

December 2015

Division I Men's Basketball Scholarship : The Challenges of Being a Black Male Athlete

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/8220175>

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DIVISION I MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHOLARSHIP: THE CHALLENGES OF BEING A
BLACK MALE ATHLETE

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December 2015

Dissertation Approval

The Graduate College
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November 13, 2015

This dissertation prepared by

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Division I Men's Basketball Scholarship: The Challenges of Being a Black Athlete

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

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Abstract

The Qualitative research will explore issues that interface particularly with Black student-athletes on Division 1 basketball scholarships regarding academic readiness, academic support, family support and how the experience of a Division 1 scholarship impacted their lives. The population of Black student-athletes that the focus of the research will concentrate on are the black student-athlete who typically exhaust their scholarship, who may have graduated or not but didn't advance to the Pro Ranks. Case Study methodology will be applied wherein the researcher will interview nine former Black basketball players, within 1 to 5 years separation from 3 different Division 1 schools to ascertain their perspectives relating to the scholarship experience, how they negotiated these experiences, and how their actions and decisions impacted them during and beyond their scholarship playing days.

Acknowledgments

My brothers Larry R. Wright, and John Currie, sister Paula and a very Special thank you To Dr. Greg Levitt my Chairman, without him I would not have made it through this process, what a great man with a great family who excepted me hanging around at all times of the day and night!... and thanks to the rest of my committee, Dr. Leann Putney, Dr. Clifford McClain, Dr. Howard Gordan, Dr. Steven Grubaugh, great minds and spirits who sharpen me to do my best effort at all times.

My business partner and best friend, Mr. Peter Guzman, who tells me what I need to know and not what I want to hear, Mr. Otto Media mentor and friend who is the van guard for the Las Vegas Black and Brown communities, Mr. Harvey Munford who taught me how to be a student through Upward Bound 1968, the Lewis Foundation (Harold and Tina Lewis) who continue to give UNLV scholarships to those who can't afford a college education, Dr. Andrew Nixon, my high school sociology teacher, who taught me how to laugh at my problems and be grateful.

Last but not least: Coach Jerry Tarkanian and Dr. Lois Tarkanian, both always gave more than they ever received, along with all of my teammates, Coach Bill Scoble, Coach John Bayer, Coach Fred Albrecht, Doug and Dave Coon my childhood and life-long friends.

Dedication

To my wife Sherrie D. Wright, who encouraged me to finish, I love her more and more each day, (the Boss) to Elmo and Everlean Terry , my grandparents who encouraged me to get an education as a young boy. My mother and father Bobbie Vaughn and Ernest Wright.

Mr. Sig Rogich (Ambassador) my mentor and role model for nearly 50 years and who taught me integrity, courage and hard work. To my family, sons, Saron and his beloved wife Charina, Josh Wright, daughter Nicole Holmes who is always there to help and keep me laughing, and my precious grandchildren, Nicholos, Anya, Zarina and on his way... Amir Joshua Wright.

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Chapter I

Intercollegiate athletics have captivated Americans for over 150 years. Games provide millions of fans with an opportunity to be entertained, build school spirit and recognition for their school. School sports are important for many reasons, most importantly enhancing the national visibility of the college. Athletics has long been considered proponents of other benefits such as providing opportunities for athletes to develop leadership, teamwork and other traits that add to human capital upon graduation (Denhart, Villwock, & Vedder, 2009). Although student athletes face distinctive experiences and challenges as athletic scholarship recipients, they also dream of becoming professional athletes. While these dreams may have begun at an early age for many of the athletes, the academic and athletic challenges before them may be daunting.

Rasmussen College lists “Professional Athlete” as the third rarest career, behind astronomer and fashion model (Freeland, 2009). The three major revenue-earning sports in America are football, basketball, and baseball. Of the high school players in these sports, only 1 in 736 (.0014 percent) will actually make it professionally (Eitzen, 2001). The daily competition for a position on the team may rival their priority of performing in the classroom; yet, the university and the NCAA maintain that the participant is a student before he is an athlete.

As sports in American culture are held in high esteem, it becomes evident to coaches that their jobs become tied to the numbers of wins in a season. The coaches feel the pressure of performing and counsel their students to take classes that would be deemed easier to pass. As noted by Adler and Adler (1985) they select courses from faculty who are “student-athlete friendly or are willing to give the Division I student-athlete special consideration in the classroom” (p. 43).

Division I

To understand the challenges of being a Black Student-Athlete at the Division I level, one must understand the inter-dynamics of what a Division I school is. On the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) website, it states that:

Division I universities are those in which there are at least seven sports for both males and females. Each playing season has to be represented by each gender as well. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. For sports other than football and basketball, Division I schools must play 100 percent of the minimum number of contests against Division I opponents -- anything over the minimum number of games has to be 50 percent Division I. Men's and women's basketball teams have to play all but two games against Division I teams; for men, they must play one-third of all their contests in the home arena. (NCAA, 2008)

A Division I scholarship requires the student athlete to take on additional responsibilities that follow the expectations of both university athletic and academic standards. However, this may not be a true realization of the student athlete as he/she has the mindset to excel in his/her sport without true realization of the close ties between academic performance and performance in the chosen sports arena.

A Division I scholarship renders young impressionable student-athletes with responsibilities that must be navigated and channeled by the institution, or the students have the potential to fail. Student athletes realize they must successfully play their sport in order to have their scholarship renewed, but they may not realize the degree to which they must compete academically (until they are about to be academically dismissed from the team), regardless of their performance on the playing field. Those who do recognize themselves as both students and

as athletes will use the opportunity to maintain their eligibility and graduate, while others may continue to chase the dream of professional basketball in the NBA or any other professional opportunity domestically or internationally. Though it is uncommon, an ever-present threat exists that a student's scholarship can be revoked if she/he fails to uphold the requirements of the contract.

Institutional Benefits

People often consider attending a university based on the sports and teams associated with that institution (Shoop, 2001). Northwestern University increased undergraduate applications by 30% after their football team's participation in the 1996 Rose Bowl, and their overall college ranking rose to put them in the top ten in the U.S. News and World Report (Ehrenberg, 2000). Many universities benefit in similar ways through intensified, positive, athletic exposure. Greater applicant selectivity is a result of increased applications and higher SAT scores (Ehrenberg, 2000). If a student is considering a number of colleges, an athletically competitive Division I school may sway that decision (Denhart, Villwock, & Vedder, 2009).

Athletic program success bolsters the university community and it is common knowledge that a high degree of loyalty and connectedness has the potential to increase alumni donations. Affluent Alumni will donate money to their favorite program. Take for example Robert L. Mendenhall, an inventor and local businessman donated funds for the Mendenhall practice arena for the highly successful University of Nevada, Las Vegas Men's Basketball Program. Funding for athletic programs at Division I universities can be generated by successful teams or simply being a member school in a conference that includes highly successful football and basketball programs. Successful teams and conference members earn monies from television rights paid to sponsor games. Television rights for Championship Football Games and NCAA Basketball

Championships are worth tens of millions of dollars per year (USA Today, 2008). Viewers watch and follow their teams because they feel an emotional connection. According to Yiannakis, Douvis, and Murdy (2003), sports include all human emotions; success, pain, tragedy, along with personal issues and philosophies are associated with sports, which resonates to a broad base of fans to enjoy the stimuli and drama as it unfolds.

Participants

It has long been known that exercise and sports are considered beneficial to one's overall physical and mental development. This is even more evident in intercollegiate athletics (Denhart, Villwock, & Vedder, 2009). According to Denhart, Villwock, and Vedder (2009), athletic scholarships offer multiple advantages to some of the most disadvantaged athletes wishing to attend a college or university. Some of these advantages include: (a) learning the importance of teamwork, (b) learning the art of cooperation to function as a unit while building relationships with team members, and (c) developing leadership traits to build strong characters for use in society as a whole.

In a 2005 study of student-athletes, over 80% responded that athletic participation had positively contributed to their educational and/or personal development (Potuto & O'Hanlon, 2007). Additionally, almost all students stated that they improved their time management and work ethic. It is important to note that differing perceptions of character exist within society (Rudd & Mondello, 2006).

Some literature suggests sports that contribute financially to an institution, namely men's basketball and football, exploit the athletes and diminish the academic aspect of college (Rudd & Mondello, 2006). The degree of mental and physical stress endured by student-athletes, in addition to injuries, plays a huge role in sustainability (Eitzen, 2009). In addition, college

coaches' focus on the aforementioned social aspects of character leads one to discover disconnect between competition and unsportsmanlike conduct. An example of such a disconnect would be a baseball coach who suggests a player "lean into a pitch" or purposely be hit by a ball in order to get on base in order to secure a base hit. While no rules will have been broken and the player's commitment to the team is without reproach, the respect for the game and honesty has been compromised (Rudd & Mondello, 2006). Rudd and Mondello (2006) stated that instances such as this are found in every sport and the more often a player faces such a dilemma, the easier it becomes to see the social rather than the moral aspects of character. According to the authors, in an effort to maintain integrity, the NCAA has increased penalties for unnecessary celebrations and similar inappropriate conduct.

Student-Athlete Obligations

Some people consider the student athlete to lead a charmed life. Their perception is that athletes play all day and let the classes take care of themselves. In reality, intercollegiate athletes' obligations outside the classroom are far greater than that of the average student (Cigliano, 2006). Scholarships are granted based on athletic ability, however academics play an equally important role and students must learn time management skills to address their academic requirements as well. It is essential to understand that a scholarship is not license to play, instead it is a "sophisticated business arrangement;" between the student-athlete who has a "job" to play ball well and the university that depends on the student-athlete to perform at a level that yields a winning record. In addition, s/he must perform at an acceptable academic level as well. The role of the student-athlete is best understood if one considers using a business model: the "employee" must be an "asset" and not a "liability" in order to maintain his, or her, scholarship and viability as an investment.

Stereotypes

Since the nineteenth century enduring stereotypes have represented Blacks as athletically better than Whites (Miller, 1998; Wiggins, 1989). These condescending stereotypes affect students socially and psychologically, while limiting overall capabilities (Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling, & Darley, 1999). For example, Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling, and Darley (1999) stated that emphasizing athletic ability confirms a negative stereotype, “increases anxiety and in part because it creates self-doubt about the ability to perform” (p. 124). The researchers further state that the stereotyping of Black athletes regarding intelligence can indirectly limit actual academic potential (Stone et al., 1999). Teachers, coaches, counselors, and other school personnel must be aware of such stereotyping and understand the detrimental impact it could have.

Sport stereotyping can also come from within the sport. Whiteside (2004) cited the example of University of Norte Dame’s legendary football player and alumnus Paul Hornung’s comment about lowering academic standards to attract black athletes (Whiteside, 2004). Unknowingly, stereotypic beliefs heighten alleged similarities and differences between racial groups (Jones, 1998). Black student-athletes have expressed concerns that racism is noticeable in terms of Blacks being: (a) deprived of leadership positions on and off the playing field in sports, and (b) being treated in a different way compared to White student-athletes (Singer, 2005).

The prominence of race affects judgments about in-groups and out-groups. For instance, Stone et al. (1997) found college students (a sample of predominantly White undergraduate students) held stereotypic beliefs about Black and White athletes and these beliefs influenced their judgments about athletic performance of basketball players. Taylor (2000) asserted that schools in the United States are, “saturated with images of Black athlete stereotypes that perpetuate the myth that the road to success is paved with sports contracts, not diplomas” (p. 75).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the academic habits of Black former Division I scholarship athletes and their competitive commitment to the sport while they participated in intercollegiate athletics. The research of this study further examined strategies of Black former Division I scholarship athletes to compare academic performance to athletic performance. The study focused on the intricacies associated with having been a scholarship athlete at a Division I institution. For example, some experiences of student-athletes may include, but are not limited to: Dealing with the media, balancing their personal, social, family and professional lives, being under constant scrutiny, and so on, while trying to maintain some semblance of normalcy as a college student. In this study, interviewed six former Black Division I basketball players from 3 different Division I schools to ascertain their perspectives relating to the scholarship experience and how their actions and decisions impacted them during and beyond their playing days.

Significance of the Study

The research explored issues that interfaced particularly with Black student-athletes on Division I scholarships regarding academic readiness, academic support, family support, and how the experience of a Division I scholarship impacted their lives. The structure of this study consisted of qualitative data utilizing formalized structured interview questions. The data from formalized interviews were examined and analyzed looking for recurring patterns related to the former Division I scholarship recipients' experiences. Merriam (1998) noted that qualitative research is an appropriate means for seeking to understand perspectives of views of the people involved in a study. She further noted that information retrieved from specific interviews may provide data that are rich in descriptive verbiage to allow for variables and themes that help to understand the theory behind the research study. This research explored the recurring patterns

generated from the gathered data and suggested measures to improve the overall academic and social well-being of Black student-athlete subjective experiences derived from participation in Division I scholarship attainment.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework informing this study was the sociology of sports, which pertained to looking at the relationships between sports and society as a whole. Crossman (2015) notes that sports sociology examines the intertwining values between sports and society related to the cultural values, influences, and relationships are pertinent to both. The focus of this research will be on social inequality as it relates to the sociological theory of social conflict.

