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Parent Educational Attainment</td>
<td>H5</td>
<td>• PARENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.6. Parent Educational Attainment and Alternative Hypothesis**

**Subjective Career Success Scale**

Subjective career success was the sole dependent variable for this study and is comprised of two indicator variables, self-referent career success and other-referent career success. Each of the items used to measure subjective career success (both self- and other-referent success) were taken directly from the Heslin (2003) study. Studies indicate a relationship exists between
subjective career success and family perceptions and expectations (Peluchette, 1993), athletic identity (Cecić Erpić, Wylleman, & Zupancic, 2004), adaptive capacity (Heslin, 2005), reason for termination (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994), and number of years removed from participation (Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008).

The self-referent career success (full scale) reported a Cronbach’s Alpha of .755, while the other-referent career success (full scale) yielded a Cronbach’s Alpha of .743. Both of these outcomes fall within the desired range, as reported by George and Mallery (2003), who indicate that an acceptable range is between .9 and .5

Sampling Procedures

Sampling Frame

“The different backgrounds and experiences of Black and White student athletes, despite the common experience of labor exploitation, will enable Black student athletes to be viewed as class fractions, thus allowing us to analyze their experience at predominantly White institutions as more complex than their counterparts” (Hawkins, 1999, p. 2). Therefore, the participants in this study are delimited to African-American males who participated in a revenue-generating sport, either D-I basketball, FBS/D-IA football, or FCS/D-IAA football, who did not matriculate into the professional ranks, and began working in the general labor market. The subjects of interest were selected because of the uniqueness of their experience as college students as well as athletes. Though African-American male athletes are not homogenous, there are some characteristics that appear more consistently within this particular group than in any other racial group, which afforded the researcher the flexibility to view these individuals who met the race criteria for the study. According to Holzer (2009), African-American male student-athletes
generally have low college grade point averages, especially when compared to the non-athletes, athletes of different races, African-American females and males who are not athletes.

An indication of the total population of interest is provided using the NCAA Student Athlete Ethnicity Report (Zgonc, 2010). This report provides an account of the number of African-American male participants in FBS/D-IA football was 62,334, FCS/D-IAA football had 49,305 participants, and 29,474 participated in D-I basketball between 1999 and 2009 alone, with 2004 information not available in the report (see table 3.7 below for full breakdown by year). Thus, it has been reported that over 141,113 African-American male student athletes participated in the highest level of collegiate sports for this 10-year period, with some replication. This gives the researcher a population size of greater than 139,702 individuals (with replication), taking into consideration Harper, Williams, and Blackmon’s (2013) assertion that less than 1% are able to enter the professional ranks.

Table 3.7. AA Male Participation in D-I Revenue-Generating Sports (1999-2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FBS/ D-IA</td>
<td>5,343</td>
<td>5,592</td>
<td>5,925</td>
<td>6,140</td>
<td>6,178</td>
<td>6,527</td>
<td>6,491</td>
<td>6,707</td>
<td>6,644</td>
<td>6,787</td>
<td>62,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCS/ D-IAA</td>
<td>4,374</td>
<td>4,682</td>
<td>4,611</td>
<td>4,916</td>
<td>5,063</td>
<td>4,907</td>
<td>5,012</td>
<td>5,197</td>
<td>5,272</td>
<td>5,271</td>
<td>49,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-I/ BB</td>
<td>2,647</td>
<td>2,803</td>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>2,903</td>
<td>2,905</td>
<td>2,941</td>
<td>3,052</td>
<td>3,090</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>3,158</td>
<td>29,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12,364</td>
<td>13,077</td>
<td>13,411</td>
<td>13,959</td>
<td>14,146</td>
<td>14,375</td>
<td>14,555</td>
<td>14,994</td>
<td>15,016</td>
<td>15,216</td>
<td>141,113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Sampling Techniques**

**Purposive Sampling.** A purposive sample is a non-probability sampling technique used to gather data, where the researcher intentionally selects participants because they share a particular characteristic or set of characteristics (Vogt, 1999). This approach was ideal for this
study because it allowed the researcher to investigate domains where a knowledgeable sample is needed for a particular cultural experience and a random sample was not accessible (Lewis & Sheppard, 2006). Though the innate biases produced when employing this approach may lead to additional questions and the findings may be only applicable to those being studied (Tongco, 2007), the researcher was aware, accepted, and communicates these in the limitations section of this manuscript. However, in some instances, purposive sampling produced better results than random sampling (Karmel, & Jain, 1987). Should a researcher desire to expand the breadth of this study, other studies can be conducted using the same approach, but on another group of participants as indicated by Bernard (2002). The first research question asks, “To what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational level attained, and athletic identity predict subjective career success for African-American males who have played FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level?” Because purposive sampling can be observed in quantitative as well as qualitative research, this particular study employed this method due the uniqueness of the population being explored. It is common to see purposive sampling used along with other data gathering techniques (Tongco, 2007), whereas in this study the researcher utilized a snowball sampling strategy.

**Snowball Sampling.** Snowball sampling is highlighted by the use of referrals to obtain additional eligible participants (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997). According to Spreen (1992), this method is ideal for samples that are hard to access, as members of these types of groups generally share a bond or ties to where members of the group have an easier time identifying others in the group than would a researcher acting on his/her own. Potuto & O’Hanlon (2006) indicated, African-American males athletes typically only engage with teammates when in
college, thus it was assumed that some contact is maintained even after their athletic careers ended due to limited social capital. This group can be considered a hard to reach population and warrants the use of non-random sampling practices.

Sample

Sample size describes the minimum number of participants needed to produce valid outcomes that can be generalized to a particular population (Marshall, 1996). For this study, a total of 91 individuals were needed in order to generate adequate results that could be generalized. This sample size was determined with the help of an a-priori sample size calculator for multiple regression created by Soper (2015). Cohen (1969) suggests at least a medium effect size, Soper (2015) indicates a medium effect size is .15 for his calculator, thus .15 was used as the anticipated effect size. The statistical power level was set at 0.8. The calculator asked for the number of predictors in the model, which for this study is five. The final condition required was probability level, which was set at 0.05, which is a standard figure according to Soper (2015). However, number of individuals needed according to the calculator was not achieved due in part to the interpretation of the question which asked participants if they had professional sport experience, outlined in the criteria for inclusion. Additionally, the researcher received no support from the organizations that had previously committed to assist in identifying eligible participants. However, when the researcher ran the stepwise linear regression (forward selection and backward selection) on the model, only one variable was significant. Thus, when the researcher inserted the one variable in the calculator, with the other parameters remaining constant, the Soper’s (2015) calculator indicated that a sample size of 54 was required, which is less than the number of participants surveyed. The 62 respondents who were able to complete the survey are also more than the 50 outlined by Harrell (2001), who suggest a 10:1 ratio in subjects
to predictors, and the standard sample size of 30 proposed by Rumsey (2011). Yet, should the researcher have not been able to achieve a reasonable number of participants to conduct this analysis there were other options capable of yielding useful data (Wampold & Freund, 1987).

**Sampling Error**

When facilitating a quantitative study which uses purposive sampling, the researcher must always remain conscious of the potential for sampling error. The intentional pursuit of a hard to reach sample, such as former African-American male D-I revenue-generating athletes, creates the potential for sampling errors which can ultimately impact the outcomes of a study (Fowler, 2009). Babbie (2012) indicates that employing a probability sampling method, like random-selection, increases the representativeness of the sample, however, obtaining a random sample was not feasible for this study, based on the population of interest. The use of purposive sampling, along with snowball sampling, as well as the researcher providing an analysis of the participant’s demographic profiles served to offer some level of representativeness.

**Data Collection (Quantitative)**

The survey was administered using Qualtrics and distributed using a web link, which was included in an email, to individuals across the U.S. The survey was initially sent to individuals in the researcher’s personal network, who met the criteria for inclusion. The researcher also recruited participants using social media outlets. Those who received the email correspondence were themselves asked to redistribute the email to individuals who met the criteria for inclusion, in their respective networks. The researcher also attempted to recruit participants using the assistance of five community-based, and social organizations believed to have members who may have met the desired criteria (i.e. fraternities, professional clubs, professional associations, etc.). The researcher forwarded the online survey to these organizations to disburse to their membership in hopes of gaining support from individuals. The researcher drafted a formal letter
and emailed it to these organizations requesting the letter be distributed to their membership. The individuals were then directed to another page and asked a series of qualifying questions to ensure the criteria for participation were met. If the requirements were met then access to the survey was allowed, the survey remained open for approximately 90 days with multiple postings on social media.

**Data Analysis**

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-method approach for investigating the factors that influence the transition from participating in a Division I revenue-generating sport to the general labor market for African-American males. It is essential when employing this approach that the researcher use the same or comparable variables, concepts, or constructs in both the qualitative and quantitative segments (Yin, 2014). Both the multiple linear regression and case study approaches used in this study were complementary approaches and offered unique insight into the transition from athletics to the general labor market for this population. Parallel track analysis was employed as the process to analyze the data separately as well as collectively. It is characterized by engaging in two separate analyses simultaneously and eventually bringing the two together to gain a more in-depth understanding of the problem being studied.

**Multiple Linear Regression**

The first research question asks, “To what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational level, and athletic identity predict subjective career success for African-American males who have played FBS/D-I football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level?” Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the survey data. Multiple linear regression is defined by a model’s capacity to account for multiple independent variables when seeking to predict the
variance in a single independent variable (Nathans, Oswald, & Nimon, 2012). Multiple linear regression is the ideal means of analyzing quantitative data when a researcher seeks to predict relationships between a single dependent interval or ratio variable and more than one interval or ratio independent variables (Afifi & Clark, 1990). Three assumptions had to be met to produce a model that was able to yield meaningful outcomes using multiple linear regression: A.) Each independent variable must have its own linear relationship with the dependent variable, B.) Variables had to be normally distributed, C.) The statistical variance had to be consistent amongst all variables, a condition known as homoscedasticity (Norušis, 2008). Multiple linear regression offered two key benefits that increased its usability in this study: 1.) It was a more accurate model because of its ability to accommodate more than one explanatory/independent variable, 2.) Permitted the researcher to explore the comprehensive effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable, as well as investigate the individual relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable (Marill, 2004). There are several processes that a researcher can employ to determine the best set of predictors for a given dependent variable, one of which is stepwise regression.

**Stepwise Regression.** A stepwise regression was run on the data to measure which independent variables had significant relationships with the dependent variable. Stepwise regression is characterized by the use of both the forward selection (step-up) process as well as the backward selection (step-down) process to specify which items are able to predict the dependent variable, and thus should remain in the model. The forward selection process begins with no variables in the model, adds the variable that has the highest bivariate correlation with dependent variable at each step, this procedure continues until all items that are significant are entered (Nathans, Oswald, and Nimon, 2012). The backward selection process however, begins
with all independent variables entered into the model. The researcher sets the level of significance that permits a variable to remain in the model. The backward selection process operates in such a way that at each factor being considered for the model is entered at the onset, and at each step of the process the variable with the least significance is removed, until only those variables that are significant remain (Hintze, 2012). Along with the quantitative analysis the researcher also gathered and analyzed qualitative data.

**Missing Data**

Each participant was given 30 days to answer all of the items on the survey. When these participants did not complete the survey in its entirety, the Qualtrics system automatically submitted the surveys as is.

**Qualitative Design**

**Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research is characterized by the observation of traits and qualities of human participants in a situated activity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). The purpose of qualitative research is to 1.) Describe and explain, 2.) Explore and interpret, and 3.) Build theory (Leedy & Ormrod, 2020, p. 96). In qualitative research, the goal is to identify themes and associations which are derived from lived experiences (Creswell, 2014). The process of facilitating qualitative inquiries consists of recording and analyzing qualitative data, these components of this study are outlined below.

**Case Study Method**

The qualitative portion of this convergent parallel mix-method study utilized a case study method approach. Yin (2014) asserts that using case study within a mixed-method design is a natural practice, because case studies innately “represent a form of mixed methods research” (p.
The case study method is a qualitative approach that allows a researcher to investigate the happenings of a given program, event, activity, or process of one or more individuals (Creswell, 2014, p. 241). This type of inquiry is ideal when “the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009). Within case study design there are single case study designs and multiple case study designs (Yin, 2014). For this study, the researcher deemed the multiple-case study design to be most appropriate and beneficial.

Multiple-Case Study Design

The second research question asks, “How did African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for a FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball program and realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market?” The individual cases were bounded by their participation in a revenue-generating sport for an FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-I-AA football, or D-I basketball program, being an African-American male who no longer participating in sport as a collegian, and having never played as a professional, and believed to be subjectively successful. These individuals provided the researcher with a set of common themes that aided them in what is said to be a very difficult transition (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Stambulova, 1997; Harrison, 2000; Edwards, 2000; Hawkins, 1999).

By employing a multiple-case study design, the researcher had to determine if the nature of the inquiry was to replicate the findings between cases literally or theoretically (Yin, 2014). If the researcher is looking for literal replications, the expectation is that information gathered from the various cases will tell a similar story. However, if the researcher is looking for a theoretical replication, contrasting results will offer theoretical implications (Yin, 2009). For this case, the researcher desired literal replication to understand the transition from play to the general labor
market for African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for an FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or a D-I basketball program and not played professionally, and is subjectively successful in their career. The research states that members of this group are generally not subjectively successful, as they have a hard time transitioning, due in part to high athletic identity, false hopes of playing sports professionally, limited subject knowledge, and few marketable skills. The subjects recruited for the qualitative strand were a subgroup of exemplary African-American male former D-I revenue generating-sport athletes, who provided the data which produced a set of themes which assisted them in their transition.

**Sampling Technique**

**Purposeful Sampling**

The second part of this mixed-method study employed a multiple-case study design to explain the processes and barriers participants experienced during their transition from sport to the labor market. In-depth interviews were used with seven participants, six of whom also completed the survey, a sample size that is supported by Yin (2009). The researcher also interviewed an individual who is identified as a discrepant case in this study, as he is objectively successful, but not subjectively successful, he participated in the survey segment as well. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants. When employing purposeful sampling for qualitative studies “particular settings, persons, or events are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be gotten as well from other choices” (Maxwell, 1997, p. 87). According to Sandelowski (1995), most qualitative research studies employ purposeful sampling techniques for enlisting participants. Teddlie and Yu (2007) state that purposeful sampling offers greater depth of information using only a small number of cases.
For this study, purposeful sampling was selected because one of the functions of this method is designed to allow comparisons across different cases focused on a topic of interest.

**Selection of Participants**

In order to achieve a comparable collection of cases, the researcher used maximum variation sampling for selecting the sample for this study. The goal of maximum variation sampling is to seek a particular demographic variation (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), which in this study the variation of interest was “career choice”. The purpose for using this approach was to identify themes or patterns apparent in the subjects’ description of the transition from sport to the labor market, as well as the process for realizing subjective career success. The career choice variation afforded the researcher the means to explore this transition while also accounting for differences in income, position, and prestige, all factors used when assessing self-referent career success and other-referent career success. Due to the use of a convergent parallel mix-method design, the instruments to measure both the qualitative and quantitative data were facilitated simultaneously, the outcomes analyzed independently, and then converged to gain a holistic understanding of the problem being studied.

**Data Collection (Qualitative)**

**In-Depth and Semi-Structured Interviews**

Data were collected using in-depth, semi-structured interviews with participants. Yin (2009) defined in-depth interviews as a qualitative technique that calls for intense inquiry about facts or opinions of events. In-depth interviews were utilized, because they are ideal when a researcher wants detailed insight into a person’s thoughts and recollection of lived experiences (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Several benefits of using in-depth semi-structured interviews include: (1) obtaining a detailed account of an event; (2) acquiring more precise and specific answers, as opposed to general answers offered through surveys; (3) identifying significant associations and
relationships that may not have been apparent initially; (4) gathering information about respondents, values, attitudes, opinions, and how they contextualize the event, (5) adjusting the line of questioning as needed or desired based on the direction of the conversation, and (6) the ability to observe body language and voice inflections as additional means to gather data (Minter, 2003). These interviews also typically occur in settings that allow the participant to be comfortable, relaxed, and are managed as casual conversations (Yin, 2014). The in-depth semi-structured interview approach afforded the participants a greater degree of freedom reflecting on his lived experiences and an opportunity to provide the researcher a level of detail not available in the quantitative components of this study (Geer, 1988; Ballou, 2008). In-depth semi-structured interviews call for the development of an interview protocol. This protocol is designed to serve as a guide so to ensure that pertinent questions are asked and essential topics are discussed (Creswell, 2014). The protocol is located in Appendix C.