Wikipedia (2015) has attributed the initial study of social conflict theory to Karl Marx who believed that individuals and groups within social classes have varying amounts of material and non-material resources with which to function. Those with the greatest resources become more powerful, thus ruling over those with less power. Antonio Gramsci took Marx's theory one step further and noted that connections existed between culture, the state, economy, and power relations. Particularly, Gramsci noted that, "domination of a social class is achieved in part by a dominant ideology expressed through social institutions that socialize people to consent to the rule of a dominant group." (Cole, 2015, p. 2) As it relates to this research, the social institution named by Gramsci was that of an educational facility or university and media.

Crossman (2015) has noted that in conflict theory, there is an inequality due to a disproportionate distribution of resources. Those with the most resources have the greater social control and advance their own social interests before those of others. She specifically suggests that there is a greater attention in this social control paid to race and gender because they endure the most struggles in society as a whole.

Edwards, a Black sociologist and graduate of Cornell University took this conflict theory and entwined his own experiences as an athlete to develop the initial proponents of the sociology of sports. While completing his own graduate studies, he theoretically framed the examination of sport and society to examine the world of sport identifying it as a microcosm of society (Smith, 2010). Specifically, Edwards (1973) advocated his own transformation from student athlete to scholar activist to include four elements. These elements are: (a) institutional structures and dynamics, (b) societal roles and functions, (c) interfacing with other societal institutions, and (d) the forces of social change and evolution that influence the character of sports and society.

Qualitative research methodology was employed to explore and understand the individual subjective experiences of former Black student athletes having received scholarships to larger institutions of higher education. Edwards' work was used as a lens with which to view the data collected from the formalized interviews with former Division I institutions. In looking for emerging patterns, Dr. Edwards' view that the world of sport is a microcosm of society was one commonality sought by this researcher. Research conducted involved asking formalized questions, interpreting existing patterns, and building themes to generalize data responses (Creswell, 2007). Meaning from data sources involved the use of multiple participants, in this case, six former Black Division I scholarship athletes. A case study design using multiple participants resulted in obtaining an insider position, thus allowing for the presentation of personal values and experiences used for collaborating and validating the findings created through possible recurring themes gathered from the formalized interview questions (Creswell, Plano, & Clark, 2011).

Definition of Terms

A student-athlete is defined as a participant in a coordinated competitive sport supported by an academic institution in which an individual is enrolled. Gerdy (2000) stated that student athletes must typically balance the roles of being full-time students and full-time athletes.

Black student-athlete is defined as a student-athlete whose ethnicity is African American.

Limitations and Assumptions of the Study

This study examined a cross-section of former Black student-athlete basketball players holding alumni status from three universities with three participants from each university. The main limitation is the number of participants and schools. In addition, an increasingly large number of Black female student-athletes are participating in the very same sports as men; however, this demographic was not included in this study. Finally, I only interviewed participants who were living on the west coast. There may be cultural differences, particularly in the South, Midwest, and Northeast, along with individual experiences when comparing schools and student-athletes' experiences.

Summary

Certain expectations and challenges are specific to Black student-athletes that are not recognized by the general public. The research examined the experience of having been a Black student athlete on a Division I scholarship, and the distinct set of expectations and challenges they faced during their time as student athletes.

The past established experiences and Edwards' study of sport sociology was the lens through which I viewed this study as he has examined the status of Division I Black student-athletes extensively. His presentations and publications have dealt with the issues of: (a) institutional structures and dynamics, (b) societal roles and functions, (c) interfacing with other

societal institutions, and (d) the forces of social change and evolution that influence the character of sports and society (Edwards, 1973). Therefore, the qualitative data collected for this research also incorporated the critical elements mentioned above as the analysis of data were brought forward.

Chapter II

Literature Review

According to some researchers the time demands of athletic competition compel student-athletes to sacrifice academics (Meyer, 1990; Parham, 1993), making it difficult to dedicate study time or attain respectable grades (Cantor & Prentice, 1996). For example, Shulman and Bowen (2001) found athletes who played all types of sports to under-perform academically, but the deficit was more pronounced for athletes who played high-profile Division I revenue-generating sports (i.e., football, basketball and hockey). Differences in measures of cognitive skills between male athletes in revenue-producing sports (i.e., football and basketball) and male non-athletes develop in the freshman year (Pascarella, Bohr, Nora, & Terenzini, 1995), and have been found to mature over the course of college experience (Pascarella, Trunkenmiller, Trenzini, Edison, & Hagedorn, 1999). Research suggests the “athletic culture” isolates athletes from regular students (Astin, 1977); student-athletes find it problematic to intermingle with peers outside athletic groups (Blinde & Greendorfer, 1992) consequently restraining opportunities for personal development.

Racial Identity

“Haven’t you ever wondered why the White man genuinely applauds a Black man who achieves excellence with his body in the field of sports, while he hates to see a Black man achieve excellence in his mind?” (Cleaver, 1968, p. 151). Hodge, Burden, Robinson, and Bennett (2008) have noted that Black male athletes have been seen as athletically gifted and intellectually inferior since the 19th Century. Simiyu (2012) has pointed out that the dominance of Black athletes seems exaggerated in the high profile sports of football, basketball, and track and field. Simiyu (2012) stressed that Black student-athletes encounter race challenges in what is viewed

as cultural practices. Similar to Marx's theory of social organization, whiteness of race is associated with academic achievement and darkness of skin is associated with natural athletic talent.

Edwards (2010) has stressed that sports participation is seen as one means for moving out of the ghetto and into a middle class way of life. Edwards established that this gives very young children a misconception that excelling at a sport is more valuable than obtaining an education that promotes academic achievement. Simiyu (2012) then argues "the dominant role of Blacks in selected collegiate sports would seem to provide evidence that sports are the only elevator to success." (p. 43). Harper (2014) concluded that less than two percent of college athletes are really drafted into professional sports after college. He particularly listed the number of athletes drafted professionally into the National Football League (NFL) or the National Basketball Association (NBA) where a predominance of athletes are Black.

Harrison (2002) stated that in terms of higher education, counselors, administrators, coaches, and student-athletes have approached college entry with low academic expectations for classroom performance. Black student-athletes found in the big revenue sports of basketball and football are given classes that are non-rigorous in nature in order to keep them focused on excelling in their sport, yet keep them eligible to play for the university. Simiyu (2012) confirms, "a high proportion of Black students go to school with a single-minded purpose to excel in athletics and only barely make it through the academic program to maintain eligibility." (p. 70).

Simiyu (2012) cites Hyatt (2003) as having studied a report submitted by the Center for the Study of Athletics. The data from the study encompassed research involving forty-two Division I colleges. The report of the data noted that, "a high proportion of African American

athletes attended college as an avenue to profession ranks” (Simiyu, 2012, p. 44). The Center for the Study of Athletics reported that 44% of Black athletes expected to become professional athletes after college while only 20% of non-Black athletes had the same expectation.

Harper, Williams, and Blackman (2013) conducted a four-year study of 76 colleges that were member institutions of the NCAA. The study utilized student-athletes, primarily focusing on Black athletes to look for graduation rates as the subjects of the study. Primarily they were seeking to determine the percentage of Black athletes that graduate from these universities having obtained academic scholarships. The results of the study noted that Black male student-athletes graduated 5.3 percentage points lower than their same-race male counterparts not on intercollegiate sports teams. They also determined that 49.8% of Black male student-athletes did not graduate within a six-year period of time. Wieberg (2008) reiterated that from 1995 – 1998, only 49% of the Black student-athletes having college scholarships were able to graduate with a six-year period of time as opposed to 76% of White student-athletes.

Race logic suggests that White athletes’ success in sports can be ascribed to intellectual attributes and hard work, whereas Black athletes’ success is ascribed to natural superior physical abilities with inferior intelligence (Sailes, 1993). Stereotypic race logic in sports when conveyed to impressionable Black youth can impose beliefs of athletic superiority while minimizing beliefs of intellectual ability. In contrast, when race logic is conveyed to impressionable White youth it can impose beliefs of athletic inferiority while maximizing beliefs of intellectual superiority (Harrison, Azzarito, & Burden, 2004; Harrison, Harrison, & Moore, 2002).

In a qualitative research study, Beamon (2015) suggested that socialization is used by society as a theoretical framework for Black males entering Division I schools as student-athletes. Social imitation and social learning were used by the researcher to guide her study in

looking at the over representation of Black male athletes in the college revenue sports of basketball and football. Specifically, Beamon (2015) stated, “The process of socialization is carried out by family, school, peers, the media, and the community” (p. 3).

Beamon interviewed 20 former Division I student-athletes in one study focusing on identifying socializing agents, processes, and the environments that affected the former athletes and their move to develop their identities with sports. Beamon (2015) noted, “Through the socialization process, one learns the social roles to play, such as gender roles, racial roles, and athletic roles” (p. 3). The premise of her study and the interaction with the former athletes through the interview process noted a similarity in many issues. Primarily, “many of the respondents expressed ideas that evidence their early, intentional, and intensive socialization into sports.” (Beamon, 2015, p. 3)

In a further explanation of the study, Beamon noted that 57 percent of the Black athletes were seen as successful due to physical ability while four percent of white athletes were portrayed as the same. Conversely, white athletes were portrayed as intelligent, while thirty-six percent of the Black athletes were seen as violent or aggressive. The research suggests that this portrayal of violence and aggression could lend a negative stereotype to the Black athlete as a whole. Through the interview process and the responses of the participants, eighteen of the former athletes interviewed noted, “that their parental support for athletic achievement outweighed the support they received for academic achievement” (Beamon, 2015, p. 11).

Recruitment

Higginbotham (2011) noted that it has been common practice at some institutions of higher education to recruit talented student athletes. In so doing, not all of these individuals are academically developed to succeed in a university course of study. He further noted that young

Black children are drawn to the media where athletes are idolized and portrayed as having a luxurious life. Higginbotham (2011) cited Sack and Staurowsky, (1998) as having noted that sports have been used as a vehicle to elevate minorities and immigrant groups by recruiting these players for universities to profit from athletic abilities rather than educational levels in an effort to focus on their becoming professional athletes. Higginbotham (2011) also noted that student-athletes at Division I schools tended to have lower mean grade point averages, lower test scores, and academically performed lower than their non-athletic peers.

Davis (2006) conducted a dissertation research on freshmen student-athletes looking at how these freshmen decide the university they will attend, and what their satisfaction is with that university once they arrive and attend. In his dissertation, Davis (2006) noted that recruiting high school athletes is a highly competitive process. Recruitment for some high school athletes begin in their junior year as the coaches outline the vacancies in their own teams and strive to find the best new athlete to fill the vacated position. Davis (2006) also stated that for some incoming student-athletes, the awarding of scholarships can mark the difference between recruiting a top high school athlete or losing a potential candidate.

Davis (2006) cited Mentz and Whiteside (2003) who suggested that students are aware of institutional rankings in today's society due to the media. Mentz and Whiteside (2003) also stated that students use the rankings that are important to them, to find institutions that have similar qualities. These potential student-athletes look at university rankings as a factor in making the decision for where they will fit in. If success is an important factor to student-athletes, they may look to rankings or successful conferences as a means toward their own goal. Some coaches have stated that they perceived a particular student-athlete chose to attend an institution because they wanted to be a part of a particular conference (Davis, 2006).

Although African American males are under-represented in nearly every traditional venue for upward socioeconomic mobility in our society, education included, they are considerably over-represented in professional football, baseball, basketball, and boxing. African Americans comprise 12% of the United States population and the median enrollment of African American undergraduates at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I institutions is only about 4% (Center for the Study of Athletics, 1988), yet they comprise about 46% of the football players and 62% of the male basketball players who participate in Division I college athletics (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 1992).

Exploitation

It has been argued that the existence of every race rests on the talents of a small percentage of exceptional individuals (Du Bois, 1903). Are college coaches from Division I institutions recruiting the talented one-tenth of the Black community? In the unrelenting rouse of reports indicating long hours that resulted in forty to fifty practice and play weeks devoted to athletics, grades of student-athletes trended down due to lowered academic preparation standards. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in view of the above consequences had recently introduced stricter regulations, reducing playing schedules, and elevating eligibility standards to silence the many critics.