Twelve original questions and one question adopted from Thomas et. al. (2005) were used within the framework of the interview protocol to inquire about the nature of the subject’s transition out of sports participation and into the general labor market. Questions were designed to encourage self-reflection. The means by which data was collected in this strand proved vital in the final analysis because the information needed to be capable of being directly compared to the outcomes reported in quantitative portion of the study, to allow the researcher the means to provide a meta-analysis (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). This meta-analysis allowed for a more comprehensive depiction of the opinions of this subgroup, providing an additional resource from which to base other works on this population moving forward.
Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis

The replication approach to multiple-case study design as depicted by Yin (2014, p. 60) was expanded to meet the needs of this study and can be seen in Figure 3.2. This process was initiated when the researcher developed a theory, then identified the cases he wanted to explore, and designed an appropriate protocol for gleaning the desired information from the cases of interest. From here, the researcher began to gather the data from the individual cases and drafted a report for each individual situation. Using the MAXQDA qualitative research software, the researcher then stated why and how a given theme was observed in a particular case, as well as if the outcomes supported the theory originally proposed by the researcher. This model also allowed for changes in the expected and observed outcomes as there was an arrow in the model that refers back to the original theory outlined in the literature, which affords the researcher such autonomy if something other than what was expected is observed (Yin, 2009).

Cross-Case Analysis

Along with the thematic analysis, a cross-case analysis was also conducted across the cases. Cross-case analysis is a research method in which a researcher explores the results of multiple cases for the purpose of identifying patterns across the cases, ultimately producing a comprehensive output based on the individual answers (Yin, 2014). The assumption of using this design was there’s a chance of the accounts having commonalities but also, allowing the researcher to explore the differences amongst the cases (Yin, 2009). The goal, of using a cross-case analysis was to reproduce outcomes across the various cases being observed (Baxter & Jack, 2008). For this study the analysis used word tables. Word tables were used to display data provided by the individual cases pertaining to one or more of the identified categories (Yin, 2014). These word tables were not established prior to the study, and emerged as the data were
being examined. The researcher was able to take advantage of the benefits of using this method of analysis as, the outputs are considered stronger (Yin, 2009) and more reliable (Baxter, & Jack, 2008).
Figure 3.2. Multiple-Case Study Procedure. Note: Adapted from Yin, R. (2014). “Case Study Research: Design and Methods” (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. (p. 60)
Design Quality

The field of qualitative research is evolving, so too is the means by which data are analyzed and the manner in which its findings are rendered trustworthy. Guba and Lincoln (1982) indicate there are two primary paradigms of inquiry (rationalistic and naturalistic), where a paradigm is a process of arriving at “truth” (p. 234). Unique to the rationalistic paradigm (also known as scientific inquiry) is the assumption that every inquiry has a singular reality, which can be understood when the independent segments are manipulated. Rationalistic inquiry lends itself to be better understood through quantitative research methods. Naturalistic inquiry assumes there are numerous realities, and everything within this reality is interconnected, thus when investigating, it is necessary to consider the impact of all parts in a natural setting. Naturalistic inquiry lends itself to be better understood through qualitative processes (Guba, 1981). Both lines of inquiry seek to prove trustworthiness through paralleling measures displayed in Table 3.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Scientific Term</th>
<th>Naturalistic Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Truth Value</td>
<td>Internal Validity</td>
<td>Credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicability</td>
<td>External Validity</td>
<td>Transferability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generalizability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Dependability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutrality</td>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>Confirmability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In order to address the truth value in the study or credibility, the researcher engaged in member checking. Member checking is a process of seeking support from the participant to
provide credibility to the study. This was done by asking the participants to review the transcripts of their interviews allowing them to confirm their account of the inquiry and line of questioning (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Lincoln & Guba (1985) indicate that member checking is the most important way of establishing credibility.

The second measure of trustworthiness as identified by Guba (1981) is applicability, which in qualitative research is addressed through transferability. Transferability refers to the ability of the data to be generalizable and provide measures of validity (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). One way to assess transferability is by providing detailed documentation of every aspect of the study, which is suggested by Yin (2014, 2009). The details are explained within the steps of this study.

The third measures of trustworthiness is consistency. Consistency speaks to the necessity for the data to be stable and trackable, this is regarded as dependability in qualitative research (Guba, 1981). Dependability is assessed by accounting for changes in the conditions which comprise a given phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). One way in which qualitative data can be deemed dependable is through triangulation (Guba, 1978). Dependability was achieved by the use both quantitative and qualitative methods as proposed by Guba (1981).

Triangulation was also used to provide an account of neutrality, otherwise regarded as confirmability in qualitative research (Guba, 1981). Measures of neutrality serve to offer transparency and assist readers in following the researcher’s logical reasoning when analyzing the data (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). Triangulation for this purpose was accomplished naturally through the multiple case study design (Shenton, 2004).
Meta-Inference Stage

Creswell (2014) outlines three distinct means of converging the qualitative and quantitative aspects of a mixed-method study in order to yield a singular outcome; side-by-side comparison, data transformation, and a joint display of data. Side-by-side analysis is described as the use of one approach to confirm or disconfirm the findings of another. Data transformation describes the process of adjusting qualitative themes into quantifiable variables and then combining the two databases (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). The joint display is characterized by the use of graphs and/or tables to visually compare the outcomes, and can be done in a variety of ways as long as the data are merged into a single visual portrayal of the data (Li, Marquart, & Zercher, 2000). Each of these options provides a unique and functional outcome for practitioners. For this study, the researcher employed the side-by-side approach. The goal of the side-by-side analysis was to compare the outcomes through discussion (Creswell, 2014). To this end, this chapter served to inform, readers as to the process implemented to arrive at outcomes that are useful.

Assumptions

Assumption are the aspects of a study that are accepted as true or believable, especially as it pertains to the target population, research design, data gathering procedures, and method of analysis (Simon, 2011). Both the quantitative and qualitative data collection methods called for self-reported data, thus the researcher assumes those who participated in the survey and interview provided accurate and honest information. Because an online survey was employed to gather quantitative data, it was assumed that all individuals who participated were members of the targeted group, with qualifying questions being added to minimize exposure. It was also assumed that the researcher would have access to enough members of the targeted group to meet
the sampling requirements of multiple regression. When using case study methods to analyze data the researcher assumes that patterns and/or themes would be able to be gleaned from the individual participants as well as when commonalities are explored across cases (Yin, 2014).

**Delimitations**

Delimitations are those aspects of a study that the researcher controls, yet are used to limit the scope and outline the study’s boundaries (Simon, 2011). For the quantitative strand of this study, the researcher was only interested in African-American males, who had participated in at the Division-I basketball, FBS/D-IA football, or FCS/D-IAA football for at least one season, and no longer play at the collegiate level. For the qualitative strand, the researcher only sought individuals who were African-American males, who had participated in Division I basketball, FBS/D-IA football, or FCS/D-IAA football for at least one season, at the time of the study is not currently participating in the sport at the college level, and is subjectively successful. The use of the convergent parallel mixed-method approach was meant to offer a comprehensive outlook of the experiences former African-American male athletes as they transition from sport to work. The goal of the researcher was to gain baseline information for future studies on the experiences of African-American male collegiate athletes.

**Limitations**

Price and Murnan (2004) define a research limitation as a “systemic bias that the researcher did not or could not control and which could inappropriately affect the results” (p. 66). The researcher acknowledges that the outcomes of this study are not generalizable to other collegiate sports, participants in other levels of collegiate competition, or other populations. Especially with using the case study method, which Lunenburg and Irby (2008) state by nature cannot be generalizable.
The use of an online survey, where the participants could not be vetted also was a major limitation of this study (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). The broad geographical distribution of the targeted population, and the number of participants needed forced the researcher to employ this method, which could have impacted how a participant interpreted an item, willingness to participate, and response rate. The use of a purposeful approach to obtaining participants for the survey component of this survey was a limitation as identified by Jupp (2006). The variables identified as factors within the model also impacted the outcomes produced by this study. Using the convergent parallel mixed-method approach also introduced limitations, such as the uneven sample required for the two research strands. The variables being studied also had to be comparable or the results could have been difficult to converge (Creswell, 2014).

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed account of the methodology that was employed to collect and analyze the data for this study. Specifically, the researcher outlined the means by which: (1) participants were selected for both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this study, (2) a description of quantitative and qualitative instruments used, (3) data was collected for each strand, and (4) data was analyzed for each strand, both separately and jointly. Findings of the data are presented in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

Overview

The purpose of this study was: (1) to determine the factors that predict subjective career success for former D-I African-American male athletes who played a revenue-generating sport, and (2) to explore how former D-I African-American male athletes, who played a revenue-generating sport and have realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market. The research questions that were the foundation of this investigation are: 1.) to what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational level, and athletic identity predict subjective career success for African-American males who played FBS/D-I football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level; 2.) How did African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for a FBS/D-I football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball program and realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market?

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design characterized by the independent analysis of both a quantitative and qualitative strand of research. Chapter 4 reports the outcomes of these two analyses. The first half reports the results of the quantitative data online survey instrument, with the purpose of answering the first research question and the second half reports the results of the qualitative semi-structured interviews, with the purpose of answering research question number two. In addition to exploring what factors predict subjective success in former African-American male student-athletes, this study also served to inform individuals and systems who play key roles in the development of these young men (the student,
parent, institutional administrators, and the NCAA) what can be done to promote success beyond participation for this group.

Multiple linear regression, stepwise regression in particular, was used to analyze the survey data. Thematic and cross-case analyses were used to analyze the data collected through interviews. Descriptive statistics were also run on the data. Preliminary tests for multicollinearity and homoscedasticity were run on the data as well. Additionally, as depicted in Figure 3.8 (in chapter 3) steps were taken to provide measures of validity and reliability for the study. The details of these design quality measures will be discussed later in this chapter.

Quantitative Results

A 69-item online survey instrument was used to collect the data for this study. Snowball sampling, a variation of purposive sampling was used to distribute the survey. Sixty-two participants completed the survey and multiple linear regression was used to analyze the data.

Missing Data

Two of the 62 participants did not complete the survey in its entirety. Both of the participants completed at least 54% of the survey. The researcher included these responses, because according to Newton and Rudestam (1999) more than 85% of participants need to provide an answer for a given question to make it viable, in this study over 97% completed each item.

Descriptive Characteristics of the Sample

The survey consisted of eight items whose purpose was to obtain demographic information from the participants. The demographic questions included: (a) Sport played, (b) reason for exiting sports, (c) participant’s view of their current occupation, (d) current industry, (e) degree field of highest degree obtained, (f) highest level of education achieved (at the time of
participation), (g) current annual income range, (h) current status within their organization, and (i) classification of career progression, all of which were self-reported. Demographic characteristics are provided in Table 4.1, located in Appendix D.

In this study, 45 (73%) of the participants participated in D-I football, whereas 17 (27%) played D-I basketball. The breakdown of sport participation is displayed in Table 4.1.

Sixty percent of the participants “positively exited” sports as they exited sports due to choice and graduation, whereas the remaining 40% “negatively exited” sports as they stated that they exited sports either due to injury or deselection. This is illustrated in the Table above.

Survey participants were asked to classify their current employment as a job, career, or calling. Most participants believed they were working within a career or in their calling. Twenty-nine percent of the participants were employed in education and training, with the remaining 71% working in a variety of industries. The list of industries were obtained from the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (2015) website. Two of the industries (Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications as well as Transportation, Distribution and Logistics) were not selected by any of the individuals who participated in the survey. There were five individuals (8.1%) who did not complete this item.

Table 4.1 displays the reported field participants obtained their highest educational degree. These major clusters were adopted from American College Test (2012). These data show education is the 3rd most common degree earned, whereas business and social sciences are 1st and 2nd respectively, making up 40% of respondents. However, participants reported working predominantly in education and training (29%); a contrast to the field in which individuals received their highest degree. Eight individuals did not provide an answer for this item.
When participants were asked to identify the highest level of education completed, responses ranged from some college – with no degree (4.8%) to earning a graduate and/or professional degree (9.7%). Half of the respondents obtained a bachelor’s degree (31) and 38.7% (24) hold advanced degrees. This leaves less than 10% not completing college and only 4.8% not receiving any degree from their time in college. One individual did not answer this item.

The income range options offered in the survey were established by the National Conference of State Legislators (n.d.), and goes from below $25,000 to over $250,001. None of the participants reported to earn over $150,000 annually. It was reported that 36 (58%) reported earning $75,000 and less, and 47 (75%) earn $100,000 or less. There were two participants who did not complete this item.

The Table displays that more than 43 (69%) of the participants held the status of a professional (profession requiring a college degree/certification) or higher within their respective organization, with 17 (27%) functioning as a first level manager or higher. Only 11 (17.7%) individuals reported to operate in lower level roles (i.e. manual labor and administrative/support) within their organization. There were two individuals who did not provide an answer for this item. The categories were adopted from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (2006).

The participants were also asked to classify their career progress as either due to their work performance (contest mobility) or support from a decision maker within the organization (sponsored mobility). Table above shows that about 19% attribute their career success to sponsored mobility. The remaining 77% indicate that their career progress has been accomplished through their own productivity at work. Two individuals did not provide an answer for this item.
This study involved 62 African-American males, who formerly participated in either FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball, yet did not play sports professionally. Of the 62 participants, 89% held at least a bachelor’s degree. In this study, 53% of the subjects considered their occupation to be their calling. Twenty-nine percent of the sample worked in the education or training industry, despite a large number of the participants working in the education/training industry, 40% of the respondents obtained their highest degrees in business or social science. Income, which is typically an indicator of subjective career success, and other-referent success in particular, was reported to be less than $150,000 annually for 100% of the individuals polled; many of which (48%) stated that they have arrived at their current level of success through their own efforts, 69% of the 62 participants hold positions between professional and executive/senior level officials, or managers. When asked “how much worse or better off they would be had they not played collegiate sports,” 62% indicating that they would be at least somewhat worse off in their career, 15% stated that they would be at least somewhat better off, and the remaining 23% said they would be about the same.

**Research Question & Hypotheses**

The first research question asks, “To what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational level, and athletic identity predict subjective career success for African-American males who have played FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level?” Prior to analyzing the data, the researcher made hypotheses regarding the anticipated relationships between the predictors and the dependent variable for this study, based on the results of previously conducted studies as outlined in the literature review. These alternative hypotheses are summarized in Table 4.2 and can also be found in Appendix A.
Table 4.2. Alternative Research Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>Adaptive Capacity</td>
<td>H1</td>
<td>LEVEL of ADAPTIVE CAPACITY will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>Athletic Identity</td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>ATHLETIC IDENTITY has a significant negative relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Reason for Termination</td>
<td>H3</td>
<td>REASON for TERMINATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Number of Years Removed from Participation</td>
<td>H4</td>
<td>NUMBER of YEARS REMOVED from PARTICIPATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Parent Educational Attainment</td>
<td>H5</td>
<td>PARENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

Data were examined for univariate outliers and screened to address each of the requisite assumptions, to include univariate normality (i.e., is the data normally distributed), multicollinearity (i.e., are the independent variables highly correlated with one another), and homoscedacity (i.e., is the statistical variance consistent amongst all variables) before running the multiple regression analysis. Each of the requisite tests produces satisfactory results and no outliers were detected. These initial findings permitted the researcher to proceed with the stepwise linear regression to determine if either of the variables adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational level, and/or athletic identity were able to predict subjective career success for African-American males who have played D-I basketball, FBS/D-IA football, or FCS/D-IAA football at the college level. The variables that are measured using multiple items, comprising a subscale, are identified as full scale in the analysis because their composite measurements are what were used to produce the outputs reported in this study.

The results of the stepwise linear regression illustrate that as it pertained to the model, only adaptive capacity (full scale) had a statistically significant influence on the subjective career
success (full scale) \( (R=0.386) \) of the targeted group, \( F(1,58) = 10.150, p<0.0005, R^2 = 0.149, R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = 0.134 \). The results suggest with every unit change in the full adaptive capacity scale (all five subcomponents considered together), there is a 0.571 change in subjective career success \( (B = 0.571, \beta = 0.386, t = 3.17, CI = 0.212 \& 0.929) \). The mean and standard deviations for the variables are listed in Table 4.3.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest Level of Education by Parent/Guardian</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Identity (FS)</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Termination</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive Capacity (FS)</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>0.486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Career Success (FS)</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>0.728</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FS = Full Scale

The researcher also obtained correlation coefficients to measure the size and direction of the relationships between the predictors and the dependent variable, which was used to test the hypotheses. The results indicated there was a statistically significant correlation between adaptive capacity (full scale) and subjective career success (full scale), these two factors reported a Pearson Correlation of 0.386, which was significant even at the 0.01 level. There was also a statistically significant relationship between highest level of education achieved by a parent and subjective career success (full scale), which produced a Pearson Correlation of 0.233, an outcome significant at the 0.05 level. Other statistically significant correlations were found between some of the independent variables (see Table 4.4).
Table 4.4. Correlation Coefficients for the Stepwise Linear Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4 *</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.) Adaptive Capacity (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.097</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.279</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.386**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.) Athletic Identity (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.392*</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.) Reason for Termination</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.205</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.) Number of Years Removed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.) Parent Educational Level Attainment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.233*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.) Subjective Career Success (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).**  
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).**  
FS = Full Scale

The regression output found that there was a statistically significant relationship between number of year removed and athletic identity \( r = .392 \). Also found to be statistically significant, was the correlation between number of years removed from participation and adaptive capacity \( r = .279 \).

Based on the correlation outputs reported above, the null-hypotheses pertaining to the significance of the relationship between three of the independent variables (reason for termination, number of years removed, and athletic identity) and subjective career success were accepted. However, the null-hypotheses pertaining to the significance and direction of the relationship between adaptive capacity (full scale) and subjective career success (full scale), as well as, parent educational level and subjective career success (full scale) were rejected based on the statistically significant and positive relationship produced. These outcomes are outlined in Table 4.5.
Table 4.5. Alternative Hypotheses Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
<th>Accept/Reject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive Capacity</td>
<td>H1</td>
<td>LEVEL of ADAPTIVE CAPACITY will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Identity</td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>ATHLETIC IDENTITY has a significant negative relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Termination</td>
<td>H3</td>
<td>REASON for TERMINATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years Removed from Participation</td>
<td>H4</td>
<td>NUMBER of YEARS REMOVED from PARTICIPATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Educational Attainment</td>
<td>H5</td>
<td>PARENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher performed additional correlation coefficients to understand the relationships between the primary constructs used in this study (parent educational level, reason for termination, athletic identity) and various subcomponents of the variables adaptive capacity (aware, action-oriented, networked, purposeful, and resourceful) and subjective career success (other- and self-referent success). Each of the subcomponents are themselves measured as scales as they are made up of several items, thus the composite score is used to produce the correlations. These correlations are displayed in Table 4.6 found in Appendix E.

These correlations reported several significant relationships that were of interest to the researcher. One of the correlations worth discussing, is the statistically significant relationship between parent educational level and other-referent success (r=.263), which was statistically significant at the .05 level, yet parent educational level was not statistically significant with self-referent career success. Also of interest is that all five of the subcomponents (full scales) of adaptive capacity reported statistically significant relationships at the .01 level with one another and with the adaptive capacity full scale. Action-oriented (full scale) was the only adaptive capacity subcomponent to not have a statistically significant correlation with either subcomponent of subjective career success, nor the full scale subjective career success scale. The
only other statistically insignificant relationship between the subcomponents was that of aware and other-referent success.

The other scales reported the following correlations between the subcomponent of AR and subjective career success: full scale networked (other: $r=.346$; self: $r=.331$; subjective career success full scale: $r=.347$; all at the 0.01 level), full scale purposeful (other: $r=.337$; self: $r=.336$; subjective career success full scale: $r=.392$; other- and self referent were significant at the 0.05 level, and the subjective career success full scale was significant at the 0.01 level), and the full scale resourceful (other: $r=.242$; self: $r=.298$; subjective career success full scale: $r=.324$; all at the 0.01 level). There was also a correlation between reason for termination and the full scale of the subcomponent aware ($r=.273$), which was significant at the 0.05 level. The variable final year of competition was found to have a statistically significant relationship with the subconstructs action-oriented ($r=.382$) and resourceful ($r=.299$), both of which were at the 0.01 level.

Self-referent success and other-referent success were reported to also have a statistically significant relationship ($r=.853$), at the 0.01 level.

The mean and standard deviation outputs for the subcomponents of adaptive capacity and subjective career success are provided in Table 4.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose (FS)</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>.603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware (FS)</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>.624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action-Oriented (FS)</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resourceful (FS)</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networked (FS)</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-Referent Career Success (FS)</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Referent Career Success (FS)</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>.897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FS = Full Scale
Qualitative Results

The qualitative data for this study were obtained through the use of a 13-question semi-structured interview protocol, which can be viewed in Appendix C. Purposeful sampling was employed in the selection of participants, with the purpose of obtaining a maximum variation in the occupational choice of the participants.

The interviews were conducted with seven African-American males, who had played FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball, had not played sports professionally, and additionally self-identified as successful in their career. Maximum variation was obtained by including individuals who represented a range of occupations. Maximum variation in occupation was used to try to offset some of the other-referent biases and assumptions related subjective success that are associated with one’s level of prestige in their organization and income. Six of the interviews were conducted over the phone and were recorded to a device; these interviews were stored on flashdrive for security purposes. One interview was conducted face-to-face; his interview was also recorded and saved to the same storage device as the others. The recorded interviews were shared with a transcriber, who was required to sign a letter of non-disclosure for her participation and was compensated for her efforts. A copy of the confidentiality agreement form is available in Appendix J.

The interviews ranged in total time from 27 minutes to 101 minutes in length. One of the interviews took two sessions due to the participant’s time restriction. All of the participants except one completed the survey, their demographic information is provided in Table 4.8. Each of the subjects were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity, these alphabetically ordered names were assigned based on the chronological order of their initial interview.
### Table 4.8. Participant Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alias</th>
<th>Current Occupation</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Reason for Exit</th>
<th>Last Year</th>
<th>Highest Degree in</th>
<th>Highest Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>VP, Public University</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>D-I</td>
<td>Choice</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Bobby</td>
<td>Lawyer/ Sports Agent</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>D-I</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>High School Dean</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>D-I</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dillon</td>
<td>Judge</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>D-I</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td>Safety Management/ Real Estate Agent/ Entrepreneur</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>D-I</td>
<td>Injury</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred</td>
<td>Executive Chef</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>D-I</td>
<td>Choice</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>Bachelors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George</td>
<td>HS Teacher/ Coach/ Entrepreneur</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>D-IAA</td>
<td>Injury</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Science and Math</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>State Police Officer</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>D-IAA</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>Bachelors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Participant Profiles

**Aaron**

The first participant to be interviewed was Aaron. Aaron played football at a FBS/D-IA institution located in the western region of the United States. He grew up in a state located in the midwest, during the Civil Rights era, at a time when racial tension was high in the 1960’s. Aaron experienced race based altercations and riots during this period of his life. He grew up in a household with both his mother and father, with his mother having graduated from community college. He expressed little interest in education during his time in high school, mainly due to a lack of motivation, a feeling of displeasure with the educational system, and not being challenged in the classroom. Upon graduating high school, Aaron enrolled in a junior college to play football, partly because he could not gain admission into a 4-year university, due to his low
grade point average. Aaron participated in a federally funded program, which was geared toward assisting low-income and first generation minorities gain entry into college. This program was directed by a gentleman that he considered a mentor. With a new sense of urgency related to education, Aaron, with the assistance of his mentor was able to gain admission into a 4-year university. There he was able to continue his collegiate football career on the D-IA level. Although he was offered a full athletic scholarship, Aaron refused and instead accepted an academic scholarship, and participated in football as a “preferred walk-on.” Almost immediately, Aaron became very active on campus, with some of his most meaningful experiences coming as a member of the university’s Black Student Union.

Participation in the black student union did not sit well with the coaches according to Aaron. He recalls the head coach approaching him about his involvement, especially his role as the president of the organization at the time when racial relations on campus were not ideal. Ultimately, Aaron was given an ultimatum by the coach to either be a member of the Black Student Union or play football. Aaron chose his role with the Black Student Union and walked away from football in 1971.

Upon exiting football, Aaron remained enrolled at the university and focused solely on his education. He was able to earn his bachelor’s degree in physical education and was prompted by a friend to pursue his doctorate degree in curriculum and instruction. He was able to earn his Ph.D despite several setbacks including but not limited to disagreements with university faculty and staff, the departure of key personnel directly involved in his studies, race infused experiences, and limited knowledge about navigating the college experience, among other things. Another major factor in his development was his continuous employment.
Aaron has maintained a job since the age of eleven. Early in his life he worked in several different industries including retail and manufacturing. He credits his lack of desire to continue in manufacturing as a reason he finished college. Later in life, he held jobs teaching, serving as a school principal, and even recruiting African-American students for the university. He was eventually promoted to director at a western university, later obtaining similar positions at several colleges. Ultimately he earned the role of vice-president at another public university on the west coast, maintaining his post for over 37 years. When asked if he felt as though he was successful, he responded “Extremely… Extremely, successful. Cuz, not only did I meet all of my goals and objectives, I have far exceeded them.” Aaron states that playing collegiate sports, “played the only role in my development. Cuz I didn’t care about nothing else, except playing ball.” and also expressed that he would be much worse off had he not played and said that his college experience did not prepare him for the labor market.

Charlie

The third interview was conducted with Charlie. Charlie played basketball for a D-I basketball program located in the midwest. Charlie is bi-racial (African-American and Caucasian) and grew up in a single parent home in a midwestern state, with a mother who had obtained her master’s degree. Charlie expressed that some of the barriers he experienced to being educated in high school were due to tiredness from being bussed to a different school district and not having parental oversight in middle and high school. He also did not feel challenged in high school because of the requirements to stay eligible to participate in sports were low. Upon being admitted to college he had to make significant adjustments, primarily to studying and being serious about succeeding in college because he knew he wanted to graduate from college. When asked why he chose to major in English, he replied “I had a wonderful high school English
teacher. I knew I wanted to be a teacher as far back as I can ever remember. I never really knew why, but English is something that made sense to me.” Charlie continued his participation in collegiate sports until he graduated with his bachelor’s degree in 1995. Charlie strongly feels as though participating in collegiate sports helped him learn the importance of hard work, how to manage pressure packed situations, and being a public figure, though he indicates that he does not think the work done during his undergraduate years prepared him for the labor market.

Upon graduating, Charlie was presented with an opportunity to play professional basketball abroad, however prior to the start of his professional basketball career abroad, he was informed by his girlfriend they were going to have a baby. This news prompted him to forgo his professional pursuits to secure viable employment in the states. Charlie had stints with several midwestern school districts upon graduating from college, where he worked in several capacities including coaching baseball, basketball, as well as football. All of his jobs post graduation were related to teaching and/or coaching sports at the high school level. He obtained his masters degree in education in 2005. Charlie retired from coaching to become a dean of students in a midwestern high school, a position he has earned in the past three years. Charlie feels that his current occupation is his calling, and when asked if he thought he was successful, he answered, “I absolutely do… I’m happy with what I do and I make good money with what I do and it allows me to do something that I want to do and that’s my definition of success.”

Dillon

Dillon was the fourth subject to be interviewed for this study. Dillon played basketball at for a D-I basketball program in the midwestern region of the United States. Dillon grew up in a midwest state, as a member of a household with both parents present, one of which obtained their bachelor’s degree. He went on to graduate from the school he played basketball for in 1969, with
a bachelor’s degree in business administration. He chose this major based on his own research and some advice from family members. He explains his biggest issue was time management, due to the demands of being a collegiate athlete. He stated, “while I was practicing or going to games other people could be in the library you know, going over their notes, all those kinds of things.” Dillon’s father was not high on sports and informed his son to use the opportunity to get a free education as a “means to an end,” thus Dillon expressed that he did not particularly have dreams of playing professional sports. Dillon also joined and was active in a fraternity during his undergraduate years.

Dillon feels as though the transition to the labor market was rather easy because he remained in the city where he played college ball. He explains, “a lot of people knew about me before I even thought about having a career so as most people know, you know, the jobs that you get are about connections, not about answering a want ad.” When asked about barriers to transitioning, he acknowledged the presence of racism, but being a new father he knew he had to overcome whatever barriers he was presented with in order to provide for his family. Dillon felt the riots in 1968 assisted him with opportunities that may not have been available prior to them. He went on to hold positions in marketing, sales, economic development, government work, and even started a business. While working, he attended law school in the evenings. Upon graduating in 1985, from law school, he began his career as a lawyer, transitioned to being a court commissioner. In 1999, Dillon began a 15-year career as a judge, which he felt was his calling, before retiring in 2014. Dillon feels as though his undergraduate experience did prepare him for the labor market, and his participation in collegiate sports also helped his ability to realize success. Dillon acknowledges mentors who helped in his development, especially in the legal and political arenas.
Eric

The fifth interviewee was Eric, an individual who played football for a FBS/D-IA program in the midwest. He grew up in a midwestern state. When Eric was in elementary and middle school he says that he had behavioral problems, until he began to play sports. He became more serious about sports when he entered high school where he continued to do well in the classroom, despite being bored and feeling unliked by his teachers for his antics. At this time, he was not aware of what he wanted to do professionally, he did know he wanted play football and run track. He went on to enroll in college, where he played football. He walked away from sports due in part to injury and a loss of “love for the game.” He expressed that while a student athlete he was not able to get the full college experience because of the time demands of collegiate sports. He equated being a student-athlete to having two jobs. While in undergrad he majored in both history and business based on his own personal research and interests and graduated in 2006. He immediately enrolled into graduate school, earning his masters in safety management in 2008.

Upon graduating with his master’s degree, Eric was hired by a east coast construction company before being laid off due to the recession. He ventured into program management before making his way back into safety management. He eventually moved back to the midwest to continue his career in safety. He explained that being “different” in his industry has been a major barrier for him in the labor market. He states, “you have a young, um, a young African male with locks and then you have like an old industry that’s just been around forever and so it’s still a challenge.” When asked if playing collegiate sports helped him, he says that it did, because people enjoy college sports and love talking about them, and people like knowing people who played. He refers to it as a conversation piece. However, he indicated that he feels would have
experienced about the same level of success in his career if he had never played collegiate sports. Eric doesn’t feel his educational experience during his undergraduate program prepared him for the labor market. He did mention the presence of several mentors who helped him manage the rough terrain in the corporate environment.

**Fred**

Fred is an executive chef, who played FBS/D-IA football at a large public institution in the southwest region of the United States. He was born and raised in a western state. He explains that he had a “wonderful” experience in high school as well as college. Fred experienced teachers that had a profound impact on his life. He attended two high schools, one of which was private and the other a public school. He felt that the private school emphasized education to a greater degree than the public school. He indicated that academically, the transition to college wasn’t hard, however it took an adjustment (to understand the perceptions of student athletes by) the professors and coaches. He tells of some professors having “athlete friendly” courses and others taking a strong stance on student’s attendance. He said that coaches treated education differently based on the student’s approach to school. Coaches were more considerate of class schedules for players who were intent on succeeding in the classroom, and not as understanding if they thought you were a “run of the mill” player. Fred majored in criminal justice, which he chose as his area of interest after taking a course with a teacher whom he had admired. Time was the biggest hurdle for Fred to overcome as a student-athlete, especially during the season. He completed his eligibility to play sports collegiately in 1997 and graduated in 1998.

Upon graduating, he expressed that the transition was a difficult one, because he didn’t know what he wanted to do and did not feel prepared by his college experience to succeed in the labor market. A friend of a relative helped him obtain his first working experience at a temporary
agency, because he could not secure employment related to criminal justice. He was able to obtain a job as a shipping and receiving clerk, before informing his family of his desired career change in 1999. His family supported this career shift by gifting him cutlery and other items to assist in his development as a chef. He became employed by an ethnic catering company, with the owner insisting if he wanted to be a chef, he needed to go to school and offering Fred all the hours he needed to finance this endeavor. He completed a degree at a culinary program. Fred then began working at several catering companies in a major metropolitan area on the west coast. He and his girlfriend moved to another west coast city known for its highly rated restaurants, where he began a job as a sous chef in 2004. He took some time off for the birth of his first child. Returning to the labor market, he landed jobs in bars and one fine dining restaurant, before arriving at a culinary training institute, where he met one of his mentors. He left his post at the culinary training institution to go back into fine dining for some time. Fred began a rotation at some eating establishments in the city, before returning to the culinary training institution. He was let go due to budgetary issues, which led him to work in several restaurants around the city, before settling into a position as an executive chef for a catering company.

Fred stated that his skin color and size made him intimidating in the kitchen especially early in his career, which limited his development. He began to wear eyeglasses to try and offset his appearance and felt that it helped immensely. When asked if he felt successful he responded, “definitely, hard work. Because of a uh, I have a uh, kind of a passion for what I do. I think that anything for in life you have to have passion for it.” He feels that participating in collegiate sports really helped him in his transition to the labor market because of the connections it gave him, which led to several employment opportunities.
George

George is a high school teacher, football coach, and entrepreneur, who played football at the FCS/D-IAA level at a mid-size institution in the Midwest. George is bi-racial (African-American and Caucasian) and grew up in a town where he was the only minority in his small high school. George expressed that being the sole minority caused him to get into many verbal and physical altercations, so much so, he felt ashamed of being Black at times. He stated that he had trouble with relationships high school, but his success on the field led to acceptance by his peers, an enhanced identity, provided direction for his life, and the pursuit of self-established goals. George felt as though he was well prepared for college. While in college George majored in sport management because of the influence of teammates and because he said it “sounded easy.” As a student-athlete, George sustained several major injuries, which impacted his performance on the field. When asked about the barriers he faced as an athlete, he indicated that having limited options as far as majors and on his social life because of the time commitment that sports demands. George felt that his educational experience helped him transition well into the labor market. George also joined a fraternity while in college, which he says had a big impact on his college experience.