Black student-athletes in the 1960s found it difficult to juggle their academics, the expectations of their coaches or teams, and became socially isolated as they had little or no time to immerse themselves in the college experience. Therefore, the demands of their sport took precedence over developing their educational knowledge and hindered their role of becoming a serious student. The case study of one Black student-athlete illustrates the inexcusable cost of disregarding the academic task of higher education. Jack Butler dreamed of a career in

professional football. When his athletic eligibility at California State – Los Angeles was completed, the institution’s academic support deteriorated. “Suddenly the academic C+ former football star . . . flunked out of LA State . . . and, in the end, Butler had no degree, no proposition to play football, and no skills to use for productive employment” (Lapchick, 1984, p. 202).

Jarvie and Reid (1997) noted that between 1920 and 1960 racial studies concentrated on the social and economic inequalities, cultural and psychological development, and family relations and political isolation. During that time, Karl Marx espoused his conflict theory noting that racism was about ruling class delineations where capitalism divided individuals into social classes where one class ruled and the other was subservient (Jarvie & Reid, 1997). John Rex continued to develop this conflict theory and noted that racially categorized groups were intertwined within the large social structures. Rex analyzed the differences at this time between Blacks and Whites. The conclusion he devised noted that racial discrimination resulted in Blacks being at the bottom of the social structure (Jarvie & Reid, 1997).

Jarvie and Reid (1997) noted suggestions that in the 1990s, the physical makeup of the Black athlete allowed for a greater number of these individuals to become sought after in the sports arenas. They also noted that within the American athletic society, the development of the Black athlete brought forward the concept of financial profit, celebrity status on the part of the athlete, and cultural acceptance. For the development of sociology and sport then, sports have been viewed as a means for idolizing Black athletes while “marking self-expression and sporting profit as a means of pursuing social and economic mobility” (Jarvie & Reid, 1997, p. 218).

The profit of sports can be seen in many divergent venues. However, if we narrow the scope to that of student athletes and their desire to become a big star one day, one can note that Division I universities take great pains in recruiting those athletes that will help to bring the

crowds who generate the dollars spent on the sporting event itself. Collegiate basketball and football are noted to be revenue-creating programs for major universities. Purdy, Eitzen, and Hufnagel (1982) noted that winning sports programs attract monetary gains through television, bowl contracts, corporate sponsorships, alumni donations, and fan participation in sporting events. These fans generate multiple sources of income through concessions, ticket sales, and merchandise purchases.

The importance of generating revenue implies that it is the economic reason of student-athletes, which is the most important concern to an institution. “While bowl-game revenues have just about doubled . . . to \$88 million . . . the NCAA’s Division I men’s basketball tournament . . . brought in approximately \$153 million” (Blum, 1994, p. 61). Wiggins (1991) stated that increased attendance at collegiate sporting events showed the worth of athletics. He continued by asking whether academics were being neglected in pursuit of sports. For many years, athletics sacrificed the student for the athlete, a practice that generated a substantial damaging and appalling outcome. Despite their eagerness to go after a college education, many Black student-athletes arrive at the doorstep of their university ill equipped (academically) to take on the rigors of college-level athletics while sustaining an academic focus (Wiggins, 1991). Edwards (1983) claimed the “student” was sacrificed and that three quarters of students awarded college scholarships did not graduate. Those athletes who do find a role in professional athletics enjoy an average career of a mere five or fewer years (Miracle & Rees, 1994). The exploitation of Black athletes is not a new idea in the environment of collegiate athletics, according to Edwards (1983). Universities and athletic departments have financially benefitted from increased recognition and alumni donations for decades.

Eligibility

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was launched in 1910 to help police athletics and to facilitate the amalgamating of organized sport programs at colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada. Despite the regulations noted above, in 2005, many Division I schools struggled to graduate 50% of their players within the six years of enrollment. (Christy, Seifried & Pastore, 2008) To combat this problem, the NCAA devised the Academic Performance Rate (APR) to look at a team's ability to measure and retain eligible athlete's semester by semester. The NCAA believed that the APR would assist in raising the requirements for graduation rates with penalties put forward for those who could not comply.

Since its inception, the NCAA has tried to repair academic integrity in intercollegiate athletics. The heart of the NCAA's reform labors has been directed towards making incoming student-athletes as equivalent academically to the rest of the student body as possible by ever-increasing the pre-college academic requirements for the initial eligibility of impending student-athletes. As a consequence, Proposition 48 was executed in the fall of 1986 and required that potential student-athletes obtain a high school grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 in a set of 12 core curriculum courses, as well as at least a 700 combined score on the SAT, to be eligible to participate in athletics during their first year (Sellers, 1992).

A student-athlete who met only one of the requirements was considered a partial qualifier and was ruled ineligible to compete during their first year. However, the partial qualifier was allowed to receive an athletic scholarship. In 1989, the NCAA passed legislation (Proposition 42) that eliminated the partial qualifier. The passage of Proposition 42 meant that all student-athletes must meet both the SAT requirement and the grade point average or they would lose the

opportunity to receive an athletic scholarship their first year in college as well as lose a year of athletic eligibility (Sellers, 1992).

In 1996, the initial eligibility requirements were raised and a sliding scale was implemented to address some of the criticism levied about the use of a single cut-off score for the SAT. The new legislation requires a potential student-athlete with a 2.0 high school GPA on a set of 15 core curriculum courses to earn a combined score of 900 on the SAT in order to be eligible to receive an athletic scholarship (Wieberg, 1996).

Sellers (1992) noted the importance of regulating eligibility for collegiate sports, but pointed out that ACT and SAT scores were of primary concern to Black athletes. The author noted, “Black student-athletes score significantly lower than their white counterparts on the SAT and ACT as reported by the Center for the Study of Athletics” (Sellers, 1992, p. 49). Sellers (1992) also reported that the NCAA (1984) stated:

Fifty-four percent of Black male athletes and 48% of Black female athletes who attended and graduated from the Division I universities would have been disqualified from freshman eligibility by the standardized test scores as opposed to 9% of their white counterparts. (p. 49)

Stressors

Welsing (1990) explains her definition of Racism (white supremacy) as the local and global power system and dynamic, structure, maintained by persons who classify themselves as white, whether consciously or subconsciously determined. This system consists of patterns of perception, logic, symbol formation, thought, speech, action, and emotional response, as conducted simultaneously in all areas of people activity (economics, education, entertainment, labor, law, politics, religion, sex, and war). The ultimate purpose of racism is white genetic

survival, and to prevent white genetic annihilation on planet Earth - a planet upon which the vast and overwhelming majority of people are classified as non-white (black, brown, red and yellow) by white-skinned people, and all of the non-white people are genetically dominant (in terms of skin coloration) compared to the genetic recessive white-skinned people.

Hawkins (1999) explains that Black male athletes many times come from communities where African Americans are the majority. They then attend universities where they are not only in the minority; they are a small subset of the minority, with a whole host of expectations and pressures to which other Black students are not exposed. Person and LeNoir (1997) found that one out of every nine African American students at a four year predominantly White institution of higher learning is an athlete. Many of the Black male student-athletes come from predominantly Black communities, making the adjustment to college, which is often difficult for any student or student-athlete, more complicated by race and ethnicity. Hawkins (1999) found that the transition into predominantly White universities may be particularly challenging for some, as it may be the first time that these Black males are made aware of their minority status, and may not have the resources to handle such a realization.

Purdy, Eitzen, and Hufnagel (1982) conducted a study assessing the degree to which college athletes were disadvantaged academically by their sports participation. In their study of athletes from Colorado State University from 1970-1980, they looked at Division I-A student athletes to examine the number of athletes who took the normal four to five years to complete their undergraduate degree. In the study, 2,091 student-athletes were represented. Two factors were considered in the study. First, the researchers compared the athletes to the general student population measuring academic ability and achievement. Next, the researchers looked at the

sport in which the athlete participated, whether the student lettered in the sport, and what the participation level of the athlete was during their previous high school senior year.

Results of the research yielded the following: (a) athletes were less prepared for college entry than the general student population, (b) athletes had a lower grade point average in high school than the general student population, and (c) SAT and ACT scores were less than the general student population. Further analysis showed that black athletes scored the lowest on academic measures and were the least prepared for academic study (Purdy, Eitzen, & Hufnagel, 1982).

Purdy et al. (1982) noted that athletes in the male revenue sports of football and basketball had less of a chance of receiving a quality college preparatory background, as these high revenue sports placed immense pressure on the student-athlete to perform. They further stated that, “The coaches in these sports were seen to be excessive in their demands on the student-athletes” (Purdy et al., 1982, p. 446). The researchers demonstrated that the coaches of these high revenue sports found it necessary to recruit exceptional athletes who may not be qualified to meet the academic rigors of college and that to keep these marginal students active in their sport, it might require... “obtaining bogus credits for them out of difficult classes leading to graduation, thus subverting their education” (Purdy et al., 1982, p. 446).

Simiyu (2012) cited evidence by Coakley (2009) in research noting there are six factors that have led to the isolation of Black student-athletes on college campuses. Included in these six factors are: (1) racial and athletic stereotypes related to academic success or the lack thereof, (2) expense of inordinate amounts of time on athletic related tasks, (3) sense of apathy on the part of the Black athlete to participate in campus activities, (4) disconnect of the Black athlete from interactions with the general student population outside of his/her sport, (5) White athlete’s

feeling of discomfort in interactions with Black athletes as it relates to their own cultural interactions with diverse races, and (6) perception held by White athletes of the Black athlete's being privileged and sought after in the high revenue sports. Simiyu (2012) associated these six factors as elements contributing to making a college environment toxic for Black student-athletes, thus again causing them to withdraw into their sport and isolating them from the whole college experience and from being prepared academically to excel.

Thomas (2008) reported that student-athletes in the high revenue sports had a larger cumulative physical toll throughout the academic year. The coaches of these sports control the physical aspects of the games and concentrated the efforts of the athletes on the rigors of sports participation. The need for physical conditioning, participation in daily pick-up games, weight-training sessions, cardiovascular conditioning, time trials and fitness tests, and individual skill development along with studying play books and training films can lead a student-athlete's inability to concentrate on the cognitive rigor of a college education. Yet another aspect to consider is that of the emotional buy-in of the student-athlete. Many of them, especially the Black-athletes, have been indoctrinated to be less invested in their education (Harrison, 2002). Athleticism and the vision to make it to professional status can lead the student-athlete to the emotional highs and lows associated with competition outcomes. Burnout then, for the student-athlete, can come in the form of physical exhaustion, cognitive confusion, and emotional fatigue.

McHugh Engstrom, Sediack, and McEwen (1995) conducted a study looking at a major public research university faculty members' attitudes toward male student athletes. In this study, 201 faculty members from a NCAA Division I school were surveyed to measure their attitudes toward groups of student-athletes:

Negative responses from the faculty returning surveys noted, (a) faculty were amenable to slowing the pace of instruction to lengthen the degree seeking time for the athletes, (b) faculty were upset at a student-athlete being admitted to the university with lower ACT/SAT scores than that of the general student population, (c) faculty were more angered and embarrassed when a student-athlete who was less academically prepared than a general student received a scholarship to attend the university, and (d) faculty were upset when expanded advising and tutoring programs were opened specifically for the student-athletes. (McHugh Engstrom, Sediack, & McEwen, 1995, p. 222)

In a study of how this places an academic stress on the student-athlete, McHugh Engstrom et al., (1995) reported that student-athletes receiving scholarships to college and being admitted with lower SAT scores elicited stronger feelings of anger, disapproval, and concern on the part of the university faculty. The surveys from the university faculty members also noted surprise and disbelief in a student-athlete who might obtain an A in their class. While they would recognize the accomplishments of the student-athlete in his/her sport, this accomplishment was not held by faculty to be as important as the general student population who received acknowledgement for an academic feat. McHugh Engstrom et.al (1995) further noted that the perceptions held by these faculty members had “potentially harmful effects on the student-athletes’ academic performance and self-esteem” (p. 225).

Coordinating Role of Student and Athlete

The college experience of a student non-athlete differs extremely from that of a student-athlete, because student non-athletes are not held to the professional standards expected of college athletes. A college student non-athlete attends classes, attends extracurricular activities such as student government or intramural sports, studies, and usually still has time to spend with

friends or possibly work a part-time job. If he/she so desires, the student non-athlete can take fewer credits or even take a semester or more off without jeopardizing his/her standing at the school. In contrast, the student-athlete who is awarded a scholarship for his athletic ability quickly discovers that no extra revenue may be paid to the student-athlete, nor can the student-athlete work a part time job aside from the athletic scholarship. Violation of this rule can cost a student-athlete his scholarship and place the university on probation by the NCAA. Further, if a student-athlete's academic credit load falls below 12 credits (full time status) he becomes immediately ineligible for any athletically-related aide. Further, if he sits out a semester or more of school, his eligibility for that time is lost. Student non-athletes may receive non-athletic scholarships from their university or outside sources in reward for unique or exceptional talents they possess, hold a part time job, receive monies or gifts for participating in extracurricular activities, or enjoy free meals or any number of perquisites not permissible to the student-athlete. Non-athletic scholarships may have general requirements for renewal, but these requirements usually don't exact much time or concentration from the student's academic life. However, student-athletes are primarily concerned with and limited to two facets of the college experience: attending classes and performing on the athletic fields.

Student-athletes have three to five fewer hours per day to study because of practices, position meetings, game film reviews, treatment for injuries, and athletic competitions. When they do get around to studying, they usually are already drained mentally and physically. Unlike their non-athlete counterparts, student-athletes have practically no time to explore or discover any extra-curricular interests and the chances of pursuing their desired degree are lowered. According to a national study by the Center for Athletes' Rights and Education (CARE) a large percentage of student-athletes who initially enrolled in professional programs either switched to

more manageable majors, dropped out, or did minimal work to get by (Sack & Saurowsky, 1998).

A study by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) discovered that Division I athletes, compared to students intensely involved in other extracurricular activities struggled to take on leadership roles, learn new skills, and learn about themselves (Sack & Saurowsky, 1998).

Counter to arguments that student-athletes misuse or do not appreciate the free education they are given; one might argue instead that student-athletes are not allowed to explore all of the aspects of their “free education” because they are prevented from pursuing a normal student lifestyle in or outside of the classroom. The need to produce on the athletic field takes priority, followed by very limited study time while leaving little time for personal exploration (Higginbotham, 2011).

Professional Aspirations

Barbalias (2002) noted that many student-athletes arrive on college and university campuses each year with the idea of making it professionally in their sport and, subsequently, making vast sums of money. However, soon after registering for classes, they encounter discrimination in the classroom and on the field or court. A seemingly critical problem encompassing the Black student-athletes on campuses has commonly involved the painstaking seclusion of these athletes from their new academic environment (Barbalias, 2002).

Barbalias (2002) cited Wiggins (1991) as noting that during the 1930s, only the best Black athletes were received into the colleges’ athletic communities, and very few found a safe haven in the social community (Wiggins, 1991). These athletes found themselves on primarily White campuses surrounded by predominantly White communities, and the academy made little effort to enroll non-athlete Black students (Wiggins, 1991).

Harper, Williams and Blackman (2013) argued that young Black men are socialized to value sports over academics at a very young age. As it pertains to scholarship for Division I schools, these athletes tend to be recruited from less prestigious high schools where they have had fewer resources and were found to have less academic rigor to prepare them for college-level academic studies. Harper, Williams and Blackman (2013) also acknowledged that Edwards (1984) espoused the representation of Black athletes as unprepared scholars with athletic superiority, hence these men were sought after for the revenue producing Division I schools. Even if the limited representation of Black students on campus may hamper the cultivation of a strong community among Black students, a determination to strengthening the existing community could lessen the feeling of rejection many Black student-athletes experience during their college years (Lapchick, 1984).

In a continued conceptual view of the Black athlete, Harper, Williams, and Blackman (2013) noted that Black male student-athletes rarely develop the academic benefits and degree seeking status associated with high levels of purposeful career attainment beyond their athletic careers in college. Harrison (2002) noted that Black student-athletes have been stereotyped to have less expectations put upon them than do their White counterparts outside of sports. Thus, it was reported by Edwards (2000) that these athletes have more difficulty in transitioning from sports to careers once their Division I days are completed.

Harrison and Lawrence (2003) studied the perceptions of Black student-athletes' athletic career transitions. Specifically, the researchers noted that one of every nine Black student-athletes who attended universities that were predominantly white with athletic scholarships had a skewed view that they would be making the big money in sports. Harrison and Lawrence (2003) noted that Edwards (2000) summarized that this "distorted view by Black student-athletes ended

in the realization that only 1.6% of college student athletes would move on to the level of professional sports” (p. 374). Thus, career transitioning for student- athletes is critical.

In their research, Harrison and Lawrence (2003) worked with 26 Black student athletes’ perceptions of athletic career transition. The Life after Sports Scale was utilized to obtain a mixed design of qualitative and quantitative data outlining five domains emerged as critical by the student-athletes to their transition to life after sports.

These domains were outlined as follows: (a) inspirational imagery validation – a self-recognition of the work needed by the athlete to make the transition, (b) academic and athletic success – a self-reflection of the importance and academic and athletic success to make the transition, (c) classroom accomplishments – the necessity for academic success as well as athleticism, (d) family devotion – recognition and importance that family played in the transition process, and (e) life after sport – a self-reflection on the part of the athlete to face the reality of having to experience the exit from collegiate sports to a career field. (Harrison & Lawrence, 2003, p. 382-383)

Harrison and Lawrence (2003) concluded, “student-athletes’ responses involved the athletes relating their life experience to their experiences as an athlete in their chosen sport” (p. 385). “Individuals who strongly commit themselves to the role of athlete were less likely to explore other career, education, and lifestyle options because of their involvement in sports” (Brewer, 1993, p. 387).

Summary

Blacks have been fighting various forms of exploitation: racism, stereotyping and identity for a very long time. Exploitation by stereotyping and other forms of racism are particularly insidious in the realm of intercollegiate athletics and most obvious in the sports of football and

men's basketball. University athletic programs are driven by revenue produced by successful athletic teams. As a consequence, it is crucial to the universities that the best possible athletes are recruited and once there, provided with the best opportunities for athletic excellence. Too often the mission of the university, to educate all its students, is compromised, particularly with Black athletes, by overemphasizing athletic pursuits to the detriment of academics. Interventions must be put into place to secure adequate efforts are made to guarantee that student-athletes, especially Black scholarship students, take advantage of the academic component and graduate

Chapter III

Methodology

The purpose of this research study was to understand the issues involved in being a scholarship athlete in a Division I college/university by interviewing six former Black Division I scholarship athletes. This dissertation implemented a qualitative research approach using multiple case studies. Case studies are appropriate for examining an issue when the connection with the context is not clear (Yin, 2003). A multiple case study design was chosen to identify similarities across diverse individual experiences (Stake, 1995). Putney (2010) further noted that the use of multiple cases may “become a form of generalizing to a theory, either taken from the literature or uncovered and grounded in the data” (p. 7). This study used multiple cases in an attempt to generalize to the theory brought forward in the review of literature.

For the purpose of this research the focus was instrumental as it is one that “lends itself to the understanding of an issue or phenomenon beyond the case itself” (Putney, 2010, p. 5). In this instance, the interview and analysis of data collected from former Black Division I scholarship athletes served as the basis for understanding their development of successful academic habits and attitudes versus commitment to their sport. Subsequent interviews also addressed their student academic strategies versus the athletic expectations from their coaches and university personnel.

Baxter and Jack (2008) have noted critical elements need to be present in order to justify the use of a multiple case design. In particular, these would be the ability to focus on ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. This dissertation focused on questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ former Black athletes were influenced by their dual roles of college student and college athlete. Interviews of various former student athletes were conducted to analyze and interpret their previous experiences and

views. Merriam (1998) noted that interviews offer specific information as a common view for asking questions in order to elicit information. Spradley (1980) discussed the critical nature of formal interviews as elemental to setting a request to hold an interview for a specified purpose. The structure of the formal questions was used to look for explanations of how and why the former Black Division I athletes addressed their student academic strategies while addressing the athletic expectations inherent with the awarding of the scholarship to attend the intended college/university while pursuing their chosen sport. Putney (2010) noted that an explanatory study is appropriate when the researcher seeks to discover how and why things are taking place to the subjects being studied.

After completing the interviews, the researcher examined the data gained from each of the six former athletes. Specifically, the researcher looked for patterns in the data. As Putney (2010) noted, “patterns are constructed from one set of data within the case and then subsequent data collected to see whether patterns are consistent” (p. 9). Merriam (1998) states “analysis results in rich, thick descriptions reach across multiple data sources to make use of themes derived from the data collected” (p. 156). These collected themes became a charting of the commonalities of collected data used to explain the issues being researched.

Research Questions

The following two research questions formed the basis of this study:

1. What were the experiences of the Black Division I scholarship student athletes as they pertained to developing successful academic habits and attitudes versus commitment to their sport?
2. What strategies were used by the former athlete to maneuver the dual role of student and athlete?

A complete list of research interview questions asked during each interview can be found in the Appendix.

Interviewer's Background

The researcher conducted all of the interviews. The researcher interviewer was a 62-year-old African American male, who also participated as a former Black male student athlete at a Division I university.

Written Consent

Written consent was obtained from all participants in case study. And they were informed of their rights as participants before the interview was conducted, including being able to draw from their interview at any time, refrain from answering questions that may induce discomfort and stop the interview. Confidentiality was explained to the participants before the interview, informing them that their names would not be published in any document, and would be disguised on all researched materials.

Participants

This study employed purposive sampling. The participants selected for this research were six Black former scholarship athletes from three Division I universities. The selection process included the following steps. The researcher conducted a search of twenty Division 1 college basketball rosters from 1984 to 2013. Based on those rosters, which included photographs of the players, the researcher determined that 30 athletes met the research criteria. The researcher called the Athletic Directors to obtain contact information for each of the players. The Athletic Directors called the athletes to briefly describe the research project, to ascertain their willingness to participate in the study and to get permission to give the researcher their contact information. Of the 30 possible participants, the researchers received contact information on fifteen athletes.

After attempts to contact fifteen athletes, the researcher was able to contact twelve athletes. Of those twelve athletes, nine agreed to participate in this study. Three of the athletes were unable to complete the interviews for this study. The six remaining athletes were all from three universities in the Mountain West Conference, which is nationally recognized for its Division I basketball programs. For the purposes of anonymity, pseudonym names were used to protect their identity. Participants are described as follows:

Julius graduated from high school with a 3.5 GPA, was a great athlete, but wasn't highly recruited coming out of high school. With his superb skills on the basketball court, he earned his way to a Division I school in the south and then later transferred to a powerhouse Division I school on the west coast.

Bernard was highly recruited to one Division I school and then transferred to another Division I school on the west coast where he graduated with a 3.0 GPA.

Hendley also went to two Division I schools where he encountered some tension and personality conflicts with the coaches he had at both schools, but manage to graduate from college with a 3.3 GPA.

Ervin was a celebrated All American coming out of high school. He was so good that he contemplated going straight to the NBA after graduating from high school. He ended up injuring his knee his freshman year and managed to graduate from college.

Trenton, while in high school, was a top 50 power forward in the country, an excellent student in high school graduating with a 3.8 GPA, had some substance abuse issues his first year in college and then bounced around to three more Division I Schools before graduating with 3.5 GPA in college.

John graduated from high school with a 2.8 GPA. He attended two Division I schools where he had conflicts with coaches, teachers and counselors, but managed to graduate with a 3.0 GPA.

Setting

The interviews require a certain degree of privacy and divulging of personal information required concessions regarding setting. The researcher did respect each individual's different personalities and interviews were conducted in agreeable. Five interviews were conducted face to face and one interview was conducted via telephone. The face to face interviews took place in a private room in a university library. The interviews took place from January 2014 through July 2014.

Procedure

The researcher conducted three one-on-one structured interviews using pre-determined formalized questions for each of the participants. The interviews focused on the participants' past experiences as Black Division I student athletes and attempted to uncover how they navigated the dual role of scholarship student and athlete. Consent forms delineating the purpose of the study were given to each of the participants. All identifying information was removed and pseudonyms were used throughout the transcription process to maintain anonymity. All participants involved were consenting adults. There were no power or status issues included in this research.

Five interviews were conducted face-to-face and one interview was conducted via telephone. The five face-to-face interviews took place in one setting over a 5 to 7-hour time frame. The researcher and the participant took 30 minute breaks between each one-on-one structured interview. The initial telephone interview lasted four hours. The second and final

interview lasted 2 hours. Due to the transcription errors the researcher conducted follow up telephone interviews with 3 participants to clarify their responses.

Analysis

As is typical in qualitative research, once the data were collected it was transcribed, reviewed and then coded (Creswell, 2003). During the review of the transcript and the process of analysis, eight themes emerged that allowed the researcher to reassemble the texts into meaningful chunks. The eight themes were defined as 1) Academic Aspirations and Preparation - High School, 2) Family Support, 3) Structured Life, 4) College Academic Support, 5) Resiliency, 6) Sociability, 7) Athletic Aspirations, and 8) Academic Success – College. Further analysis revealed different levels of strength of comments within each theme. Therefore, the research used three levels of high, medium and low for each theme to organize the texts.