Upon graduating in 2003, George found the transition to the labor market to be rather easy, as he was used to being on a schedule, working hard, and being task-oriented. George speaks of a relationship with academic advisors who mentored him and provided him a job, which aided in his transition to the labor market. His first job was as a coach at a Midwest college, which he chose to leave due to the birth of his daughter. He relocated to the south where he started his career as an unpaid intern, which transitioned into a full-time physical education teacher and coach of multiple sports. In 2006, he established a business where he trained high
school, college, and pro-athletes, which is his passion. After not being satisfied in his role as a teacher after a number of years, George went to graduate school and obtained his master’s degree. Upon graduating with his master’s degree, George was offered an opportunity to be a head coach at the high school level, while continuing he career as a teacher. During the off-season, he continues to train athletes as part of his own business. When asked if he felt successful, he said “yes, I set personal goals and achieve them,” and he feels that sports helped in his transition to the labor market.

**Harry**

Harry is a former FCS/D-IAA football player, who is currently employed as a state police officer in a Midwest state. He grew up in the south. In high school, Harry admits that he did not realize the importance of education because he was “the guy,” and regarded as the best at his position in the state. He explained that he didn’t think school was important because most of the people he grew up with, who were good players, were not educated, which showed that all he had to do was be good at sports to get by. Harry graduated from high school and enrolled in a junior college in the Midwest. At the junior college he continued not to take school serious. While at junior college he tore all of the ligaments in his knee, so severe was his injury that doctors told him he would never play football again.

He was able to recover from his injury and enrolled in a 4-year university in the Midwest. Harry feels like the only barrier he encountered in his pursuit of an education, was his lack of motivation. While at the 4-year institution, Harry encountered two events that changed his idea of education, one of which was a broken clavicle, which led to team doctors telling him that he would never be able to play at the level that he did previously. The other instance he recalls, was in a meeting when the coach asked all of the individuals to stand when his name was called.
Harry was one of them. Once standing, the team was told to give the members standing a round of applause, because none of them were able to maintain over a 2.0 grade point average, an instance that embarrassed Harry. He stated from that day forward, he was committed to doing well in the classroom and his grades began to reflect this change in attitude. While at the 4-year university, Harry majored in criminology because he thought it was easy and it would allow him to concentrate on football. It was also something he thought he might like to do if football didn’t work out. Harry didn’t feel like his undergraduate program prepared him for the workforce. He does however believe that collegiate sports significantly, positively impacted his transition the labor market, and that he would have been much worse off had he not played collegiate sports. Harry graduated in 2003 with a bachelor’s degree.

Transitioning out of sports was very difficult for Harry, however with the help of his girlfriend at the time (now wife), as well as his parents, including his father, with whom he had recently reconciled, he was able to manage this transition. Harry feels his career as a police officer is directly correlated with being a student-athlete, because it is a high adrenaline occupation, competitive, and has physical aspects similar to sports. Harry’s work background consists of time spent at several juvenile detention facilities, working in manufacturing, and in a restaurant prior to becoming a police officer in 2007. Harry informed the researcher that one of the biggest barriers to entering his field is the lack of opportunities for minorities, due to the measures used to select viable candidates. This includes a criminal background, credit, family history, and the system being a “good ole boy network,” thus not as welcoming to African-Americans. Harry feels as though he is successful and when asked why he responded, that he has been able to provide for his family and live a life that is comfortable.
Qualitative Research Question

The second research question for this study is, “How did African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for a FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball program and realized subjective career success, managed the transition from sport to the general labor market?” To answer this question, the researcher used the qualitative data analysis software MAXQDA. The software assisted the researcher in recognizing the key themes in each interview and tracking similarities between multiple cases. Documentation of the themes were recorded on a storage device. The identified themes are detailed below.

Thematic Analysis

The themes derived from the interviews pertaining to the second research question paralleled the subcomponents of the variable adaptive capacity. These themes were not identified prior to the study, yet the responses provided by the subjects are consistent with the explanation of the individual manifestations of the subconstructs as provided by McCann and Selsky (2012): aware, action-oriented, resourceful, networked, and purposeful. These themes as well as their associated definitions are outlined in below in the order in which they were prevalent in the interview commentary.

Theme 1 – Aware

The theme that appeared most often in the interviews was the idea of being aware. As it pertains to the individual application, aware is explained in the literature as, “Active learners with curiosity about the larger world, open to change and able to make sense and act in ambiguous environments” (McCann & Selsky, 2012, p. 44). Some of the ways in which being Aware can manifest in a response include statements regarding: reading and acquiring new information, converting it into actionable knowledge no matter what stage in life or career you
are in; corresponding with diverse groups in order to form an informed opinion; and even using your personal goals as a basis for evaluating and assessing what you perceive and what it may mean to you (McCann & Selsky, 2012). In the seven interviews where the subjects felt subjectively successful, the skills, tools, and practices associated with this idea were alluded to 92 times, with each of the seven referencing their ability to be aware at least 5 times. Of the seven individuals who participated in the interviews and self-identified as successful, in their career, six have multiple degrees, five of which have a master’s degree or higher. When asked what he felt was the most important thing he learned in his transition from being a student-athlete to being in the labor market full-time George stated:

Man, the world is a very difficult place. It’s not fair. Um, but you really can do whatever you set your mind to. Like you really can do it. I mean there are areas of weakness for me that no matter what, if I stay the course then I’m going to achieve it. Um, you know over time it’s been more and more reinforced in my life. You know it’s definitely something you take right out of sports and see how it grows in manhood. I mean I guess you could find it in any arena. Not necessarily just sports but that’s what I’ve learned. You’re a living example yourself (referencing the researcher).

When reflecting on his educational journey, Aaron speaks of an encounter with the head coach pertaining to his involvement in a student organization, which led to him quitting the team, he explained:

At the beginning of the season the ba… the football coach told me you got to choose between the black student union and playing football… I’m not gonna have nobody… especially the president of the black student union on my team…
So I… You know… So weeks went by… Uh… first two games… um… and half way through the season he came back at me again… And he was insistent this time, you need to quit that… that black stuff… or that negro stuff as he called it back in them days… I said nope… Well… You got… you got until next week to make a choice… So I made my choice… I said I’m not gonna go pro, I said these cats are crazy here… And I saw some of the former players who did go pro who was on steroids and half nuts already- that wasn’t for me. And then I did a little research on pro athletes 10 years, 20 years later… half of them dead, half of them nuts… I said nuhun… That’s not the future for me… um… So… be… between that, the coach telling me I got to make a choice, I chose the black student union… I said see you… He said… You actually gonna quit? I said, yep… Unless you gonna let me play being president of black student union and then um… My grades were outstanding… I made the Dean’s List.

Fred, when elaborating on why he feels like he is successful iterated:

You know, I have a far greater passion for cooking than I ever did for playing ball and I have a lot of friends that are asking me now, uh, man we thought we were gonna see you in the NFL and you know one thing I always tell them is that you know, I love cooking way more than I ever did playing ball you know, and life is a long journey you know? You can only play sports for so long and I have a far greater passion for food and that whole, the hospitality industry than I ever did playing or working out or any of that kind of stuff so…
Theme 2 – Networked

The theme that appeared the second most frequently in the interviews was the idea of being networked. As it pertains to the individual application, networked is explained in the literature as, “Positive, active relationships maintained within the immediate family, work group, and community to sustain a sense of connectedness and meaning” (McCann & Selsky, 2012, p. 45). Some of the ways in which being purposeful manifested in a response include statements regarding: valuing personal associations inside and outside the work environment; acknowledging how their relationships provided a sense of meaning to your life at work and beyond and consciously working to nurture them; understanding when a relationship is not beneficial to the subject’s development and being able to manage or dissolve these associations as necessary (McCann & Selsky, 2012). In the seven interviews where the subjects felt subjectively successful, the skills, tools, and practices associated with this idea were alluded to 76 times, with each of the seven referencing their ability to be networked at least 4 times. Under networking, there were two subthemes that were identified, the influence of mentors and the influence of family. As it pertains the role of the family, Harry describes the negative impact that family expectations had on his transition:

I think what, what became my biggest hurdle to get over with was my family’s expectation. So it wasn’t necessarily a specific person but my family as a whole, their expectations of me to make it was so, at the time, seemed insurmountable because everything was riding on my back being that if I made it, they made it, and if they made it then that means that they were gonna stop working and you know ride my coattail and whatever the case may be. When I learned that football wasn’t going to be that meal ticket, not only for me but for them, I thought I let
them down and it was, it was man…that’s what gave me that complex of man, life is over. What am I going to do? There’s no need to live now that there is no more football. So, it wasn’t any specific person. It was just a collection of people.

Harry goes on to express how members of his family also were beneficial to him being able to positively transition into the labor market:

My father was very inspirational. My mother, my father kept giving me words of advice like son, hell football is just a game. It taught you everything it could. It got you educated for free. Uh, you’re going to be alright. You know you’ve learned things throughout life and throughout the game that’s taught you how to succeed in life and those conversations were priceless and to have the support of my mother. A mother’s love is always going to be phenomenal. You can’t go against a mothers love. Those three people man were very instrumental in letting me know that there is life after football.

When asked which relationships helped him in his transition to the labor market, Eric stated:

I think I had some pretty good mentors that were already in the industry and kind of doing their thing so staying in touch with them and picking their brains and bouncing ideas off of them kind of helped me you know, manage the corporate America side.

In detailing what outside events had a positive impact on his transition to the labor market, Fred mentions the role that his mentors played in his success:

My mentors and it’s been three black chefs and they definitely pulled me aside and tried to teach me the ways to uh, not necessarily assimilate but get by and advance yourself without being um, seen as intimidating because there are very,
very, very few black executive chefs in this city and in the country, let alone this
city and to get to that level of success it’s hard and I’m proud to say that I have.

Dillon expressed during his interview that he had several individuals help him along the way:

Along the way there are people that you can look at that helped you figure out one
thing or another. I remember when I was in college there was a lawyer who was
like a mentor to me and I thank him for having pushed me kind of in the direction
of the law and then to as politically, [local political figure] was a big help to me. I
mean she was a mentor as well and opened some doors for me because she was
well known and I talked to her and we were able to get along and she helped me
in a lot of ways, get elected and then to navigate the waters of politics because I
was never really a good politician but she was.

Theme 3 – Action-Oriented

The theme that appeared the third most often in the interviews was the idea of being
action-oriented. As it pertains to the individual application, action-oriented is explained in the
literature as, “Confident and competent in taking initiative, acting or reacting as necessary to
gain advantage, avoid collisions, or minimize setbacks” (McCann & Selsky, 2012, p. 45). Some
of the ways in which being action-oriented can manifest in a response include statements
regarding: being pro-active in recognizing knowledge as well as skills gaps and creating learning
goals directed at acquiring the competencies needed to effectively manage the unknown, which
can take the form of formal and/or informal education (McCann & Selsky, 2012). In the seven
interviews where the subjects felt subjectively successful, the skills, tools, and practices
associated with this idea were alluded to 75 times, with each of the seven referencing their ability
to be aware at least 5 times. When telling about how he became more intentional with his
educational pursuits, which spoke to his capacity to be action-oriented, Harry communicated the following:

So I got to [4-year institution] man and it was like a lightbulb came on. My athletic prowess is not going to last forever. You got to get educated and that’s when I decided to take education a little more seriously and not just educating myself on you know what society thought was important but things that was… I needed to sustain these opportunities and educated myself on how to become a man. Educated myself on how to get closer to God, educated myself on things that were important to sustain and to continue my legacy as far as you know if I have kids or whatever the case may be. So that’s when education really to me became important.

One example of how Charlie demonstrated his tendency to be action-oriented is in learning how to study, a skill that he had not mastered prior to enrolling in college, he recollects:

I just kind of breezed through high school. When I got to college, I knew I wanted to graduate from college, so it took some major adjustment. I had no study skills coming out of high school. So, I just got together with a group of friends who were successful in college and they kind of…I don’t want to say taught me but I just learned from them. I used to go to the library two hours a day whether I had homework or not because they did that. So just some things like that helped me adjust to college life because you know it’s kind of sink or swim when you get to college and I don’t want to say I was sinking but my head was slowly bobbing in and out of the water. After I figured out the study habits and study skills, meeting with professor, doing those things, college became easy. You know once you
figure out how to navigate college and what you’re supposed to do then, like I said, my academic performance vastly improved. So the academic piece started off rocky and once I got the study habits and the study skills and the know-how it was really much easier down the stretch.

As Aaron is discussing some of the challenges he faced on his road to realizing his current level of success, he speaks to his ability to act and react to minimize collisions, saying:

I blocked myself, I did some things myself, now that I’m older I can see I should not have done, but that’s how you learn, by making mistakes. That’s how you learn, by making…I made a few mistakes. See, I wasn’t perfect…But I learned from each mistake, the mistakes I made in [state], I didn’t make in [state], when I went to the University of. The mistakes I made in [state], I definitely didn’t make them in [city]. And the mistakes I made early in [city], Ha… I think I.. I quit… I quit being a Black racist once I got to [city].

Another instance where Aaron provided context for his capacity to be action-oriented was as he was explaining the most important things he learned transitioning from playing collegiate athletics to the general labor market:

Number one, surround yourself with good people, number two have some strong mentors and advisors, and number three and probably the most important one, yourself… inside yourself you’ve got to want to do good because it’s easy to do bad. Most things that are wrong are easy, most things that are good are hard. Once I mastered those concepts… Cuz I was so tired of working hard, so tired of everything being hard… Well, that’s where the good stuff is… You got to realize
the difference between easy and hard, what you can do, what you can’t do, the right way, the wrong way…

The one example of Dillon’s capacity to be action-oriented is evident in his answer to the question, “What traits, characteristics, attitudes or behaviors did you have to get rid of in order to realize your current success or your career success”:

I just tried to learn from every situation so I can continue to advance but I don’t think I really gave up anything. I think if anything I gave up immaturity. That you’re not going to get what you want without working for it. So that was probably something that I gave up. Immaturity.

Theme 4 – Purposeful

The theme that appeared the next most frequent in the interviews was the idea of being purposeful. As it pertains to the individual application, purposeful is explained in the literature as, “Positive self-concept with a physically and psychologically healthy presence capable of sustaining them in highly ambiguous, stressful work situations.” (McCann & Selsky, 2012, p. 44). Some of the ways in which being purposeful can manifest in a response include statements regarding: positive views about who they are currently and who they will be in the future; the pursuit of health in the form of physical, psychological and social wellbeing (McCann & Selsky, 2012). In the seven interviews where the subjects felt subjectively successful, the skills, tools, and practices associated with this idea were alluded to 70 times, with each of the seven referencing their ability to be aware at least 3 times. In telling of the most important lesson he learned transitioning from college athletics to being in the labor market full-time, Charlie demonstrates his propensity to purposeful:
Never lose sight of your goals. You know if playing professional basketball was my only goal in life, then I probably would have been disappointed. I probably would have been…I probably wouldn’t have saw myself being successful but that was never my lifetime goal was to be a pro basketball player or be a pro athlete. So I guess it’s just how you view what you want to do in life and so because playing pro basketball was not my end all be all, giving up that was not something that just crushed me or that I cried about or I really never even…once I made the decision I never looked back. I never said, Okay. My daughter is born. Let me try to get back into this. It’s not something I ever tried to go back to. So I just moved on and I transitioned and I’m still around the game. So that was plenty for me.

The ability to be purposeful in his efforts to manage corporate America has been vital to the Eric’s success, who feels he has yet to master what he calls an “old industry.” He hints at racism and a general lack of acceptance in a caucasian male dominated field, as he speaks to the barriers he has had to overcome in order to realize success:

Man, still like…still battling with that. Mostly it’s just, you know, um, just being different from like the normal like, you know, average Joe that’s in the industry. You know what I mean? I mean I look…its just different. You know what I mean? I mean you have a young, um, a young African male with locks and then you have like an old industry that’s just been around forever and so it’s still a challenge, you know, for me to you know I guess stay true to who I am and what I believe and also you know, try and navigate through the corporate bs.
Understanding the political and social climate of the times as he was transitioning out of college and even today, Dillon expounds on his challenges with racism despite needing to provide for his new child and family:

I think racism is always an issue. I mean it still is an issue. It wasn’t a major issue for me because you know, in particular when I became a parent and a father I understood that if I was going to take care of my family, I’d have to move beyond those difficulties and barriers, you know obstacles, to do what I needed to do as a father and a parent. So, you know the same ideas, it’s the same concepts that are associated with winning a game and being successful as an athlete that kind of translates into the real world.