The interviews were recorded and during the face-to-face the researcher observed and took notes on the participant's body language and nuances expressed. The raw data were analyzed and coded according to the eight themes and the three different levels. The researcher adapted the coding scheme: refined the information, words and phrases throughout the analysis. The researcher utilized one sociologist and one reader to perform separate analysis of the data. After the completion of all analyses, the researcher conducted another comprehensive analysis combining all relevant themes.

Data Storage

All digital files were encrypted and stored on a secure laptop computer. The laptop computer is backed up via the Microsoft Cloud. Transcriptions and all additional hard copies including field notes, were kept in a locked filing cabinet the researcher's home office. All data will be kept for three years.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this chapter is to present the outcomes of the current research study questions that guided the investigation of this study by asking: (a) questions in terms of the Black Student Athlete's lives regarding academics before the Division 1 scholarship experience, (b) Academic life during the Division 1 scholarship experience and (c) after the Division 1 scholarship experience. The outcomes of this research emerged through the process of data analysis by the researcher and two reviewers. During these discussions and the researchers' final analysis, six themes emerged as common elements in all six participant interviews. The eight themes that emerged were as follows: 1) Academic Aspirations and Preparation - High School, 2) Extended Family Support, 3) Structured Life, 4) College Academic Support, 5) Resiliency, 6) Sociability, 7) Athletic Aspirations, and 8) Academic Success – College.

The participant interviews provided rich descriptions of their athletic and academic lives in high school through college. Interview samples are provided below to give the reader a better understanding of the participants and their views of a few of the issues discussed.

Sample Interview Discussions:

Bernard discusses his views on his family and academics:

My dad was a pretty strict guy as far as academics went, being an educator himself. We were not allowed to get a C. In fact, my freshman year in high school, I got a C. I remember getting four A's, a B and a C, and my dad took me off the basketball team. So it was very simple after that as far as what I had to do academically. That being said, I was able to get it done in a very timely manner. Academically being successful in the classroom was a foregone conclusion growing up with academic people, a family of

educators. Taking care of things in the classroom and putting myself in a position to be successful as far as academics was concerned was not even going to be an issue. My area of concentration was more identified more with the African-American side of things, but as far as my ability to be in other social environments I felt like I was a chameleon; I could adapt to any situation.

Julius was raised by his grandfather who stressed “education, education, education”.

Julius had no problem blending into the mixture of cultures within his school’s community. He speaks of their being a mixture of “urban kids as well as the preppie kids and the high-class, middle-class kids”. He also boasts of being on student council and being able to mingle with a little bit of everybody. He also knew basketball was going to be his way to gain a scholarship to a Division I school, because his “family couldn’t afford it”. So, as he puts it:

I put in countless hours. And I'll be honest with you. I probably put in more countless hours developing my skill on the court than I did probably in the classroom. So I would say it was 50-50, 50 percent education and 50 percent athletic. So I had to work at both of them to make sure that I could position myself to be one of the best players in the country. I wasn't big in stature, so I had to give myself some type of advantage, so that I could be recruited by division one school. I wasn't necessarily treated with special privileges. They knew that I was an athlete. But you know what? I think then the teachers actually cared about our education at that time. So I had a great experience as far as my teachers. The teachers made sure that...And it wasn't just because I was an athlete. I saw them do regular students the same way. And so my experience with education then was actually great.

Hendley felt school life was typically easy and a lot of students gave him a pass because he was a student athlete. He also got along with, and was able to blend in well with the mostly predominantly upper middle class Persian and Malaysian student population at the school stating that, “They all had nice cars, nice watches, nice clothes and everything like that”. But, when it came to sports his confidence exudes:

I was always the best athlete in the school. Whether it was basketball, football, soccer or whatever, I was always the best one, the most popular athlete, and they always just typically revolved around myself. Didn't have any troubles with any type of ethnicity or any type of gang or anything like that because they just always took care of me or looked out for me. But then teachers looked at me as a typical stereotype; lazy, unmotivated, just cares about sports, doesn't really care about schoolwork, even though that I was totally opposite of myself and my upbringing. A lot of things I did during school or in class because teachers gave us time to do work in class or when I was at lunch or break and I didn't feel like doing other things that the high school kids were doing; I was just doing my homework.

Ervin comes from more of an old school perspective. This is evident by the language he uses (Afro-American and Caucasian) referring to different races of people having grown up in the sixties, seventies and eighties. He reminisces about how his mother had high expectations of him by stating, “My mom made sure that I hit the books. It was an hour and a half, two hours of homework before I could go outside and play basketball because that was my routine. After school, go home, eat a little something, homework, play basketball”. He had a great high school basketball career and many believe he could have come straight out of high school and entered

the NBA. There is a stark contrast of the times when he shares his perspective of life before entering a Division I school on a basketball scholarship:

So my life before college was awesome. There were some negativities when I was at high school from certain teachers that were Caucasian; they thought maybe some people of the black origin was a little lenient on me. But in a nutshell, again, it was a great high school career. I think for in the sixties, seventies, in the eighties, I would say every Afro-American kid had a dream. I never dreamed to go to college or to the NBA; that was not a dream of mine; it was a goal. I think dreams are just something you just have. I had the goal. The workload for me, again, in some times it was very easy and other classes it was too much. The too-much classes came from those who were jealous of my talent and what others were—basically they were saying kind of pushing you through. But when I got home it was a different scenario. Back in the eighties, unlike now, there weren't many tutors to help you and if there were, they were going to the Caucasian race; they weren't going to the Afro-American race. They wanted to get this Caucasian kid to be the next city council member of (city on the west coast). But the Afro-American male, they were like, "Oh, well, we don't have any tutors," or it just wasn't there. You know what I mean? If it was there you didn't see it or you would have to go through so much to try to find it. My help came from just little girlfriends that I had that would help me in class or I would call, "Hey, well, what's going on with this?"

So the work ethic and the workload, it varied. Like I said, it varied from... We had one Afro-American teacher at our school and we all as kids thought he was the hardest man in the world. He was this one Afro-American teacher that would give you a hell of a load of homework. Then you had to write standards in his classroom. You had to do

everything. He was the one teacher that I say honestly that helped me to understand that everybody going to put you through; but, yet still, he understood that, *okay, if we're going to the playoffs, the workload will get lower*. But this Caucasian teacher, it seemed like the workload got tremendously big. It's like, *jeez, you know I got this important game*. For those people on that side, they cared, but they really didn't care. They shook your hand, but you knew it was phony, when you think back now, when I think back. But when you're a young kid, you don't know that. But when you think now, you're like, *that was the phoniest handshake in the world*. You know what I mean? So that's why when I graduated I never went back to my high school. I didn't want them to retire my jersey or nothing. I didn't want to have nothing to do with it.

Trenton, on the other hand having grown up on the east coast in the south, shares a unique and totally different kind of experience before heading to a Division I school. For him it was all about basketball, which caused him to not be as focused on his academics. This lack of focus on his studies, attending several high schools, not prepping for the SAT, caused him to not get his diploma and not being eligible to go to college until he was twenty years old. He reflects on his journey:

I went to a whole lot of different schools when I was in high school. I can't even lie. I went my first year in Southeast Raleigh High School; that was predominately black. It was on the south side, kind of black kids everywhere. Then my final two years of public school I went to (high school in city). My family went there, a whole bunch of people from the north side, west side of (the city), and it was predominately white, rich white kids that go to that school for public school. Before, typically I was a hard-head kid. I didn't take education really serious. But as I grew older I knew that education would get

me the basketball and you had to be a student athlete. I just failed to realize that my first couple of years. And so after that, after I got that in my head, got cut every single year because—one year I actually got cut because of my grades and that's when I was like, *all right, I've got to buckle down in school*. So after that I mean it typically became routine. I had to go to every class. Before, I would skip class and do whatever I wanted. But once I got older, my junior and senior year of public school that's when I started to buckle down and took academics more seriously and that's when I kind of maxed everything out. And then even my final year at prep school, I was the president of the school. I had a 3.8 GPA. I was just doing it all because I felt like private school is way better than public school because private school was a little bit more intimate, not as many students, not as many knuckleheads, because in public schools it's a little bit faster. In private school everybody seems a little bit more sheltered and academics is very serious to people in private school because they're paying for school. Public school, ain't nobody paying for it. I mean it wasn't really that big because I was the type of kid that will do my homework as soon as I get it, like as soon as the teacher assigned it to me, I just start working on it in class and so I won't have to worry about it when I go home. So when I go home I do whatever I want to do.

Although *John* grew up in California (Inglewood) Los Angeles, he actually went to a rich school in the Woodland Hills area, where 75 percent of the school population was white, 20 percent were either Middle Eastern, Persian or Afghanistan and 10 percent were black.

Although he excelled in basketball and his studies, there was more he had to deal with behind closed doors at home. He describes some the successes and challenges as a high school student athlete:

Well, my senior year of high school my mom and my dad got a divorce. So it was a lot of stuff going on. But even though my dad moved out, he was still encouraging me to get a scholarship and get an education and my mom was doing the same, but we just all weren't in the same house anymore. So after school I'd probably stay on the court for about two or three hours and then when I'd get home I probably spent at least two and a half hours to three studying. I just took the time out and I always put in a lot of hard work to get a scholarship because I knew my parents couldn't pay for my college education.

The participants of this study had much more to say (positive and negative) about their academic life during the Division 1 scholarship experience. Once these Black Student Athletes left the comforts of their homes and entered college, they had to adjust to a different class schedule, basketball schedule, coaching personalities, culture of the Division I school, culture of the town community, and some professors who do not care about their practice, game conflicts and travel schedules.

A common thread that runs through all of the experiences these Black Student Athletes had were; they all had a pretty strict schedule from morning to the evening of working out, going to classes, attending basketball practice and studying; they all but one the participants felt they had support from professors, counselors and academic advisers; the participants were able to mingle and get along with the other students on campus; all had aspirations to play in the NBA and all of the Black Student Athletes graduated.

For the majority of these Black Student Athletes, they were no longer the “big man on campus”, and their first interactions on campus with their professors and coaches would be a rude awakening.

Juluis describes his experiences of academic life at the Division 1 schools and making the adjustments academically, athletically and culturally from a school and town perspective of the University he chose to attend:

Yeah. Both programs were under a major microscope because of what they were dealing with. But (Division I School) before I got there, they fired the whole academic staff because of the probation that they got hit with. We were on academic probation, and so because of that it was mandatory that incoming players had to go through eight hours of study hall for the week. So, it was really like monitored big time. I mean we had to do a swipe card to make sure that we were at study hall. So you had your typical classes on Monday and Wednesdays that were maybe, I think, 50 minutes long at the time, and then you had Tuesday and Thursday classes that may be an hour and 25 minutes. Absolutely. I believe I took 12 credits per semester. So I took, what, 24 classes (sic) during the course of the year and then, of course, summer school.

I'd say about six, about six in the morning. Actually, five-thirty because you have to be at workout at six. So you catch the bus down the street to go to work out to the gym, a workout. Go back home, take a rest, take a shower, get ready for class about maybe nine o'clock, somewhere around there. Maybe do two classes, maybe on a Monday or Wednesday, maybe do your two classes, then go eat lunch. Maybe go home, if you can go home, take a quick nap or whatever. Then go back to practice about maybe two or three o'clock, maybe practice from three to five, somewhere around there, three to five. Then after that right after practice you probably have weights. So that's another hour. So then you're looking at study hall from about—after you take a shower, maybe for about six-thirty to eight-thirty because you've got to do your eight hours. Then you've got to

make sure you get something to eat at the end. So you're probably in bed about ten o'clock.

Bernard shares his thoughts on adjusting to a small rural town, the coaching staff, day to day schedules and shares his experience of academic life during the Division 1 scholarship experience at the two schools he attended: He was very confident he could handle the courses in college because of his previous success in high school, so he focused much of his attention on working on his basketball game:

I would definitely say it was more homogenous than it was diverse. (Division I school) was rural, blue collar town, not a great deal of diversity. The ideology of playing professional basketball was prevalent and always at the forefront of my thought process. But I didn't really—I would have to say basketball because for me academics was, like I said earlier, a foregone conclusion. I knew I was going to be successful in the classroom. I wanted to sort of put my chances of being a professional basketball player on the same level playing field as I knew it would be academically. So I probably focused more on basketball. Coming in, there's a saying, an unspoken saying or it might be a spoken that says, college coaches, they will kiss your ass to get you on campus and then kick your ass once they get you on campus. And that pretty much sums up my first year in college. I mean it was basically like a military when I got there. I mean I was up early, right to class. We might have a two-a-day practices. So we got a two-hour practice in the morning at six o'clock before I've got an eight-thirty class. And then I'm struggling to stay awake in class because I'm so tired and half the time I'm standing up because I might be getting a charley horse because I'm so sore from the workout. Then probably got two more classes that day and then an afternoon practice. The practices were so physically

and psychologically demanding that once practice was done, the day was pretty much done. Practice ended at six or six-thirty. The rest of the time I'm walking around with ice packs and just trying to find something to eat. And then if I had homework that given night, I'd obviously be in study hall. For the freshmen we were required to go to study hall two hours four times a week, mandatory study hall. That was after practice. If we got into upper class, they expected us to. If there were any guys that were even questionable, they would have to automatically be in study hall if they were even close to a 2.0. I think it was 2.3 or 2.3 was the lowest you could be while I was at (Division I School). Well, I mean, obviously as a kid there's the big dream as a player especially now at a big university and you're playing on a scholarship. The ideology of playing professional basketball was prevalent and always at the forefront of my thought process. I knew I was going to be successful in the classroom, so I wanted to sort of put my chances of being a professional basketball player. I probably could have been benefited from asking for even more (family) support, but I sort of got to—I was definitely—I grew up in a household where my parents were very stern and there were a lot of rules, and so college represented autonomy for me, as it does for most kids that leave the house. So I probably needed more support from my family, and I'm talking about more emotional support and spiritual support, than what I led on. They were definitely there for me when I needed them; I just didn't call on them enough.

Hendley had a plan to graduate in three years and he did. He discusses how he was able to balance basketball, academics, a rigorous schedule and receiving support from the academic team at the university he attended. He describes his academic life while attending a Division I school:

A typical day...Weight training in the morning, weight conditioning in the morning around five, six. Classes from eight to twelve-thirty. Practice from about one-fifteen to four. Study hall from five to six-thirty. Extra workout or a film session from seven-fifteen until about nine-thirty. And if you have any, finish your homework after that, finish it up. I actually think I had tremendous academic support while I was here. They made sure that I was going to be successful. Whatever I needed, whatever I wanted when it came to academics, they'd try their best to fulfill it for me. A degree was always talked about, but they want to see what's going to be best suited for you. They're not going to put you in a certain degree field unless they know that something else is in your future. For me I knew what I wanted and I had a plan coming in. So they made sure that I would execute my plan. And they supported me a hundred percent of the way. They might have asked me a couple of times throughout my years, like, "Are you sure you want to do it this fast? Are you sure you want to put this heavy of a load on yourself?" I was like, "I'm committed to this plan as a freshman; I'm just going to follow through with it." The athletic program, they definitely did whatever they could do for me, gave me the best tutors, helped me out. If I needed to miss a practice just because I had to finish an assignment because it was that hard, they would let me do that without penalizing me. They made sure I got in the best classes. They made sure I had the best times for classes. They just made sure that I was put in a position to succeed. They did the best for me. But then my professors, on the other hand, I had some professors that were very understanding of me being a student athlete. They were understanding of what I brought to the university. "I know what you do for this university. I know if you do well both on the court and off the court, it brings us much more notoriety and that brings up everything

across the board. And so I'm going to help you succeed. So, in turn, it's going to help the university succeed." Then I had other professors who felt student athletes hinder the university because they bring down test scores, GPAs, things of that nature because one bad apple spoils the whole bunch, and so they had a problem. I don't know if they did it on purpose, but I don't want to be naive about it. But they made life very difficult attending their class. Yes, they did make it very difficult. They made their deadlines very...very hard deadlines where if you have two, sometimes three games in a week that's kind of hard to meet that deadline on a Friday when you're on the road the previous six, seven, eight days and you have to do work from airport to airport, hotel to hotel, before games, after games. Like I know there was times that I was literally...We had the game on a Wednesday night at seven. My test was due at eight-thirty. And he opened the test on a Tuesday midday. So you have from Tuesday around twelve to Wednesday at eight-thirty that night to finish the test and we're on the road. You know how it is going on the road. You're on an airplane for about five hours. I'm not going to do a test on an airplane. And then you get to the hotel. You've got to eat, you've got a film session, and then you've got a shoot-around. So, I probably had maybe a two-and-a-half-hour gap to finish a test, which I asked the professor, "Is there any way possible you can extend it for me until Thursday when I got back to take the test?" He was like, "No, you signed up for what you signed up for, so you have to take the test." I'm like, "If I don't pass the test, I'm going to take this up to somebody else because this is not acceptable because I don't have the same amount of hours, the same amount of time frame that everyone else." I'm like, "This is a big game I've got to prepare for. You didn't open it earlier for me or gave me the same amount of window as someone else

did." I wouldn't have a problem if it was on a Monday until Tuesday. I don't mind taking the test early because I was prepared for it. But give me Tuesday to Wednesday where I maybe had two hours to finish a three-hour test, that's almost impossible. Like every time people wanted to hang out or every time people wanted to talk, I was always busy running to a meeting or I was always busy running to practice or to weights or I was busy doing some type of community event that they had me doing, which I was doing probably three or four times a week. So it was always—I could never really enjoy the college experience. I was always in class or doing something athletic related.

A Typical College Day for a Division One Scholar Athlete

5:00 - 6:30am – Up and ready for weight training

7:00 - 7:30 am – Breakfast

8:00 -12:30 Academic Classes

12:30-1:15 Lunch

1:15 – 4:00 Basketball Practice

4:00 – 5:00 Dinner

5:00-6:30 Study Tables

7:00-9:30 Film Study or Extra Practice

9:45 –Finish: Homework

Ervin was one of the most highly recruited basketball players in the country talked about his excitement of being on campus, playing for a basketball power, the girls, and not being prepared for academic life entering his first year as a student athlete at Division 1 School. He also reflects on a career ending knee injury that puts everything into focus for him about the importance of getting his education and graduating from college. He gives a deep insight of the

roller coaster ride he was on as a Black Student Athlete on scholarship at a Division I school:

But coming out of high school going in, I had no idea. Hell, honestly, I didn't know what the hell they were talking about; I'm just going to sign up for a class. I didn't know. Maybe it's just me, but I didn't know. I was the first person in my family to go to college. So no one could help me with that college thing, no one in my family.

Well, if I can recall, my freshman year was a doozy because I'm in college. I'm like, *I'm the man*. All my friends and family...I'm the dude. You know what I mean? So I'm in the position where nobody sleeps and I'm supposed to be the man. It was like...I can't even describe it. It was like, *okay, dude, you're here*. Man, first off, I was so excited I didn't even go to school. I'm like, *I'm actually here*. And then you look at it and you're like, *okay, I'm going to be starting as a freshman at this powerhouse school building? I'm in a city that never sleeps. The coach is well-known. Girls everywhere*. Man, that's all I was thinking about. I wasn't thinking about no damn school. I'm thinking about them women and playing for a season with (coach). It is what it is. So that's it.

One, I wanted to graduate for my mother and father, number one, and I did. Number two, I had the goal of trying to be the best that I could be when I got there. I think I accomplished that. Number three, the goal was to go to the NBA. But those next years I would honestly say that as far as schoolwork I would say—out of the day. Let's use hours. I would say then with class and studying, I would say about eight hours a day, six hours a day, eight hours at the most. Yeah, I got my degree.

I had a professor that made me enjoy it. I had a professor at (Division I school) that made me enjoy it. It's a lady of Afro-American decent. She made all of my classes

fun, actually, because...Professors that I had, some of them were duped of the Caucasian race, but this one lady over here always believed in us athletes. It was great. It was great. And I think me blowing out my knee was a blessing in disguise. I still say that because I was allowed five years and in those five years I think that—because one year, my freshman year I knew it would have been a wash. I was lost. I was just literally lost because I couldn't understand, *why me?* Then I started second-guessing myself. I thought maybe I should've went to the NBA. I was a wreck. I honestly was lost. I didn't care about nothing. I really didn't. That's why I kind of understand certain kids when they're lost because I was a lost soul. Had it not been for my mom and dad and two coaches and a professor, ain't no telling where I'd be. We might not be having this discussion right now. I'm being very honest. That's how far off the deep end I went. And I never said this to anybody. That's how far off the deep end I was, to where it was just like, *the hell with everything, me, everything*, because all I knew was basketball. I didn't know nothing else; I just knew basketball. So when that happened and I couldn't do it, it was like, *why am I here?* But it took certain people outside of my mom and dad and my little sister to tell me I'm better and I'm bigger than basketball because had it not been, like I said, we may not be having this conversation.

As I began to ask certain question regarding their Hopes of and Dreams of playing in the NBA, commonalities amongst all participants began to reveal themselves. How many of these student athletes are just in school to play basketball, paying no attention to the schedules they must keep in order to succeed? How many Trenton's are out there that just see the dollar signs of playing in the NBA?

Trenton shares his unique perspective at the two Division I schools he attended:

I wanted to go to the NBA. (A degree) It was not even in my picture; I was thinking about basketball every day. I didn't even think about a major and that's where I messed up at because I had the white people decide for me. I never really took education serious. Now that I look back at it and if I could go back again, I probably would've pushed myself in academics. I just wanted to go to the NBA. I saw everybody else going. I'd see all these other kids I used to grow up with and I thought I was just as good as them and I see all them going to the NBA. I'm like, *why the hell I can't go to the NBA?* Yeah, I always wanted to be a franchise player. I didn't care about a degree. I saw how LeBron and Kevin Garnett and Kevin Durant, all these big-time players, they didn't have a college degree, but they're big-time names and they're making millions of dollars.

I didn't have white people pushing me until I got into college; that's when I started to become more cultured. My first year was general ed, so I didn't have to pick a major. Yes. They had one academic adviser; but he didn't play; he made sure we was in study hall, doing what we had to do. He would actually sit down and help you write papers. He wouldn't write papers for you, but he would help you. Yeah. He'd actually make you use your brain. He would actually make you feel like you're smarter than what you really think you are. Because when I was coming, I was like, *man, I can do the work, but I don't feel that smart.* I know we would spend about—it differentiated because we all had different schedules. But we would normally have morning practice; that would be about two or three hours. Then after that we would have class; we'll have class from either twelve to five. And then after five, five to nine we'll have study hall. So we'll have to have a certain amount of numbers of study hall each week on top of class.

At (Division I School) I was always trying to get on the wall, like the academic scholar wall. And then even at (Division I school) for a couple of years, I always tried to fight to get on the student athlete wall of academic excellence. But after a while I just got tired of it because of basketball. It was like a job. It was starting to wear on me.

Then my second year at (Division I school), they was like, *this degree seems to fit your personality; you like to talk to people; you're a pretty easygoing guy*. What major was it? Communications. So I was like, *yeah, that sounds pretty good, because broadcasting*.

That's where I graduated in four years. I used my fifth year at Long Beach State because I played one year at Iowa State and then I red-shirted a year. You didn't have to go to class? No. That's where I messed up, too, because I was in consumer affairs. I mean the only time they asked me is when it was close to the end of the—until that breaking point like winter break, where it was almost about winter break and you've got to stay eligible for the next semester or near the end of the season where they've got to get their APR points.

John shares his experience of not feeling supported by coaches and professors at the first school he attended.

(At Division I school) Honestly, it was pretty diverse. I feel like there were more Hispanics. They probably were like 30—no—like 40 percent. Then whites were probably like 35 to 40. And then the rest were probably blacks. I didn't see any Asians there, actually. Yeah, everything was okay. I was able to balance out. I'm pretty good getting in relationships with people. So I didn't have a problem getting used to diversity. It was all cool to me. I didn't get a culture shock or anything like that.

I feel as though I probably came across one teacher that really was about teaching and trying to get people to understand the material more. I feel like a lot of the other professors had so many students that they weren't really worried about everybody. And then there were some teachers I came across who knew I was a basketball player. So I feel like they made it a little bit harder on me sometimes—somewhat.

Actually, I felt like the counselors weren't too good. They didn't really help us out enough. They made us do it on our own. We didn't really have a lot of tutors like that. So it was more of the academic counselors. The basketball was okay. We were fine. But as far as the academics; that's the reason why I had to switch my major because something happened—I don't remember; it was a long time ago—but anyway, I couldn't major in psychology because of the teacher—I mean not the teacher—the counselor was trying to put me in different classes. Yeah. I felt like they had bigger priorities, like other players to worry about. So, since I was a freshman, I felt like they worried about me less. So, yeah, I feel like they weren't really consistent with what they did. I felt they were more worried about other people, other players. And my dad didn't really think that was a good school for me anyway. So I didn't listen to what he had to say. So I ended up going, anyway. But he advised me. Since he had experience with the (Division I school) culture and everything, he felt like that wasn't good for me. But I went anyway. So after that I was like, *I probably need to leave*. Yeah, I feel as though sometimes they wouldn't let me make up certain assignments because I was leaving and stuff like that. I had to go to my academic counselor and she had to e-mail the professor. I had problems with like maybe two—yeah, like two teachers. At (Division I school)... So, from Monday through Friday I would wake up at about 7:30 because I had 8:00 classes. I'd usually have two

classes in the morning. So I'd get out at around eleven. Then I would head over to the gym and we'd have a weight room session at about 11:30. So I had like 15 minutes to walk from class to get to the gym and get all my stuff. Really we'd have a weight room session for about 45 minutes to an hour depending on how heavy we worked the day before. And then after that around like 12:15 to 12:30-ish we'd go to the film room for about 30 minutes, but that also became how bad we did—if we did good or bad, because of the coach. If we had a bad practice, then we'd stay in the film room longer. So that depended and that was up in the air. But then we'd get on the floor for about two and a half hours every day, starting there up to about three hours. So then after that—we'd get done around three. Then as soon as I'd be done with that I'd go to study hall for about two hours and I'd get out around five or six depending on how much work I had. And then I live right down the street. I live like a five-minute walk from the school. So I'd get home around 6:10. And then depending on if I had a lot of work, I'd study. If not, I'd just probably call it a night around like seven and then I wouldn't have anything to do after that.