When asked about what he had to overcome in order to realize success, George acknowledged his “self-created social barriers.” George, along with Harry also spoke to their injuries as having an impact on their outlook on life, school, and work. Harry also spoke of his lost sense of purpose for a short time after his participation ended:

My relationship with my wife helped me transition, uh, obviously I did have a desire to play football. I had a chance to go out to Minnesota [NFL team], it didn’t work. I was kind of crushed but in the same token having a good support system, such as the young lady at the time… my girlfriend at the time, my wife now, um let me know that despite, or no matter what you do I’m still going to be here for you. If you made it I’ll be here for you. If you don’t make it I’ll still be here for you and uh, there was a time man that I actually felt suicidal. Like I, it’s kind of crazy to think that I would have even thought that back then but when football didn’t work man and all you’ve known from your early existence is to play
football, peewee all the way up to the collegiate level and then have somebody
tell you it’s done. There is no more football. There is no more crowds cheering.
There is no more scoreboard lighting up. Um, and then my wife just told me
actually, there is a scoreboard still lighting up, so now instead of playing against
your opponent you’re playing life. As you continue to win at life and you
continue to score in life and the scoreboard will always continue to light up
because you will see, as your family grows, as you grow the additions will
become touchdowns now so as you learn, and continue to learn, you can teach
others about that transition and you win at life and that was like man, that was like
the biggest analogy/metaphor type thing that you can…it was like okay, I can still
win at life.

Theme 5 – Resourceful

The last theme that appeared in the interviews was resourceful. As it pertains to the
individual’s usefulness, resourceful is explained in the literature as, “Entrepreneurial in securing
resources, talent, and support required to meet a goal, despite setbacks.” (McCann & Selsky,
2012, p. 45). Some of the ways in which being resourceful was manifested in a response include
statements regarding: quickly yet thoughtfully taking advantage of opportunities and moving
quickly to avoid collisions with events that may have negative consequences (McCann & Selsky,
2012). In the seven interviews where the subjects felt subjectively successful, the skills, tools,
and practices associated with this idea were alluded to 22 times, with each of the seven
referencing their ability to be aware at least 3 times. In telling of the most important lesson he
learned transitioning from college athletics to being in the labor market full-time, George
demonstrates his tendency to be resourceful, as defined by McCann and Selsky (2009), when talking about his career path:

I incorporated [business] where I’ve trained multiple, you know professional athletes, collegiate athletes, the high school athlete as well as personal training at times. Um, it’s kind of a passion and an opportunity to be an entrepreneur along the side. Outside of working in the education system, but then became disgruntled in my role at [high school] and furthered my education. An opportunity arose to become a head football coach in a low socioeconomic status um, area of [city]. Um, and that’s where I am today. Now my business is more refined. I pretty much only work with professional athletes or collegiate athletes. I narrowed the scope of my business and that’s an off season to my season and um, football and train athletes.

Aaron’s explanation of how his undergraduate experience was not able to adequately prepare him for the labor market, allowed him to illustrate his capacity to be resourceful:

My educational experience, gave me the tools that I needed, when I got out in the real world. My educational experience didn’t really prepare me for it… Um… My circumstances starting with the [university he attended], letting me recruit, letting me start the minority center, letting me be the first director, I started out as a director. Well, that directorship lead to other directorships. Uh… It’s because I had jobs as a leader, jobs as a director… I never had to really work my way up from the bottom. A few times I did, but most of the time I was always in leadership roles. So, that’s why I lead that giant center. Uh… we work with over two… um… 25,000 students Umhm… at… at the [place of business]… at [place
of business]. And we… that’s big as some small colleges. We have over… we write over a hundred million dollars worth of grants, theres nothing that can prepare you for that… You got to either uh… there’s no one class you can take…There’s no one anything, you either have to work your way from the bottom, or gradually work your way into it. When I first came to the university, I mean [current institution], I was hired under one grant. Well… I saw that wasn’t getting anywhere, So I wrote… uh… two years later, I wrote and successfully got funded three grants. I tripled the size of my workplace environment and offices in two years.

Both Dillon and Eric also started their own businesses, which speaks to their entrepreneurial mindsets and in turn resourceful nature. Though Fred did not indicate that he had established a entrepreneurial venture he did provide context as to how he is entrepreneurial in his thinking and approach to work:

You have to be a teacher to be able to show cooks how to do things. Um, you have to be a problem solver. Especially in catering, which I’m doing now. That goes into a uh, a very um, some nights you’ll be working at a five star resort. The next night you’ll be working in someone’s house. So you have to be able to adapt. The ability to adapt to different situations which is a direct correlation to college athletics you know? Um, that’s one of the reasons why I think I’m a successful chef. Because of that ability. You know? Ability to adapt to an adverse situation, whether it be a difficult client or uh, a cook that’s burned the last of your filet mignon and you got to somehow serve fifty guests right now but you can make it
happen. So I think those are the abilities and the qualities that I’ve learned and have made me successful in what I’m doing now.

Additional Themes of Interest

There were some additional themes that emerged from these interviews that deserved to be mentioned, one of which was the role that sports played in the lives of several of the participants. Five of the participants indicated to some degree that sports was the only thing that they cared about at some point on their lives, and the only reason they even went to college. Aaron spoke about his love for the game:

When I was playing ball in high school, and… We won championships three out of my four years Uh… And I thought we were going to go uh… Thought I was going to go to college somewhere… And I couldn’t get admitted to any college, so I ended up going to junior college because all I ever cared about was playing football, playing football… sleeping with my football, walking with my football, I didn’t care about school that much, I just thought I could play ball.

Sports also proved vital to the growth of Eric, as he reflects on his educational experience:

I guess earlier on in school, maybe elementary and middle school, teachers probably would have said I had a behavioral problem or issues or whatever but I think it wasn’t until middle school when I actually started playing sports that I kind of turned it around and I kind of turned it around just to play sports. You know what I mean. Moving onto high school and got a little more serious. I always had really good grades but for the most part you know teachers didn’t look like me and I was bored in a class so I may or may not have cut up in class based off that. Moving onto also high school. I think I didn’t really know what I wanted
to go to school for. I just knew I wanted to play football or run track or something up until I graduated high school.

Another theme that emerged from the interview were instances in their lives that propelled the subject to change his perspective on education and/or life that resulted in them realizing subjective success. Harry experienced such events three times as a student athlete:

Yeah, particularly when I got to [4-year institution] I broke my shoulder and playing quarterback you know, the doctors said… So I had two experiences that the doctor told me I would never play football again. When I was in junior college, in [state] I tore all the ligaments in my knee so severely that they said you’re never going to play football again and I was like naw, naw, I’m gonna play. I didn’t come all the way out to Iowa to get hurt and never play football again. When I got to [4-year institution] I broke my clavicle and the doctor said there’s no way you can play quarterback ever again or throw the football the way you used to throw the football. I’m like, hmmm, and then I started to entertain that, like... What, what, what would I do if I can’t play football no more? And I’m like man, I don’t know how to do nothing else but play football. I’ve played football since I was nine, ten years old. I began to look at education a little bit more in depth and more serious and then my other experience prior to me breaking my shoulder was uh, coach called a couple names. He said when I call your name stand up and he called myself and maybe about 12 other football players. Everybody give them a round of applause. So I’m like man, what’s going on? He said these are our student athletes who cannot maintain a 2.0 GPA and that was one of the most embarrassing moments of my life man because I had like
a 1.89 GPA my first year at [4-year institution] or after my first semester and from that point forward I told myself this would never, ever happen again. I will never ever be below a 2.7, 2.8 and after that brother it was you know…I was due smooth sailing after that. I got that wake up call. So those three events man, the GPA, breaking my shoulder, my right shoulder at that being right handed and then totaled my knee, my left knee.

For Charlie, this experience came with the birth of his daughter:

I did have pro aspirations and I was actually all set to go to Sweden and play basketball professionally and I found out that my wife was pregnant. So, I really did not want to leave the country you know while my wife was pregnant and she was due…you know my daughter was born January 30th, so that was right in the middle of basketball season. So I just didn’t want to put that stress and strain on myself and my wife. I mean I really didn’t want to start a family like that. I just gave those dreams up and just and just uh, you know I was working with kids. I was coaching. So I was still around the game and that was good enough for me.

The next theme of interest to be discussed is the impact that race had on entry into subjects field, with all but one subject indicating that their race impeded their progress at one time or another.

When asked what outside events hurt his transition to the labor market Fred stated:

Well, getting into…kitchens definitely…getting into kitchens as a black man, just my skin tone was a hindrance. Because they’re very…especially in southern [state] where I first started there’s a heavy Latino population. Uh, heavy undocumented population, where guys are willing to take less pay just to survive. Uh, nothing against them. I’ve always had an advantage because I’m semi
bilingual. So that’s been an added thing where I’ve gone into kitchens. There are
times, especially when I first started cooking. I would go into kitchens in [city] I’d
be the only black guy in there and the rest of the staff, other than the chef, would
all be Latino. So uh, I…thinking back that’s one, well-being black and then being
6’3 at 300 lbs. plus. I have an intimidating presence, I’ve been told and that, those
are two things that I’ve had to work on. I can’t work on being black but I can
work on my size but I guess my tone and once people hear that I’m educated and I
don’t talk like every stereotype that they’ve heard, they’re intimidated by that and
especially once I got into more of the fine dining establishments. That was
definitely a hindrance and something that I had to deal with. I had to learn to
navigate the ropes if you will.

According to Harry, race was a big inhibitor to his ability to secure a job on the police force:

In essence I had to overcome and I’m still overcoming is the good ol’ boys
network. You know policing has always been associated as the last dance of the
good ol’ boy network. So, if you look at the department that I work for uh, I’m
not sure what the numbers are now but last time I checked we only had 189
African American’s on the job and as more are trying to get hired there was a wall
that had to be beat down or kicked down. Like hey man, we’re just as good, but as
our counterparts are doing this job and it was tough getting into it because I
applied numerous agencies and uh, yeah, nobody would call you back and when
they call you back, uh, we’re not hiring no more or the test that they would give a
lot of people felt they wasn’t… It was a biased test you know and we wasn’t
getting hired or me specifically didn’t get hired because like oh, you didn’t do
well on the test. But the test didn’t necessarily demonstrate, or I felt demonstrate how to do policing work and as a result a lot of departments many didn’t hire and finally I got hired with [state] State Police and uh, so I guess the best way to answer the question is the barrier that really is a systematic problem of trying to get more African American’s hired within the ranks of policing and once that hurdle was kicked down, I tried to be a change agent you know I try to be a changer and managed to get other people hired.

In his line of work George thinks the contrary, with specific qualifications:

I think being a minority helps. A well-spoken, educated minority with experience in collegiate sports helps you acquire jobs. Um, I do believe that. You’re a breath of fresh air for many white people and uh, you fit quotas. In some markets you’re needed because of the population. You’re…an intelligent, experienced minority is needed because of the population he or she is working with.

Each of the individuals who had indicated that they were subjectively successful expressed that participating in collegiate sports helped them in their development, and that they would be worse off had they not played college sports. Additionally, all of the individuals expressed that they had developed and nurtured meaningful skills, traits, behaviors, attitudes, and characteristics from participating in collegiate sports, which contributed to their abilities to realize subjective career success later in life. Also, each of the individuals made statements that indicated that they used self-referent factors to measure their success rather than other-referent factors.
Discrepant Case

Bobby

Bobby is a lawyer and sports agent, living in the southern region of the U.S. who played FBS/D-IA football at a major university in the south. Bobby grew up in a single parent home in the south. While in school Bobby believed that he would be playing football in the NFL, thus didn’t take his courses seriously, which were reflected in his low G.P.A. Bobby majored in interdisciplinary studies in college because he didn’t know what he wanted to do with his life other than play football. When asked about the educational barriers he experienced, he informed the researcher that he just didn’t take school seriously, and he took classes just to take them. Not until graduation approached did he think of putting the effort into doing well in the classroom. However, it was too late. Bobby was a member of a fraternity, while in pursuing his undergraduate degree. Bobby graduated with his bachelor’s degree in 2007. Bobby had several tryouts for NFL teams, but was not able to secure a spot and thus had to seek employment in the general labor market. After graduating, Bobby took on jobs in retail, as a counselor, and as a history teacher. In 2010, Bobby enrolled in a southern university, where he obtained an international law degree. In 2011, Bobby’s brother passed away, which he says really propelled him in the right direction.

With the help of a fraternity brother, Bobby realized he wanted to become a lawyer. He took the law school admissions test several times, and on his final attempt scored well enough to be allowed to participate in a conditional summer program. In this program, he had to prove his ability to handle the work and to be successful in such a demanding atmosphere. Bobby was fully admitted into the southern law school in 2012. When asked if he would have been better off or worse off if he had not played sports, he said he could have been successful if
he had put in the time, but because playing pro football was his goal he did not put in the effort. This sentiment was echoed when asked if playing collegiate sports helped or hurt his transition to the labor market. Bobby is different from the other subjects because he indicated that despite the objective success obtained, he does not feel as though he is successful. When asked why he didn’t feel successful, he informed the researcher that to him, success is autonomy. Despite not being subjectively successful, Bobby’s experiences and description of his transition paralleled those subjects that did identify as subjectively successful and the same five primary themes that were prevalent in their commentary, also were apparent in his interview. For example, in detailing his career path, Bobby illustrated his capacity to be aware when he stated,

So you know because of the degree that I had, I really didn’t know what to do with it. It was mid-year, at that point it was mid-year so I had no idea. The school year already started for teaching high school. So I really didn’t know what to do. So I took that job at [retail store]. I worked there for, I want to say like three months, and then I began counseling kids, a counselor and so I did that for a full year. I did that for a full year… I also had a job as a teacher. I wound up teaching high school history in inner city in the fall of 2009 until 2010, the academic school year and I realized that, that’s not what I really wanted to do at the end of the day. Although, while I was in college I had no idea what I wanted to do, but I realized that teaching and being a counselor is not what I want to do and so I went to [institution] School of Law and I received my international law degree in… I enrolled in 2010 and I graduated in 2011. I realized I wanted to be a lawyer. I didn’t know what it took to be a lawyer. I thought you had to be ordained by God to be a lawyer because I thought that hey, all these people who go to law school
probably their fathers are lawyers or their mothers are lawyers or you know somebody else is a lawyer and so you know I was able to you know figure out that hey, I want to be a lawyer. So consequently I graduated from the school in 2011 with an international law degree and then I went back after my brother…my brother died in 2011. So I took that year off, the next year off and re-enrolled at [institution], for my juris doctor degree in 2012 until 2014, when I recently graduated with a law degree, both JD and the masters of international law.

Another instance where Bobby’s experience mirrored that of the other participants was as he explained his aptitude for being networked, as he explained how he decided on his career path and the assistance he received from his support system, namely a mentor:

I had a fraternity brother, I had a fraternity brother who is an attorney in [state]. That’s the one who inspired me to become an attorney. So I would say that relationship…he would be the closest relationship I had that helped me you know transition over into the real world.

There are other attitudes, characteristics, and behavior patterns consistent with the responses provided by the other subjects, to include: sports being Bobby’s primary motivation to attend college and succeed in all levels of education; an event in his life that he pointed to that propelled him to his current level of success, in the death of his brother; sports having developed and nurtured vital skills that translated into the labor market, and the use of self-referent language to define his personal success. Bobby however, did not indicate he thought race played a role in the barriers he experienced in his transition to and through the labor market.
Additional Probes – What Can be Done to Assist Student-Athletes in the Transition

Along with wanting to understand the subject’s transition and path to realizing subjective career success, the researcher posed two additional inquiries, 1) What can be done to assist current and future African-American male student-athletes in the transition to the labor market, and 2) What should be expected of the institutions and individuals who have the greatest impact on the development of these individuals.

Role of the Family

While not all of the individuals identified the same approach, they seemed to agree on the desired outcome. For instance, when asked, “what can the family do to assist the student in the transition from being a college athlete to the labor market”, Bobby suggested:

It’s not about the transition. At that point man, once you get to the transition that’s it, it’s a wrap, that’s ball game. You want to help them in high school man but when they start going to college then put them on the right proper academic map. Whether they got to struggle through it or not with that but they want to put them on a path that’s on to worst case scenario if they don’t go to whether it’s MLB, NFL, Soccer or whatever, that they have like a nice job that they could fall back on and not security at a club or you know working at [retail store] like me and things of that nature. So just having the foresee ability to being able to look ahead and determine whether or not this kid is going to be alright. That’s pretty much what they need to do.

Fred believes the following is also necessary:

Stay a part of the student’s life. Uh, I think, uh, you have student athletes. You go to college at 18 and your parents kind of let you fly but I think the more involved
that your family is as a whole and your success and it’s not necessarily, I’m not
talking on the athletic field. I’m talking their success in college period, the better
off you’ll be because we have those connections. You want to stay more focused.