Julius discusses his reality of life after the Division 1 scholarship experience:

No. I went to... They weren't NBA camps, but I did go to a couple of overseas camps, one in Richmond, Virginia, one in L.A. And I can't remember the name of them.

You know what? I figured out that I didn't want to—after working so hard for like the last 15 or so years, 20 years almost, because I played organized ball since the third grade, I just figured I didn't want to work as hard anymore. It was so grueling on my body.

And I was able to make it out injury free. So that was a blessing, no major injuries. So I just looked at it as... You know. No, I didn't put it to academics, unfortunately. But I did

want to stay around the game. So I end up coaching kids, started my own travel AU program, and because of the experience that I had with my high school coach, I wanted to make sure that this didn't happen to other kids, and so I started my own travel program to help kids get scholarships.

Bernard discusses life after the Division 1 scholarship experience and some of the networking connections he developed to move on after basketball:

Yeah, it was a positive experience in that I got a degree. I aligned myself with some pretty good people, some pretty good alumni. I created a pretty decent network for myself. I was mentored by Sam Green who went on to be nominated for an Academy Award, a directorial award for the Oscars, and ended up losing to Michael Moore who directed "Bowling for Columbine." He directed "The Weather Underground." So that relationship, meeting Sam Green, if I can't say thinking else positive about my experience at San Francisco that was enough because Sam Green was incredible and helped me a lot. And so all the negative I experienced with Phil Mathews and Trent Johnson I feel is eclipsed by having met Sam Green and some other people, amazing people that I met at San Francisco on the academic side of things.

Hendley discusses struggling with the lack of support he felt from the University, coaches and staff after his life after the Division 1 scholarship experience. He also shares his perspective about the struggles of trying out for NBA teams after his college career:

It was very interesting because during my four years at my university I had all the support from everyone on the university on the athletic offices and things of that nature. But afterwards I wouldn't say I felt alone, but at the same time it's like I felt like I didn't have the best support or the best advice given to me or even when I. They weren't really

helpful in that nature because of what else was going on, whether I wasn't coming back or whether they just didn't have the right advice or right answers to help me out. So I just felt like I was really isolated even though I just gave four years of my life to a university and to a city. I had tryouts with multiple professional teams, but a lot of the times—well, every time they said that I was good enough, but it was hard to put up my numbers against someone else's numbers from another school because they weren't double figures and points or like something higher in another category. When it comes to a business perspective, they want to see black and white. No one wants to get into what's deeper than what's on paper. So it was hard for a lot of scouts to go to their managers to take a chance like this Player A is better than Player B even though Player B has better stats than Player A.

Ervin shares a unique perspective regarding decisions made before, during, and after his experience at a Division I school he attended. He discusses the bitterness he feels toward the people who thought he wasn't going to get his degree. He also talks about being injured, its effect on him not being able to make it to the NBA and the effect it had on his ability to make a lot of money.

I was supposed to go straight to the pros, but my mom wanted me to go get that education. And still to this day I think it was a great decision by my mom because I did achieve that. But if you look at my pocketbook, it's a different scenario because maybe I... There's many elements and we will touch on these things that hampered the longevity that I could have had in the NBA. But there were many offers on the table for me to go to the NBA. I still feel like I'm an ambassador. That's just me and I could be totally wrong. But I still think that I... where I'm at now I still think that—I think people

remember me for what I did. I never was a problem child. But a lot of people knew about the horrific injury that I had and I still gave my all on the court.

And I'm pretty sure there is a lot of people thought I wouldn't graduate. But then when I graduated, it shut up all of them. When you asked me the question about that competitive thing, and I don't know that I was competitive, but when I got that diploma and I knew I shut a lot of people who thought I wouldn't get it, I would laugh so hard. And I still have to this day. To this day I'm laughing at professor whomever, Professor Caucasian. You and you and you and you thought I wasn't going to do it? Damn it, I got it. You see what I'm saying? If they and I see them, I don't even say nothing to them. That's the competitiveness I got, because you thought I wasn't going to do it and I did it. Now you see me when I graduated, whenever I would come back and see them, on the inside out I'd be dying laughing.

Trenton discusses his disappointments of his life after the Division 1 scholarship experience:

This kid was suspended, too. But after that I was at rock bottom. I was broke. I had a degree, but I didn't really know what to do. I didn't have anybody in my corner to tell me, "Hey, if all fails, I got you; I can help you start your profession." No school, not even Marty, no one told me that they had me after I finished school, even the black coach that got me. Yeah, on my own or I had my mom's friend—I was an electrician. I was a helper for the electricians for a little bit and then I was just doing like odd jobs. I can do anything. I can be a coach. I can be a sports analyst.

A common experience for the majority of participants was to attend more than one school and have more than one coach during their college career (see Table 1).

Table 1

Participants' Numbers of Schools Attended and Number of Head Coaches

Student Athlete	Number of DI Schools	Number of DI Head Coaches
Julius	2	4
Bernard	2	3
Hendley	1	1
Ervin	1	1
Trenton	4	4
John	2	2

All subjects that participated in this case study described the number of Division 1 schools they attended schools and the number of Division 1 Coaches that had either a positive impact, or a negative one.

Participants in this case study chose their college in part, because attending the particular school was a childhood dream of theirs. A common theme for most of them, there were promises from coaches during the recruiting process that they would have an opportunity to play, but when they got there, it was a different story.

Two thirds of the Student Athletes went to two or more Division I Schools before they ended up graduating. Why did they leave the first school they attended? It wasn't because they were failing in school, or did not get the academic support from their professors, academic advisors or counselors; it was because the student athletes felt they were sold false dreams of playing at a Division I power house and hopefully doing well enough to make it to the NBA. More prevalent reasons the participants chose to transfer schools had to do with personality conflicts, tensions with the coaching staff and politics on the court. They wanted to play

basketball, and they wanted to show their skills on the basketball court, but lack of playing time and conflict with coaches had a huge impact on them leaving their first Division I school and transfer to others.

This is evident by *Bernard's* comments that ended up attending two Division I schools: College coaches, they will kiss your ass to get you on campus and then kick your ass once they get you on campus. I trusted (Coach TJ). My parents trusted (Coach TJ) to deal with me, to be able to take care of their son and be an extension of what they were for me growing up. So I don't trust anybody unless or until I know their character, I've seen them in action, and even then I get reports on the type of people that I deal with. They're going to work that horse to death and get the most out of that horse and when that horse has reached the end of its tenure or if that horse is unable to perform in the way the coach needs him to perform, it's going to move that horse out of the way and get another horse.

John, who also attended two different Division I schools shares his thoughts on his relationship with his coach at the Division I school he attended:

But at (Division I School), I felt like when the season started we had an okay relationship, but as the season got on, it was...it was still a good relationship. I just felt like it was a fake relationship. Basically like talking. Before I got there and he saw me play, he told me what he could see me doing on the team and how I could contribute. He was telling me a lot of good things. Then when the season started I was actually starting. Then in our second scrimmage I didn't do as good and then ever since then he just...he just didn't want me messing like that. I don't know what it was, if it was personal or anything. But I only know that after I didn't do that good in my second scrimmage, it's like we didn't

really have a connection. I felt like he was a great talker, like he was just a great talker, but some of the things he didn't really mean.

Hendley, who attended only one Division school had this to say about his experiences with the coaching staff:

My sophomore to junior year we had a coaching change. So the whole philosophy of the team definitely changed and we definitely switched what happened. So luckily, my junior year we had the same core group of guys that we were able to adapt to the new coach assignment, but still maintain who we were and we were successful.

Bernard had this to say about the academic support he received at his Division I school:

I would say I would definitely give—I'd have to say four out of five to both institutions because the ____ School of Journalism is one of the top journalism schools in the country at ----- . I mean its top. The professors are excellent; I mean incredible professors.

Bernard came from a family of educators and education was preached as long as he could remember. Bernard stated that getting his degree was a given however he wanted to play at the next level. He stated as long as he was showing progress towards his degree his parents allowed him to transfer to another Division 1 school to pursue a platform that would give him more exposure, enhancing his dream to play at the next level, the NBA or professional leagues throughout the world.

Hendley shared his thoughts on the support he received:

It was pretty good. It was definitely pretty good. Like I said, academic advisers in the athletic program, they definitely gave me everything that I needed to succeed. I've had professors and mentors that I've met through my years that did help me out as well.

Trenton shared his views on the academic support he received:

And (Division I school), you said that you stayed there freshman year. Were they pushing you towards academics there? Yes. They had one academic adviser; his name was Bobby ____ or something like that. I forgot his name. But he didn't play; he made sure we was in study hall, doing what we had to do. He would actually sit down and help you write papers. He wouldn't write papers for you, but he would help you. Yeah. He'd actually make you use your brain. He would actually make you feel like you're smarter than what you really think you are. Because when I was coming, I was like, *man, I can do the work, but I don't feel that smart.*

John shared a somewhat different point of view of the academic support he received:

I feel as though I probably came across one teacher that really was about teaching and trying to get people to understand the material more. I feel like a lot of the other professors had so many students that they weren't really worried about everybody. And then there were some teachers I came across who knew I was a basketball player. So I feel like they made it a little bit harder on me sometimes—somewhat. Yeah, I feel as though sometimes they wouldn't let me make up certain assignments because I was leaving and stuff like that. I had to go to my academic counselor and she had to e-mail the professor. And they were honest. The counselor, she would be so specific with everything we needed. We'd have to meet with her pretty much every day. So we didn't have any room for errors because if we did she'd tell the coaches. So she was always on us.

Ervin, who was a part of the old school era had this to say about his academic support:

Back in the eighties, unlike now, there weren't many tutors to help you and if there were, they were going to the Caucasian race; they weren't going to the Afro-American race.

They wanted to get this Caucasian kid to be the next city council member of (City in California). But the Afro-American male, they were like, "Oh, well, we don't have any tutors," or it just wasn't there. You know what I mean? If it was there you didn't see it or you would have to go through so much to try to find it. My help came from just little girlfriends that I had that would help me in class or I would call, "Hey, well, what's going on with this?" But in the late seventies and eighties it was different; you couldn't get that tutor, but that Caucasian kid could get that tutor. Or that Caucasian teacher would, "Johnny, stay after school a little bit." "Oh, it's okay, Ervin, I know you got basketball practice; go ahead and go." But Johnny would stay in the classroom and get that extra help. Afro-American young kids that's trying to go to the gym instead of them saying, "No, you need to come here and get this because this right here will help you for your future." It's like, "Okay, go ahead and play," because they would not give you the opportunity to get that 4.0 in high school.

The academic Grade Point Average (GPA) of every athlete is important because students must maintain a certain GPA to remain eligible. Different coaches, different colleges and the NCAA set the minimum GPA for students to remain eligible. The GPA of participants in this study ranged from 2.3 to 3.5 (see Table 2).

Table 2

Academic Data

Student Athlete	HS GPA	College GPA	Academic Support	Graduated
Julius	3.5	?	No	No
Bernard	2.5	3.0	Yes	Yes
Hendley	2.9	3.3	Yes	Yes
Ervin	2.3	2.5	Yes	Yes
Trenton	3.8	3.5	Yes	Yes
John	2.8	3.0	Yes	Yes

Note. Academic Data is a coded description of the participants High school GPA's, College GPA's, whether or not they received Academic Support and their graduation status from college.