Role of the NCAA

Bobby felt that there was nothing that the NCAA could do to assist in the transition for
this group, both Aaron, George, and Eric believe that the players should be paid, however, most
of the subjects proposed programs that assist the student in the transition. Aaron offered the
following:

You need to have your own independent academic people tutors, um… uh…. uh
academic staff who works on the academics. That’ll free the coaches up to do…
do what they were hired to do, cuz coaches make poor academic advisors.
Number two, they gotta do a head jobs on these kids, and tell’em you know,
playing sports is very very important, but so is having plan “B” and plan “C.”
You got to have alternate plans. We need to explore those things. That’s
something, you know, I don’t… Kids don’t get. Uh… now, where I played ball at,
we had three a days, but most folks had two a days. And then we gradually
worked down to two a days, and then there’s pre-season, and season. So, then you
don’t get much time, cuz then you got spring ball. So, then you got to go to class.
It becomes a nightmare, you know. Uh, just to make it. So, what did… what…
N.C.2A schools, somebody got to figure out, are we training students or we got
semi-pro athletics. And it can’t be one school, cuz they’d be ostracized. It got to
be a nation-wide movement. Because, if we truly care about the athletes, they
gotta be taught all these things, and the athletes need to be paid, athletes need to
be paid. The reason most of them do bad, get in trouble, get kicked out. If... If...
if some booster come by, and buy all you all dinner, for Thanksgiving who
couldn’t go home, had no money, and tried to live off five dollars a day... its
insane. Somebody take their own jersey and try to sell it, or sell their autograph...
you... you kicked off the team. These rules are in... these rules are insane that
these people live by. And everybody’s probably doing it. They only catch some of
it, and some athlete from before who’s angry three, four years later tell. And
almost everybody they catch is about somebody got mad and told. These N.C.2A
people need to wake up and recognize there’s a major problem going on with
athletes. They make millions and millions of dollars for the school, but athletes
can’t get nothing to eat, got to walk everywhere, can’t nobody give them a car, yet
they know about some of the superstars, somebody done bought their momma a
house. But all that leads up to what I’m talking about.

Role of the Institution

When asked what the role of the university administrators (president, athletic director,
coaches, etc.) should be in the development of these individuals, most of the responses echoed
some variation of Fred’s statement:

More real world knowledge and application of what their major is. I know when
maybe you graduate 21, 22, 23 years old you don’t necessarily know uh, what you
want to do for the rest of your life but if there’s some way that you can uh, maybe
you’ve left college and now you have that a-ha moment where you figure out that
this is what I want to do and you’ve been a student athlete that has generated
millions of dollars for that university. You can reach back to your school and say,
Hey. I studied criminal justice but now I want to be a chef. Maybe I can take some marketing classes. Maybe I can take some classes that now pertain to what you want to do because the university has by far reaped the benefits of you being a student athlete and so I think there needs to be some kind of connection to the student athlete now versus the student…or the student-athlete that has left the university and has gone on and the student athlete that was once there. There needs to be some kind of way you can reach back to the school and say, hey, this is where I’m at now in my life, um, is there any other possibilities of further education that I can do. I’m not saying that it has to be free but maybe uh, I know you can always go back to school and get more education, but I think as a student athlete, especially on a Division 1 level, uh, I know people were sitting in the seats because [player] was there. I know people were sitting in the seats because me and some of my defensive linemen were there. I know people were sitting in the seats because [player] was there.

**Role of the Student-Athlete**

When posed with the question, who is ultimately responsible for an individual being able to effectively transition from being a college athlete to the labor market? Eric expressed that he felt the family is responsible, while Bobby suggested the family is at least partially responsible, because the work preparing the student should be done well before the transition occurs. Aaron stated the university administrators are liable because they establish the rules for admission, attendance, participation, and graduation. The remaining participants felt the student is ultimately responsible for their own success. When asked this question, Dillion said:
It’s really the student. I mean because the family can help but the student has to you know, be able to figure it out. I guess some families are very helpful in that arena. I wasn’t fortunate like that. I kind of had to figure it out for myself but I think it’s really up to the athlete to have an understanding to how the world works, you know? I don’t think you can rely on universities to give you the full scoop about how life works after college and after your athletic abilities are over.

When asked this same question Harry stated:

Ultimately, just because of what he has at stake. You know nobody cares about you but you. Nobody will care about you the way you care about yourself. So ultimately no matter if you transition into the pros or transition into the workforce, it’s up to you to make that uh, transition or do what you can to make that transition the best transition you possibly can.

Participants were also asked, what can be done to assist students in this transition? Charlie replied:

I think they have the wrong ideas, wrong values, and the wrong moral system. You know my mother, once again, and my father both were very hard working people. They never ever once mentioned anything to me about playing professional sports. It was never a… it’s every kids dream but it was never one of those dreams, it was never a pipe dream for me. So I think we have too often the get rich quick scheme from athletics because we do see the athletes that glorify them but they glorify the half of the percent that actually make it and they don’t also show those athletes 15-20 years from now outside of their you know… the average NFL career is 3 years, the average NBA career I think is 5 years. After
that all of those individuals go out and get jobs. I mean the greatest player in the
history of the game is Michael Jordan. He still goes to work. So they don’t see
that we’re going to have to have a job at some point. By the time we’re thirty we
are old in the athletic world and we still have 35 more years to work. So I don’t
think that part of athletics is being shown to our young people. Athletics is a tool
to help you with whatever job you want to get. I always saw athletics for me as
trying to…you know free money? You know if you’re good enough athletically
and you work hard and you put in these hours someone is going to give you some
money to help you go to college. That’s how I see it. I think if more people could
take that view and say, hey, you come and play and shoot this ball for me or catch
that pass or hit this ball. I’m going to give you some money to help your
education. You help me and I’m gonna help you. And that’s the relationship it
should be but you often as kids we have this glorification of the million dollar
athlete that’s just not obtainable for the majority of humans throughout the world.

To this, George added:

Accept that they have to excel in more than one arena. Nobody is just a football
player. Nobody is just a basketball player. A man has to be successful in all areas
um, that you take on. If academic success is part of being a student athlete, then
you can’t just say I’m gonna focus on the athlete part. You have to be successful
academically as well.
Table 4.9: Componential Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimensions of Contrast</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adaptive Capacity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resourceful</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action-Oriented</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Networked</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purposeful</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Event Changed View of Life/Education</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Was a Driving Force In His Life</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Self-Referent Measures to Describe Success</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race as a Barrier to Entry and/or Career Progress</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegiate Sports Helped in Development</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Probes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Student is Responsible for Transition</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Family is Responsible for Transition</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The University is Responsible for Transition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay The Players</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>More Programs, Workshops, Mentoring, Etc.</td>
<td>X</td>
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**Qualitative Componential Analysis**

Based on the data obtained from the interviews, a componential analysis was developed, as described by Spradley (1980), to illustrate the manifestation of the various themes in the eight interviews conducted for this study, which consist of the five primary themes, additional themes of interest, and the additional probes (See Table 4.9). The role of the componential analysis table is to provide a contrastive analysis among the participants.

As can be seen from the analysis, all of the components of adaptive capacity were present in the data from all participants. What is interesting is that while sports were considered a driving force to only half of the participants, all stated that collegiate sports helped them in development. Most of them saw themselves as responsible for their transition, they mostly noted that more programs, workshops, and mentoring would be beneficial for future student athletes.
Combined Analysis

When conducting a convergent parallel mixed-method study, once the researcher has analyzed the quantitative as well as the qualitative data, an inference is offered for each individual strand. Inferences are outcomes used to provide answers to a research question, it could also be understood as the process of sense making in a study (how the raw data becomes useful knowledge). These two separate inferences are then integrated to offer a singular meta-inference (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009; Clark & Creswell, 2011. There are several means of converging the two strands, with the researcher determining that the side-by-side approach is most appropriate. The side-by-side approach entails the discussion of one inference followed by the discussion of the second (Creswell, 2014).

When undertaking a mixed-method study where the intent is to converge data, as was the case with this study, the meta-inference serves to triangulate the finding between the two inferences (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Triangulation is used in mixed-method studies to increase the validity of constructs and to corroborate outcomes between the two strands of research (Greene & Caracelli, 1989). When discussing mixed-method design, the term triangulation describes the process of using one inference to support the other and vice versa, which usually occurs in the meta-inference stage.

Side-By-Side Analysis

The outcomes produced by the stepwise linear regression (using both the forward selection and backward selection processes) model in the quantitative research strand yielded one of the five variables as statistically significant in the ability to predict subjective career success (full scale) in former African-American male D-I athletes, who did not play sports professionally. Correlations between the independent variables and the dependent variable were
run. The analysis indicated the independent variables, adaptive capacity (full scale) and parent educational level attained showed statistically significant correlations with subjective career success (full scale). However, since these outcomes do not provide an answer for the first research question, no further discussion is provided.

The results of the qualitative measures, produced through the thematic and cross case analysis of eight semi-structured interviews indicated that the five subconstructs of adaptive capacity (aware, resourceful, action-oriented, networked, and purposeful) had a major influence on the ability of former D-I African-American male athletes to transition effectively to the labor market, and realize subjective career success. Seven of the participants in the qualitative components of this study, detailed the presence of each of these factors in their ability to transition effectively from their time as a student-athlete to a point in their careers where they self-identify as successful. One participant was considered to be a discrepant case because he did not consider himself to be subjectively successful, yet could be regarded by others as other-referentially successful, based on occupation, income, and job prestige. Even though he did not consider himself to be subjectively successful, he also acknowledged the manifestation of each of the five primary themes in his transition. These themes were apparent, despite the researcher intentionally selecting individuals who represented different career industries, and despite the acknowledgment of a discrepant case. Taken together this illustrates the saliency and importance of the themes across all cases in this study.

Five of the eight participants (62%) in the qualitative component of this study reported that at least one of their parents/guardians attended some college (1 – community college, 2 – bachelor’s degree obtained, and 2 – master’s degree obtained), whereas the others reported their parent/guardian graduated from high school or obtained their GED. The participants in the
quantitative components of the study reported that 77% of their parent/guardians attended at least some college, 2% indicated that their parent/guardian obtained a trade or vocational certificate, and 21% stated that their parent/guardian obtained a high school diploma or GED.

The outputs of the stepwise linear regression yielded that in both the model and the correlation coefficients, adaptive capacity (full scale) was able to predict subjective career success (full scale) in the participants in this study. When the correlation coefficients were expanded to account for the influence that each subcomponent of adaptive capacity had on the dependent variable, all but one produced a statistically significant output. The themes gleaned from the qualitative data also indicated that the subcomponents of adaptive capacity had a significant impact on the journey to realizing subjective career success.

The quantitative outputs indicate a statistically significant relationship between the level of adaptive capacity and the subjective career success of former African-American male student-athletes who have played either FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball, who did not play sports professionally. The outputs also indicate a statistically significant relationship between four of the subcomponents of adaptive capacity (aware, resourceful, networked, and purposeful) and subjective career success, three of which are at the 0.01 level (purposeful, network, and resourceful) and aware is significant at the 0.05 level. The themes that manifest in the qualitative strand indicate the subcomponents of adaptive capacity are essential to the members of this group transitioning effectively and realizing subjective career success and corroborates the outputs in the quantitative strand.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter reports the results for both the quantitative and the qualitative aspects of this study. The quantitative strand of this study utilized data collected through an online survey
instrument and analyzed using stepwise linear regression to identify the factors that predict subjective career success of African-American males, who had played a revenue generating sport at the D-I level. Adaptive capacity was the only statistically significant variable in the stepwise regression model. In the qualitative strand of this study, the researcher conducted seven semi-structured interviews, with African-American males, who had formally participated in FBS/D-IA football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball, and who were subjectively successful. One interview was conducted with an individual who is other-referently successful, meaning success as judged by others. This participant admitted feeling not successful by his own standards. These interviews were analyzed using thematic and cross-case analyses to 1) Understand the transition from collegiate athlete to the labor market, and 2) Offer insight as to how key figures in the lives of current and future participants can assist in helping the student have an effective transition to the labor market.

The exploration of lived experiences of these eight men resulted in descriptions of how the subcomponents of adaptive capacity played a major role in the transition out of college sports participation into the labor market, and ultimately to a place in their lives and careers where they felt as though they were successful. This, despite not having all of the objective measures of success, which are usually associated with becoming a professional athlete. These men also provided a unique perspective as to how current and future student-athletes can be helped to make this same transition effectively, with a great deal of the onus being placed on the student, while recognizing the influence of others in key decisions that impact the student’s ability to transition well. Based on the data obtained from the interviews, the componential analysis (Spradley, 1980) was used to illustrate the manifestation of the various themes in the eight
interviews conducted for this study, which consist of the five primary themes, additional themes of interest, and the additional probes (See Table 4.9).
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a summative account of the research process used to facilitate this study and offer insight as to how the results of this study can be applied to practice, inform policy related to collegiate athletes, and add depth to the career termination literature for African-American male student-athletes. This chapter includes a discussion of the implications, applications, and recommendations based on the reported outcomes as well as to discuss the limitations and suggest areas for future research.

Research Questions

To offer a comprehensive understanding of the problem, the researcher employed a mixed-method design to answer two research questions (one qualitative and one quantitative) (Creswell, 2014). The two questions which guided the study were: 1) To what extent does adaptive capacity, the number of years removed from participation, reason for termination, parent educational level, and athletic identity predict subjective career success for African-American males who played FBS/D-I football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball at the college level? 2) How did African-American males who played a revenue-generating sport for a FBS/D-I football, FCS/D-IAA football, or D-I basketball program and realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the general labor market?

Study Overview

The purpose of this study was to (1) Determine the factors that predict subjective career success for former D-I African-American male athletes who played a revenue-generating sport, and (2) Explore how former D-I African-American male athletes, who played a revenue-generating sport and realized subjective career success managed the transition from sport to the
general labor market. An online survey was employed to collect data and a stepwise regression analysis used to determine which of the five variables best predicted the subjective career success of former African-American male D-I athletes, who did not go on to play sports professionally. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with former African-American D-I athletes who also felt subjectively successful.

An extensive review of the literature resulted in the identification of five factors frequently associated with the career success of African-American males and those who transitioned effectively out of sports. These variables were: number of years removed from sports, the level of education attained by parents, athletic identity, reason for termination, agility, and resilience (which when combined are regarded as adaptive capacity). A convergent mixed-method approach was employed because it provided a richer and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being explored.

Results from the stepwise regression analysis showed adaptive capacity (full scale) as the only significant contributor to subjective career success (full scale). Correlation coefficients indicated that a statistically significant relationship existed between subjective career success (full scale) and adaptive capacity ($p \leq .01$) as well as between subjective career success (full scale) and parent educational level ($p \leq .05$). Themes resulting from the analysis and interpretation of the interview data aligned with subcomponents of adaptive capacity, a finding that confirms the quantitative results.

**Discussion**

The significance of adaptive capacity on the subjective career success of former African-American male collegiate athletes was apparent in this study. Though the research strands were facilitated independent of one another, the findings yielded in the quantitative strand were
strongly substantiated by the outcomes obtained in the qualitative strand, as both strands indicated that adaptive capacity was essential. The five subcomponents of adaptive capacity (action-oriented, aware, networked, purposeful, and resourceful) as a group, are essential traits that can and should be developed and fostered over time.

To help develop a sense of purpose, McCann and Selsky (2012) suggest attention to the three forms of wellness (ie., physical, psychological, and social) should be given. Physical wellness refers to being active and fit as well as maintaining good nutrition. Psychological wellness consists of emotional and cognitive wellness. Emotional wellness is the mastery of your emotions which is essential for establishing and maintaining a positive as well as realistic sense of self. Cognitive wellness is vital because it pertains to the ability to conduct yourself in a manner that is acceptable from situation to situation. Social wellness speaks to the need to build and foster relationships. McCann and Selsky (2012) propose reflective and self-exploration activities to enhance purpose. Athletics at the D-I level affords African-American males access to some of the best trainers and doctors in the world. It is imperative that the student-athletes learn how to take care of themselves in the wellness areas through organized workshops and training sessions. It is important that in these trainings the coaches take the time to stress the importance of physical and mental health, thus creating an environment that fosters growth in these highly impressionable young men. It is also vital for coaches and administrators take the time to evaluate and offer additional support to those individuals who encounter injury, demotions, and or removed from the team, as these individuals should not have to endure these turbulent times alone. These situations offer unique opportunities which can be used for personal development and planning for life beyond sports.

When attempting to build awareness, a subcomponent of adaptive capacity, the objective
is to improve sensemaking in turbulent and unfamiliar environments. Sensemaking is improved through learning (McCann and Selsky, 2012). Thomas (2008) introduced the notion of the personal learning strategy (PLS) and explored its design and application of it by those perceived as exceptional performers. He believes individually crafted approaches are “a recipe based on heightened awareness of individual aspirations, motivations and learning style — that enables to confront challenging situations and extract from them valuable lessons about what it takes to be an effective leader” (p. 15). These customized developmental tactics are typically designed to be self-regulating in nature and informal. He insists that anyone who enters into a crucible situation (life events that have the ability to help individuals develop or enhance useful skills and knowledge) can become a great asset to his family, community, and employer.

A personal learning strategy speaks to one’s capacity to be agile and resilient. Thomas outlines three aspects of the PLS: 1.) A process for gleaning insight from a situation, 2.) A desire to grow and evolve, and 3.) Techniques that demand repetition and promote application. Athletes often demonstrate their ability to apply measures of awareness to their sport with the requirements of weight training, practice, film sessions, executing scouting reports, and their desire to get better if for nothing else, to retain their 1-year renewable scholarship. However, these characteristics are not taught in such a way that is transferable to situations outside of sport. As they exit sport, these young men are thrust into situations in which they have limited experience, networks, limited knowledge, and resources. By acknowledging the elements of awareness in a sports training program, coaches and administrators are not only creating a better athlete, but also preparing a better student, community member, and one who is able to transition out of sport effectively. Offering workshops, simulations, and/or employment to these students provides them with valuable experiences that allow them to see how these traits are applicable in
other facets in life, which is essential for a positive exit from sport at the college level.

When looking to improve action-orientation, individuals must obtain the skills and know-how necessary to navigate situations that are ambiguous and/or difficult. These skills are obtained through both formal and informal learning environments and allow the individual to execute with confidence and competence (McCann & Selsky, 2012). During a crucible event, an action-oriented individual is able to use challenging personal, work, and even sport-related experiences as a vehicle to prompt personal development (Bennis & Thomas, 2002; Stambulova, 1997; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Kadlcik & Flemr, 2008). Being action-oriented is achievable through the establishment of a PLS, mentoring, and good psychological wellness (McCann & Selsky, 2012). In athletics, being action-oriented can be observed when individuals participate in voluntary and individual training sessions. During these times, the athlete is usually working on techniques and fundamental aspects of their game sometimes with an outside trainer in order to build upon these skills when the team convenes for organized workouts. Often coaches preach that success is achieved in workouts and preparation that takes place in the offseason and during team practices. This idea should be also applied to life beyond sport. By using aspects of their participation in collegiate sports to draw a connection to matters outside of sports, these traits can be effectively applied to other life situations.

Fostering resourcefulness requires learning how to creatively apply the skills amassed from formal and informal learning environments to present and future challenges. McCann and Selsky (2012) describe it as being entrepreneurial, or actively and intentionally positioning yourself to take full advantage of opportunities, while also limiting risk and exposure. Thomas (2008) uses the term innovative to describe the capacity to be resourceful, which he explains as having “new responses to changing conditions” (p. 67). He offers two concepts that assist in the
development of innovation: 1) grasping a method – the fundamental knowledge and skills required to operate effectively in a given domain, and 2) having ambition – a strong desire to accomplish the goal, where that desire to accomplish the goal is high enough to keep the individual committed to the repetition, which propels one to overcome the potential failures that progress brings. Athletes develop this form of resourcefulness through practice (individual, team, and voluntary), game situations, and the establishment of team and individual goals. Based on the schemes and game plans designed from game-to-game, these individuals must learn to adjust and accept new responsibilities, sometimes during game-play. This knack for being able to execute a plan just-in-time proves the capacity for these individuals to be resourceful, as well as agile. Thus, by using similar techniques and providing real life examples of how the student has already demonstrated the ability to be resourceful, along with organized activities, coaches and administrators will be capable of helping student-athletes understand the usefulness of this key characteristic as he transitions.

Networking is an essential skill at all stages of life and one that must be continuously cultivated, especially with the emergence of social media and other web-based forums. Networking pertains to all relationships, both personal and professional, as they have the tendency to influence decisions, behaviors, and aspirations because these relationships give purpose to life’s endeavors (McCann and Selsky, 2012). Mentorship, which is an aspect of networking requires individuals to seek instruction, actively pursue knowledge and skills, and seek feedback – being open to criticism for the purpose of adjusting (Thomas, 2008). Athletes are uniquely exposed to a wide range of individuals, wealthy boosters, well-off fans, famous alumni, reknown experts in various fields (professors), as well as those with whom they attend classes and eat lunch. The uniqueness of their situation is that they cannot take advantage of many of
these relationships, as there is the looming potential of violating an NCAA policy. They should be afforded the right to take advantage of the exposure they are receiving and use it to create opportunities outside of sport. These connections should be closely monitored, but there must be some leeway given because the status quo inhibits their ability to transition effectively as they have very little means of establishing work related skills in the sport environment. It is also imperative these athletes take the time to develop relationships with their classmates and others on campus through the involvement in campus organizations and clubs as these are additional outlets for stress, exposure, and skill development.

**Implications**

For many African-American male athletes, sport is a way out of low SES environments and a way to gain access to higher education (Singer & May, 2011). For many, it is a major motivator for graduating high school and once in college, remaining enrolled. Most of these athletes acknowledge that participating in college sports has been a good and positive experience (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2006). However, few of them reap the full benefits of this opportunity, primarily because the time dedicated to playing sport at this level is seen as an investment in their athletic future (Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013).

The transitions to the workplace has proven to be systematically unfair and arduous for African-American males with the literature outlining the difficulty of securing viable employment, maintaining employment, obtaining equal pay, and being promoted. In comparison to their Caucasian male counterparts. Barriers identified by participants as they entered and navigated their job and career paths included difficulties related to their physical appearance, cultural differences, challenges finding opportunities for employment in the area in which they obtained their bachelor’s degree. Many had to portray a more corporate friendly demeanor in
order to be accepted by their colleagues. These findings are consistant with the challenges African-American men experience when gaining entry, sustaining, and progressing in a career as outlined by Tomaskovic-Dewey, Thomas, and Johnson (2005).

Barton (2011) and Galli & Vealey (2008) state, by playing sports, individuals are able to learn and foster key life skills, and other transferable skills that will be helpful in life. Since these individuals have limited time to invest in other means of developing human and social capital, it is important that athletic programs use their platform to also advocate for personal development and provide them the opportunity to do so. They should have the means to do so in a sport, school, work, and life context, as many of these are transferable and required in other aspects of life. Some of the transferable skills participants developed through participation in sport included: leadership, communication, team work, planning, working with individuals from diverse backgrounds, resilience, agility, and the ability to juggle many tasks, among others.

One of the themes identified in the qualitative strand is the impact that life events had on the subject’s perception of life and/or education. Some of the participants discussed events that took place either during or after their collegiate careers which changed their perception of success and ultimately assisted in their ability to transition effectively to the labor market and eventually realize subjective career success. These themes were in line with what was reported in Kadlcik and Flemr’s (2008) study.

This study identified four of the five subcomponents of adaptive capacity (aware, purposeful, resourceful, and networked were statistically correlated subjective career success. While all five of the subcomponents manifested in the interviews conducted in the qualitative strand. These findings are consistant with the work of McCann & Slesky (2012) and Thomas (2008).
Colleges and universities should be held responsible for the development of these young men. This can be demonstrated with tracking student-athletes beyond graduation, which would force colleges and universities to assist in job placement. There should be resources available for these students for several years post participation because they may realize that they aren’t as interested in the major they initially selected. These schools should also move away from the 1-year renewable scholarship and adopt a standard 4-year scholarship system, which proves they are committed to the long-term development of the student. These young men are being held to a commitment made to a university, coach, and/or system who may not be entirely committed to them. Universities should consider alternative models for student-athletes, one of which is the armed forces model, which would allow them to forego education for the years they play sport, and be permitted to enroll as a full-time student once their eligibility ends. Another way of demonstrating a commitment to overall growth of the student-athlete is through paying players. This would allow the players the means to purchase necessities and prepare financially for life after sports.

For the communities these individuals come from, the findings suggest that adaptive capacity will help establish new standards for success, which will be significant for the youth who idolize these high profile players from their neighborhoods. These athletes could begin to pursue careers in areas they are passionate about. The findings in this study indicate that more of these athletes would seek degrees in education. In addition, this could significantly increase the pool of African-American male educators which are in high demand, especially in urban areas. The findings suggest that if the aspects of adaptive capacity are infused into athletic programs as early as high school, athletes could transition out of sports more effectively and position them to have success in whatever they choose to pursue post participation.
For colleges and system administrators who oversee athletics the findings suggest the components of adaptive capacity be instituted in personal development programs geared at assisting athletes in establishing identity outside of sports. These programs could help athletes seek opportunities in non-athletic arenas and may translate into increased grade point averages, participation in campus clubs/organizations, and a opportunities to grow professionally. This new commitment to life beyond sport would however cause student-athletes to forfeit some time spent on sport related training and development. A shift in priorities would prompt change in the structure of collegiate athletics because the focus would not be solely on sports which could effect scoreboards, and the financial bottom-line.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

This research study adds to the growing body of literature on sports career termination, the African-American male experience in the labor market, agility and resilience measures, adaptive capacity, sports ability to instill and nurture vital character traits, as well as the motivating factors for African-American males. This study did not compare the experiences of African-American males who played a revenue generating sports to other athletes, nor did the study look at differences between basketball and football players, or differences between African-American males and other ethnicities. It is suggested that future research explore the effect of the subcomponents of adaptive capacity have on other groups in comparison to the African-American male. The researcher also suggests the survey be readministered to a larger group of African-American males who fit the criteria for inclusion as outlined in this study verify the consistency of the findings. Lastly, the researcher thinks it is of interest to explore how the subcomponents of adaptive capacity can effectively be infused into athletic programs.
Conclusion

Being offered a football or basketball scholarship to a D-I school is the dream for many young African-American boys, however is not very likely many will make it to the professional ranks. However, many African-American males are willing to forego the human and social capital benefits of attending college just for a shot at a NFL, CFL, or NBA team simply to make thousands, if not millions of dollars for something they have done for free almost their whole lives (Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013). The difficulties experienced by many athletes as they transition from sport to the workplace is an area of study that needs much more attention because these individuals are being exploited by a system that only cares about their ability to score touchdowns and baskets and disregards them as potential contributors to society. Helping these young men realize their potential outside of sports may not fit the goals of many athletic programs, however adding a human development component to any athletic program demonstrates a commitment to the prosperity of student-athletes and is an investment in the communities from which they come (Hodge, Harrison, Burden, & Dixon, 2008).
## APPENDIX A: ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Variable Measured</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Alternative Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>Adaptive Capacity</td>
<td>H1</td>
<td>LEVEL of ADAPTIVE CAPACITY will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>Athletic Identity</td>
<td>H2</td>
<td>ATHLETIC IDENTITY has a significant negative relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Reason for Termination</td>
<td>H3</td>
<td>REASON for TERMINATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Number of Years Removed from Participation</td>
<td>H4</td>
<td>NUMBER of YEARS REMOVED from PARTICIPATION will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Parent Educational Attainment</td>
<td>H5</td>
<td>PARENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT will have a significant positive relationship with SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Adaptive Capacity Scale

Use the following scale to indicate how you generally perceive or feel about items 1-25 in the list that follows. Place a number from the scale in the space to the right of each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Purposeful**
1.) I have a strong sense of who I am and my values/beliefs
2.) I function very well during prolonged pressure and stress
3.) I understand and fully share the values and beliefs of the organizations for which I work and am a part of
4.) I can handle any situation as needed
5.) I speak up when I encounter ethical issues

**Aware**
6.) I am an active learner about new ideas and issues
7.) I am not often surprised by events or changes
8.) I am good at making sense of ambiguous, uncertain situations
9.) I actively scan my environment for information
10.) I readily access and use multiple different sources of information

**Action-Oriented**
11.) I recognize and take calculated risks when necessary
12.) I am open to change
13.) I have the training and skills needed to perform very well in my roles in the organizations with which I am involved
14.) I can quickly change roles and responsibilities to meet any situation
15.) I am the first to react when needed

**Resourceful**
16.) I am able to keep my skills and knowledge current
17.) I am good at finding creative solutions to problems
18.) I think of myself as very entrepreneurial
19.) I work at developing my creative problem solving skills
20.) I can express my creative potential in my organization

**Networked**
21.) I have good personal networks with others in the organizations with which I work and participate
22.) I have access to the resources needed to perform very well in the various organizations with which I work and am a part of
23.) I have access to key decision makers and leaders as needed
24.) I have strong personal networks outside my organization
25.) I am good at breaking down barriers between myself and others
Athletic Identity Scale

Use the following scale to indicate how you generally perceive or feel about items 26-35 in the list that follows. Place a number from the scale in the space to the right of each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26.) I consider myself an athlete
27.) I have many goals related to sport
28.) Most of my friends are or were athletes
29.) Sport is the most important part of my life
30.) I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else
31.) I need to participate in sport to feel good about myself
32.) Other people see me mainly as an athlete
33.) I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport
34.) Sport is the only important thing in my life
35.) I would be very sad if I were injured and could not compete in sport

Circle the answer that applies in item 36 – 38

36.) What was your reason for exiting sports?
   (a) Injury - You suffered an injury on or off the field/sport or non-sport related and it prevented you from playing
   (b) Deselection - You were either not picked up by a professional team or removed from the college team by a member of the staff
   (c) Choice - You chose to walk away from sports
   (d) Graduation – You graduated

37.) What was your final year of competition as a student-athlete?

38.) Indicate the highest level of education attained by a parent or guardian
   (a) Some High School
   (b) High School
   (c) Trade/Technical/Vocational Training/Certificate
   (d) Some College (No Degree)
   (e) 2-Year/Associates Degree
   (f) Bachelor’s Degree
   (g) Master’s Degree
   (h) Ph.D., Law School, Med./Dental School
Your Career Success

Please rate the success of your career to date, relative to your career aspirations, on a scale of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree) in items 39 – 44.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative to my career aspirations …</th>
<th>Rating 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39.) I am satisfied with the overall success I have achieved in my career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.) I am satisfied with the income I have achieved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.) I am satisfied with the advancement I have attained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.) I am satisfied with the skill development I have attained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.) I am satisfied with the autonomy I have attained (at work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.) I am satisfied with the intellectual stimulation I have attained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please rate the success of your career to date, relative to your peers, on a scale of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree) in items 45 – 50.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative to my Peers …</th>
<th>Rating 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45.) I am satisfied with the overall success I have achieved in my career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.) I am satisfied with the income I have achieved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.) I am satisfied with the advancement I have attained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.) I am satisfied with the skill development I have attained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.) I am satisfied with the autonomy I have attained (at work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.) I am satisfied with the intellectual stimulation I have attained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothetical Career Success

Please estimate how successful your career would be if each of the following four hypothetical situations were true, on a scale of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree) in items 51 – 56.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My career would be successful if I had …</th>
<th>Rating 1-7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51.) improved my career prospects over the last few years, even if I still perceived them to be below the average of my peers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.) not met my personal aspirations for career progress, despite having achieved more than most of my colleagues?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.) developed many skills over the last few years, though were still less skilled than many of my peers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.) attained what I considered to be only a modest income, though it was nevertheless significantly higher than that achieved by most of my close friends?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.) quite a bit of autonomy to pursue my ideas, though less than my colleagues?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.) more intellectual stimulation than most of my colleagues, though less than I wanted?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
57.) When evaluating your career success, to what extent do you pay attention to what you have done and achieved relative to your peers success?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all To a Moderate Extent To a Large Extent

58.) When evaluating your career success, to what extent do you pay attention to what you have done and achieved relative to your own career aspirations?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all To a Moderate Extent To a Large Extent

59.) Compared to your peers, do you consider your career success to be:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not too Successful Somewhat Successful Very Successful

60.) Everything considered, how successful do you consider your career to date?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Below Average Somewhat Average Very Successful

Circle the answer that applies in item 75 – 81

61.) Read each statement below. Select the one which best represents your view of your current occupation?

(a) I have a JOB - My current occupation simply meets my need for the money or benefits

(c) I have a CAREER - My current occupation allows me to gain wealth, status, influence, and social rewards

(d) I have a CALLING - I am internally driven and fulfilled in my current occupation and believe I am contributing to the greater good of mankind
62.) Select the industry which best represents your current occupation.

(a) Agriculture and Natural Resources  
(b) Architecture and Construction  
(c) Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications  
(d) Education and Training  
(e) Finance  

(f) Government and Public Administration  
(g) Health Science  
(h) Hospitality and Tourism  
(i) Human Services  
(j) Information Technology  

(k) Law and Public Safety  
(l) Manufacturing  
(m) Retail/Wholesale sales and service  
(n) Scientific Research  
(o) Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

63.) In what field was your highest degree obtained?

(a) Education  
(b) Community Services  
(c) Computer & Information Sciences  
(d) Communications  
(e) Arts  

(f) Social Sciences  
(g) Medicine & Allied Health  
(h) Business  
(i) Engineering & Technology  
(j) Science & Math

64.) What is the highest level of education you have achieved to date?

(a) Some High School  
(b) High School  
(c) Trade/Technical/Vocational Training/Certificate  
(d) Some College (No Degree)  

(e) 2-Year/Associates Degree  
(f) Bachelor’s Degree  
(g) Master’s Degree  
(h) Ph.D., Law School, Med./Dental School

65.) What is your current range of income annually?

(a) Below $25,000  
(b) $25,001 – $50,000  
(c) $50,001 – $75,000  
(d) $75,001 – $100,000  
(e) $100,001 – $150,000  
(f) $150,001 – $200,000  

(g) $200,001 – $250,000  
(h) $250,001 +

66.) What is your current status within the organization you work for?

(a) Executive/Senior Level Officials & Manager  
(b) First/Mid-Level Officials and Managers  
(c) Professionals  
(d) Technicians  
(e) Sales Workers  

(f) Administrative Support Workers  
(g) Craft Workers  
(h) Operatives  
(i) Laborers and Helpers  
(j) Service Workers
67.) How would you classify your career progression thus far?

(a) Contest Mobility - Your promotions and increased benefits (i.e. income, responsibility, autonomy) have been due to your hard work paying off

(b) Sponsored Mobility - Your promotions and increased benefits (i.e. income, responsibility, autonomy) have been due to someone within the company taking a special interest in you and providing you mentorship, assisting you in your development

68.) How much better off do you feel you would be in your career if had not played collegiate sports?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Much Worse Off Would Be The Same Much Better Off

69.) Please explain why you feel how you would be better or worse off if you had not played collegiate sport

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Title: The Influence of Collegiate Revenue-Generating Sports Participation on the Subjective Career Success of African-American Males: A Mixed-Method Study

Estimated Time of Participation: 45 Minutes

Modalities: Phone, In Person, Video Conference

Content Area #1: The Education Experience (10 Minutes)

1.) Tell me about your educational experience

Additional Probes:
   a.) What was your major?
   b.) How did you select your major?
   c.) What did you see as barriers to being educated?
   d.) What skills or traits did you develop or enhance through playing sports?
   e.) Do you feel your educational experience prepared you for the real world?
   f.) When did you graduate?

Content Area #2: Transition from Sports to the Labor Market (15 Minutes)

1.) Describe your transition from college athletics participation to the labor market…

Additional Probes:
   a.) What relationship(s), if any, helped your transition to the labor market the most
   b.) What relationship(s), if any, hurt your transition to the labor market the most
   c.) What barriers did you personally have to overcome to be successful in the labor market
   d.) What outside event(s) hurt your transition to the labor market
   e.) What outside event(s) helped your transition to the labor market
   f.) Do you feel sports helped or hurt your ability to be successful in the labor market
   g.) What is the single most important thing you learned from your transition
   h.) What is the single most important thing you learned from your transition

Content Area #3: Career Path (10 Minutes)

1.) Describe your career path, tell me about the jobs you have had and the length of time to the best of your ability.

Additional Probes:
   a.) What skills, characteristics, attitudes, or behaviors did you have to obtain or develop to realize your current success?
   b.) What traits, characteristics, attitudes, or behaviors did you have to get rid of in order to realize your current success?
   c.) Do you feel your success has been due to sponsored mobility or contest mobility?
Content Area #4: Assisting Student-Athletes in Their Transition (10 Minutes)

1.) What can be done to assist student athletes in this transition to the labor market?

   Additional Probes:

   a.) What can the student’s families do to help in the transition?
   b.) What can the student do to help in their own transition to the labor market?
   c.) What can the schools do to help the students in the transition to the labor market?
   d.) What can the NCAA do to help the students in the transition to the labor market?
   e.) Who is responsible for poor transitions
APPENDIX D: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND PERCENTAGES

Table 4.1. Demographic Characteristics and Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Item</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sport</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football (FBS/D-IA)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football (FCS/D-IAA)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball (D-I)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason for Exit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deselection</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation Classification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calling</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Industry</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and Natural Resources</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture and Construction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government &amp; Public Admin.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Science</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and Tourism</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Public Safety</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail/Wholesale Sales and Service</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Field of Highest Degree Earned</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer &amp; Information Sciences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine &amp; Allied Health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Technology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Math</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Level of Education (Participants)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College (No Degree)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Year/Associates Degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

151
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-Year/Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate/Professional Degree (Ph.D., Law/Med./Dental School)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Income Range**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below $25,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,001 - $50,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,001 - $75,000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,001 - $100,000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,001 - $150,000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Organizational Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive/Senior Level Officials &amp; Manager</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First/Mid-Level Officials and Managers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals (accountant, architects, lawyers, etc.)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support Workers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft Workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Workers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Career Progress Classification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored Mobility</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Mobility</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.) Athletic Identity (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.) Reason for Exiting Sports</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.) Number of Years Removed</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.) Parent Education Level</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.) Purposeful (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.489**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.) Aware (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.546**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.) Action-Oriented (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.586**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.) Resourceful (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.386**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.) Networked (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.346**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.) Other-Referent Success (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.853**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.) Self-Referent Success (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.348**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.) Adaptive Capacity (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.386*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.) Subjective Career Success (FS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.386*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).
*  . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

FS = Full Scale
April 6, 2015

Name/Title, Company
Mailing Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Participant:

My name is Leon Jackson and I am a doctoral candidate in the Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. My dissertation study explores factors that influence self-perceived career success of former African-American male college basketball (D-I) and football (D-I/IA/FBS) players, who have never played professionally, after transitioning from college to the workplace.

I invite you to participate in this study by completing an online survey that will take you approximately 20 minutes. The requirements to participate are the following: (1) African-American male, (2) Played at least 1 year in a FBS/D-I/IA (football) or D-I (basketball) program, (3) Never played sports professionally and (4) Not a collegiate athlete at the time of participation. All information obtained will be kept confidential. My hope is to produce useful data that leads to the development of programs and policies that benefit student-athletes.

To participate, please access the survey through the link below:

https://qtrial2015az1.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3E6zABuEFcCiR8N

I also request that you forward this invitation to other former athletes who fit the requirements for this study. Should you have any additional questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact me or my faculty advisor, Dr. Cecilia Maldonado. Thank you in advance for your consideration and for your efforts recruiting other participants. Your support will help me understand the transition from college to work for student athletes. We look forward to your correspondence in the very near future!

Sincerely,

Leon Antonio Jackson
Ph.D. Candidate, Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership
Jacks601@unlv.nevada.edu
(812) 841-6588

Dr. Cecilia Maldonado
Associate Professor, Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership
Faculty Advisor
cesiliam@unlv.nevada.edu
(702) 895-3410
APPENDIX G: INFORMED CONSENT (SURVEY)

INFORMED CONSENT

UNLV

University of Nevada Las Vegas

Department of Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership

TITLE OF STUDY: The Influence of Collegiate Revenue-Generating Sports Participation on the Subjective Career Success of African-American Males: A Mixed Method Study

INVESTIGATOR(S): Cecilia Maldonado, Ph.D. and Leon A. Jackson, M.Ed.

For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Dr. Cecilia Maldonado at (702) 895-3410.

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.

Purpose of the Study
You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to: (1) determine the relationship between adaptive capacity and subjective career success for former African-American male athletes, and (2) explore how former African-American male athletes manage the transition from sport to the general labor market and realize subjective career success.

Participants
You are being asked to participate in the survey portion for this study because you meet the following criteria: (1) African-American male (2) Former FBS/D-IA, FCS/D-IAA football player, or D-IA basketball player, (3) Played collegiate sports for at least 1 year, and (4) Have not played sports professionally.

Procedures
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

1.) Consent to participating. On the online survey, you will be asked to read the consent form and agree before you will be allowed to answer the qualifying question.

2.) Complete the qualifying questions. If you meet the criteria you will gain access to the survey, otherwise you will thanked for your participation.

3.) Complete the survey in its entirety, accessible through the link in the email correspondence.
Benefits of Participation
There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn how adaptive capacity has impacted your ability to realize subjective career success.

Risks of Participation
There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks such as uncertainty or becoming uncomfortable when providing feedback. It is unlikely that you will experience physical, psychological, or social harm as a result of your participation this study.

Cost/Compensation
There will not be financial cost to you to participate in this study. Completing the survey will take 20 minutes of your time, for which you will not be compensated.

Confidentiality
All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for at least 5 years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be shredded with university approved shredding machines. Digital data, including any documents resulting from the transcription, will be stored on a flash drive and destroyed at the conclusion of the five-year period. All emails will be deleted and all data will be de-identified and no names will be identified in the recordings.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with UNLV. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

Participant Consent:
I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have been able to ask questions about the research study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Please type your name in the space below:

______________________________________________

By clicking on the “I agree” button, I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study.

☐ I agree (NOTE: participant will be granted access to the online survey at the following link: https://qtrial2015az1.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3E6zABuEFcIR8N)

☐ I disagree and would like to exit the survey. If I exit, I will be unable to take the survey later.
April 6, 2015

Name/Title, Company
Mailing Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Participant:

My name is Leon Jackson and I am a doctoral candidate in the Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. My dissertation study explores factors that influence self-perceived career success of former African-American male college basketball (D-I) and football (D-IA/FBS) players, who have never played professionally, after transitioning from college to the workplace.

I invite you to participate in a 45-minute interview. The objective of this interview is to get a detailed description of the most critical aspects of your transition from athletics to the labor market. Interviews can be conducted by phone, by video conference (e.g. Skype or FaceTime) or in-person. The requirements to participate are the following: (1) African-American male, (2) Played at least 1 year in a FBS/D-IA (football) or D-I (basketball) program, (3) Never played sports professionally, (4) Not a collegiate athlete at the time of participation, and (5) Feel like you are successful in your career. My hope is to produce useful data that leads to the development of programs and policies that benefit student-athletes.

All information obtained will be kept confidential as I will be using pseudonyms for each participant redacting any personal and/or organizational information you wish to share during the interview.

Should you have any additional questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact me or my faculty advisor, Dr. Cecilia Maldonado. Thank you in advance for your consideration. Your support will help me understand the transition from college to work for student athletes. We look forward to your correspondence in the very near future!

Sincerely,

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(812) 841-6588

Dr. Cecilia Maldonado
Associate Professor, Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership
Faculty Advisor
ceciliam@unlv.nevada.edu
(702) 895-3410
APPENDIX I: INFORMED CONSENT (INTERVIEW)

INFORMED CONSENT
Department of Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership

TITLE OF STUDY: The Influence of Collegiate Revenue-Generating Sports Participation on the Subjective Career Success of African-American Males: A Mixed Method Study

INVESTIGATOR(S): Cecilia Maldonado, Ph.D. and Leon A. Jackson, M.Ed.

For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Dr. Cecilia Maldonado at (702) 895-3410.

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794, toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.

Purpose of the Study
You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to: (1) determine the relationship between adaptive capacity and subjective career success for former African-American male athletes, and (2) explore how former African-American male athletes manage the transition from sport to the general labor market and realize subjective career success.

Participants
You are being asked to participate in the survey portion for this study because you meet the following criteria: (1) African-American male (2) Former FBS/D-I football player, FCS/D-IIA football player, or D-I A basketball player, (3) Played collegiate sports for at least 1 year, (4) Have not played sports professionally, and (5) Identify yourself as successful in your career.

Procedures
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following:
1.) Consent to participating.
2.) Participate in a 45 minute interview, which can take place either face-to-face, via an online medium (i.e. Skype, FaceTime) or over the phone, whichever is most convenient for you.
3.) Review a copy of your transcribed interview to check for accuracy and provide feedback as you deem necessary.

Benefits of Participation
There may be no direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn how adaptive capacity has impacted your ability to realize subjective career success.
**Risks of Participation**
There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks such as uncertainty or becoming uncomfortable when providing feedback. It is unlikely that you will experience physical, psychological, or social harm as a result of your participation this study.

**Cost/Compensation**
There will not be financial cost to you to participate in this study. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes of your time and an additional 30 minutes will be needed to review the transcripts and provide feedback to the researcher. You will not be compensated for any of these activities.

**Confidentiality**
All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for at least 5 years after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be shredded with university approved shredding machines. Digital data will be stored on a flash drive and destroyed at the conclusion of the five-year period. All emails will be deleted and all data will be de-identified and no names will be identified on the recordings.

**Voluntary Participation**
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with UNLV. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

**Participant Consent:**
I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have been able to ask questions about the research study. I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this form has been given to me.

_________________________________________________________  ______________
Signature of Participant                                               Date

_________________________________________________________
Participant Name (Please Print)

**Audio/Video Taping:**
“I agree to be audio taped for the purpose of this research study.”

_________________________________________________________  ______________
Signature of Participant                                               Date

_________________________________________________________
Participant Name (Please Print)
Confidentiality Agreement

Transcriptionist

I. ____________, transcriptionist, agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audiotapes and documentations received from ____________ related to his research study on “The Influence of Collegiate Revenue-Generating Sports Participation on the Subjective Career Success of African-American Males: A Mixed-Method Study”. Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of recorded interviews, or in any associated documents.

2. To not make copies of any audiotapes or computerized titles of the transcribed interviews texts, unless specifically requested to do so by the researcher, ____________.

3. To store all study-related audio files and materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession.

4. To return all audiotapes and study-related materials to ____________ in a complete and timely manner.

5. To delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from my computer hard drive and any back-up devices.

I am aware that I can be held legally responsible for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audio files to which I will have access.

Transcriber’s name (printed) __________________________________________________

Transcriber’s signature __________________________________________________________________________

Date ________________________________________________________________________________________

APPENDIX K: IRB EXEMPT NOTICE

UNLV Social/Behavioral IRB - Exempt Review Exempt Notice

DATE: May 6, 2015

TO: Cecilia Maldonado, Ph.D.

FROM: Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects


ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

EXEMPT DATE: May 6, 2015

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category #2
Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this protocol. This memorandum is notification that the protocol referenced above has been reviewed as indicated in Federal regulatory statutes 45CFR46.101(b) and deemed exempt.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence with our records.

PLEASE NOTE:
Upon final determination of exempt status, the research team is responsible for conducting the research as stated in the exempt application reviewed by the ORI - HS and/or the IRB which shall include using the most recently submitted Informed Consent/Assent Forms (Information Sheet) and recruitment materials. The official versions of these forms are indicated by footer which contains the date exempted.

Any changes to the application may cause this protocol to require a different level of IRB review. Should any changes need to be made, please submit a Modification Form. When the above-referenced protocol has been completed, please submit a Continuing Review/Progress Completion report to notify ORI -HS of its closure.

If you have questions, please contact the Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects at IRB@unlv.edu or call 702-895-2794. Please include your protocol title and IRBNet ID in all correspondence.

Office of Research Integrity - Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway . Box 451047 . Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
(702) 895-2794 . FAX: (702) 895-0805 . IRB@unlv.edu

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REFERENCES


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Ford, J. K., & Weissbein, D. A. (1997). Transfer of training: An updated review and


Hintze, J. (2012). NCSS 8. NCSS, LLC, Kaysville, Utah, USA.


Lynn, M. R. (1986). Determination and quantification of content validity. *Nursing research, 35*(6), 382-386.


CURRICULUM VITAE

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Leon Antonio Jackson

EDUCATION

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Ph.D. – Workforce Development and Organizational Leadership
December 2015


Dissertation Examination Committee
Chairperson, Cecilia Maldonado, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Monica Lounsbery, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Sterling Saddler, Ph.D.
Committee Member, LeAnn Putney, Ph.D.

University of Nevada Las Vegas
M.Ed. – Education Leadership
Emphasis: Workplace Learning and Performance/Vocational Education
December 2011

Indiana State University
B.S. – Marketing
Emphasis: Sales/Business Development
May 2004

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

School of Environmental and Public Affairs at The University of Nevada, Las Vegas Las Vegas, Nevada

CO-FACILITATOR – Facilitation Skills for Workplace Learning and Performance, Summer 2012
School of Environmental and Public Affairs at The University of Nevada, Las Vegas Las Vegas, Nevada

CO-FACILITATOR – Small Group Dynamics, Summer 2012
School of Environmental and Public Affairs at The University of Nevada, Las Vegas Las Vegas, Nevada

TEACHING ASSISTANT – Technologies for Improving Human Performance, Summer 2012
School of Environmental and Public Affairs at The University of Nevada, Las Vegas Las Vegas, Nevada

PUBLISHED WORK /POSTERS

Co-Author, Men’s College Basketball: Analyzing the Catholic Seven Utilizing the Realignment Rating Index
Date Published: January 2013 Publication/Organization/Forum: Winthrop Intelligence
Can be viewed at: http://winthropintelligence.com/2013/01/21/mens-college-basketball-utilizing-the-realignment-rating-index-to-analyze-the-catholic-seven/

Co-Author, Analysis of the Brazilian Tertiary Education System and its Effect on the Workforce
Presented: March 2012 Publication/Organization/Forum: Annual Graduate and Professional Research Forum