In addition to identifying eight themes, the analysis also pointed to different levels within each theme. Therefore, each theme was also coded as High, Medium or Low levels. The researcher organized the text by coding the text in each interview by theme and level. This information is organized by theme, level, and examples from all interviews were selected to highlight each theme. Each theme and level is defined below followed by examples of participant comments and terms in each of the themes:

1. *Academic Aspirations and Preparation - High School:* for the purpose of this study “High School Aspirations and Preparation” is defined as participants stating they aspired to earn a bachelor’s degree and they received academic support from their high school coaches, teachers, parents, and family members to prepare for the academic and athletic environment at a Division 1 University. High, Medium and Low Levels of Academic Aspirations and Preparation – High School were categorized as follows:

- a. *High Level*: A high level of Academic Aspirations and Preparation was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “My dad was a pretty strict guy as far as academics went, being an educator himself. We were not allowed to get a C. In fact, my freshman year in high school, I got a C. I remember getting four A's, a B and a C, and my dad took me off the basketball team.” “Academically being successful in the classroom was a foregone conclusion growing up with academic people, a family of educators.”
 - ii. “(High) School life was typically easy. A lot of students gave me a pass because I was a student athlete. I was always the best athlete in the school. Whether it was basketball, football, soccer or whatever, I was always the best one, the most popular athlete, and they always just typically revolved around myself. Didn't have any troubles with any type of ethnicity or any type of gang or anything like that because they just always took care of me or looked out for me. But then teachers looked at me as a typical stereotype; lazy, unmotivated, just cares about sports, doesn't really care about schoolwork, even though that I was totally opposite of myself and my upbringing.”
 - iii. Re: High School Study Habits: “Approximately about two to three hours a day; that's because it was just tedious homework, not a lot of big projects. A lot of things I did during school or in class because teachers gave us time to do work in class or when I was at lunch or break and I

didn't feel like doing other things that the high school kids were doing; I was just doing my homework.”

iv. Re: High School GPA: “Grade point average was around a 2.9, I believe. I'm not a hundred percent sure, but it was around there.”

a. *Medium Level:* A medium level of Academic Aspirations and Preparation was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I had an idea of what I wanted to do. I just definitely knew I wanted to be out of journalism or film, some type of media production, and that's what I ended up getting my degree in. I didn't officially declare it until, I think, my sophomore year, but I definitely knew I wanted to be in media and television. It was really, could I challenge myself to have the same set of standards and the same set of consequences for myself when I failed to achieve the academic excellent that I had mandated while under my parents' roof? Could I challenge myself to be just as strict on myself as they were on me?”
- ii. “My two sisters who graduated with degrees from UNC would call me and challenged me in high school to improve my G.P.A. and to take classes that would prepare me for college level classes.”
- iii. “I ended up with a 3.5 high school G.P.A., with help and advice from my uncle who played at-----telling me if he could do it I should be able to graduate as well. My two sisters who graduated with degrees from UNC would call me and challenged me in high school to improve my G.P.A. and to take classes that would prepare me for college level classes.”

iv. “I ended up with a 3.5 high school G.P.A., with help and advice from my uncle who played at-----telling me if he could do it I should be able to graduate as well. I should have taken more advance classes that my high school guidance counselor advised me to take, looking back at the situation, I would have had an easier transition from high school to college if I would have taken more college prep classes.”

b. *Low Level:* A low level of Academic Aspirations and Preparation was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I had no interest in that (degree).”
- ii. “My advice by family members is to play well for one year and go pro.”
- iii. “I should have taken more advance classes that my high school guidance counselor advised me to take looking back at the situation, however I would have had a tougher time making the transition from high school to college if I had not taken the classes that I did, thanks to her.”

2. *Extended Family Support:* For the purposes of this study “Support from Extended Family” is defined as participants stating family members and surrogate family such as coaches, teammates, professors, provided advice and encouragement to persevere and succeed. High, Medium and Low Levels of family support were categorized as follows:

a. *High Level:* A high level of Family support was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “After I blew out my knee I was a train wreck. I was a train wreck. That was another story. But what it did was...I had people in my ear and the main two were my mom and dad that said, "Listen, that happened for a

reason. You might want to start thinking about school a little bit more." And I did. I was lost. I was just literally lost because I couldn't understand, *why me?* Then I started second-guessing myself. I thought maybe I should've went to the NBA. I was a wreck. I honestly was lost. I didn't care about nothing. I really didn't. That's why I kind of understand certain kids when they're lost because I was a lost soul. Had it not been for my mom and dad and two coaches and a professor, ain't no telling where I'd be. We might not be having this discussion right now. I'm being very honest. That's how far off the deep end I went. And I never said this to anybody. That's how far off the deep end I was, to where it was just like, *the hell with everything, me, everything*, because all I knew was basketball. I didn't know nothing else; I just knew basketball. So when that happened and I couldn't do it, it was like, *why am I here?* But it took certain people outside of my mom and dad and my little sister to tell me I'm better and I'm bigger than basketball because had it not been, like I said, we may not be having this conversation."

- ii. "Well, my senior year of high school my mom and my dad got a divorce. So it was a lot of stuff going on. But even though my dad moved out, he was still encouraging me to get a scholarship and get an education and my mom was doing the same, but we just all weren't in the same house anymore."

b. *Medium Level*: A medium level of Family Support was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “So I probably needed more support from my family, and I'm talking about more emotional support and spiritual support, than what I led on. They were definitely there for me when I needed them; I just didn't call on them enough.”
 - ii. “I should have taken more advance classes that my high school guidance counselor advised me to take, looking back at the situation, I would not have had an easier transition from high school to college if I would take more college prep classes.”
 - iii. “I just knew school was going to be paid for, room and board was going to be paid for. It just took a lot of stress off my mom, who had to pay out of my pocket for my brother to go to college. So I just knew that that was going to be my best bet for her to be financially stable to pay for him to go to college and for me being close to coming out of college and for me to go to a college of my choosing.”
 - iv. “I wanted to major in psychology. I was pretty big on that.”
- c. *Low Level*: A low level of Family support was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “I was the first in my family to go to college, the advice I got was to hang in there.”
 - ii. Not really, not much, very little, none.
3. *Structured Life*: For the purpose of this study, structured life is defined as participants stating they maintained a daily schedule and routine for attending classes, working out,

studying and attending basketball practice. High, Medium and Low Levels of Structured Life were categorized as follows:

- a. *High Level*: A high level of *Structured Life* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “I mean it was basically like a military when I got there. I mean I was up early, right to class. We might have a two-a-day practices. So we got a two-hour practice in the morning at six o'clock before I've got an eight-thirty class. Then probably got two more classes that day and then an afternoon practice.”
 - ii. “A typical day...Weight training in the morning, weight conditioning in the morning around five, six. Classes from eight to twelve-thirty. Practice from about one-fifteen to four. Study hall from five to six-thirty. Extra workout or a film session from seven-fifteen until about nine-thirty. And if you have any, finish your homework after that, finish it up.”
- b. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Structured Life* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “Regarding bedtime: “Oh, probably around eleven, twelve, around there. Studying...Probably about five to eight hours depending on the day and depending on how much homework I had and how many projects I had to do. Anywhere from five to eight hours a day.”
 - ii. “But we would normally have morning practice; that would be about two or three hours. Then after that we would have class; we'll have class from either twelve to five. And then after five, five to nine we'll have study

hall. So we'll have to have a certain amount of numbers of study hall each week on top of class. 3) So from Monday through Friday I would wake up at about 7:30 because I had 8:00 classes. I'd usually have two classes in the morning. So I'd get out at around eleven. Then I would head over to the gym and we'd have a weight room session at about 11:30. So I had like 15 minutes to walk from class to get to the gym and get all my stuff. Really we'd have a weight room session for about 45 minutes to an hour depending on how heavy we worked the day before. And then after that around like 12:15 to 12:30-ish we'd go to the film room for about 30 minutes, but that also became how bad we did—if we did good or bad, because of the coach. If we had a bad practice, then we'd stay in the film room longer. So that depended and that was up in the air. But then we'd get on the floor for about two and a half hours every day, starting there up to about three hours. So then after that—we'd get done around three. Then as soon as I'd be done with that I'd go to study hall for about two hours and I'd get out around five or six depending on how much work I had. And then I live right down the street. I live like a five-minute walk from the school. So I'd get home around 6:10 and then depending on if I had a lot of work, I'd study. If not, I'd just probably call it a night around like seven and then I wouldn't have anything to do after that. Yes. Yeah, that's about right.”

- iii. RE: Extra practice after regular practice: “Well, I would say probably three or four times we'll have a practice. But if we did really bad, we'd

have to go back later at night. This only happened like around four or five times we'd have to go back but at a later time, at like I want to say ten, and we'll probably practice for an hour and a half. We had a few of those practices.”

- iv. RE: Quality of extra practices: “Really probably mental mistakes because we'd be so tired and a lot of people didn't feel like being there. So we made mental mistakes.”
- v. RE: Effort put forth in the extra practices: “Yeah, but this was like later on in the season. None of that really happened during the season like while we were really training as hard as you can. This happened towards the end when season was somewhat about to start, but it hasn't started yet.”
- vi. Re: Summer basketball: “A lot. Probably about six to eight hours a day depending on the day and depending on what's going on whether we're in season or out of season or AU basketball, which had me on the road probably half the time out of a given month between camps and tournaments.”

- a. *Low Level*: A low level of *Structured Life* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “For the freshmen we were required to go to study hall two hours four times a week, mandatory study hall.”

- 4. *College Academic Support*: For the purposes of this study, “College Support and Advocacy” is defined as participants stating they had support from professors, counselors

and academic advisors and personally determined to get their degree. High, Medium and Low Levels of *College Academic Support* were categorized as follows:

b. *High Level*: A high level of *College Academic Support* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I had a professor that made me enjoy it. I had a professor at----- that made me enjoy it. It's a lady of Afro-American decent. She made all of my classes fun, actually, because...Professors that I had, some of them were duped of the Caucasian race, but this one lady over here always believed in us athletes. It was great. It was great.”
- ii. “The counselor, she would be so specific with everything we needed. We'd have to meet with her pretty much every day. So we didn't have any room for errors because if we did she'd tell the coaches. So she was always on us. A lot of people—well, some people didn't like her. I didn't have a problem with her. I really liked her. But some people didn't like her because she would let the coaches know that they were on their stuff. But she definitely helped us out. And we had (activities) and stuff.”

c. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *College Academic Support* was noted such terms and statements as:

- i. Some, not a lot, if I asked.
- ii. “Well, because, education pretty much and it was a dream of mine to always get an athletic scholarship. So I just took the time out and I always put in a lot of hard work to get a scholarship because I knew my parents couldn't pay for my college education.”

- d. *Low Level*: A low level of *College Academic Support* was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “The institution as well as the coach emphasized winning ball games period.”
 - ii. “Actually, I felt like the counselors weren't too good. They didn't really help us out enough. They made us do it on our own. We didn't really have a lot of tutors like that. So it was more of the academic counselors. The basketball was okay. We were fine. But as far as the academics; that's the reason why I had to switch my major because something happened—I don't remember; it was a long time ago—but anyway, I couldn't major in psychology because of the teacher—I mean not the teacher—the counselor was trying to put me in different classes.
 - iii. RE: Discussions with college counselors: “Yeah. I felt like they had bigger priorities, like other players to worry about. So since I was a freshman, I felt like they worried about me less. So, yeah, I feel like they weren't really consistent with what they did. I felt they were more worried about other people, other players.”
 - iv. RE: Discussions about support prior to accepting scholarship: “Yeah. And my dad didn't really think that was a good school for me anyway. So I didn't listen to what he had to say. So I ended up going, anyway. But he advised me. Since he had experience with the (New Mexico) culture and everything, he felt like that wasn't good for me. But I went anyway. So after that I was like, *I probably need to leave.*”

- v. Re: Parental support for college academics: “Yeah, somewhat, and it's also because he wasn't living in the household with me anymore and my mom was going through a lot of things. So it was a lot of drama.”
5. *Resiliency*: For the purposes of this study, “Resiliency” is defined as participants stating their ability to keep going in spite of negative experiences with coaches, teammates, the school environment, grades or personal life and issues like racism, prejudice, and low academic expectations. The ability to keep going or adapt to different situations including, the ability of the participant to become his own advocate is included in this theme. High, Medium and Low Levels of *Resiliency* were categorized as follows:
- e. *High Level*: A high level of *Resiliency* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “Ultimately, Coach and myself, we did not get along.” “It's funny. It's funny because I felt like he patronized the white players, and maybe it was an issue of community acceptance because this was a white community.”
 - ii. “Basically, an incident occurred where a number of my teammates were involved with some type of sexual misconduct. All my black teammates and myself were pulled into this meeting where he commenced to berate us and tell us that basically we are a target on this campus and that we basically had to toe a line that not necessarily everyone else has to toe because of the color of our skin and the politics of the color of our skin. And I had nothing to do with the incident that occurred, but he took it upon himself to basically call a meeting where all the brothers were in that meeting and none of the white players were in that meeting.”

- iii. “Coming in, there's a saying, an unspoken saying or it might be a spoken that says, "College coaches, they will kiss your ass to get you on campus and then kick your ass once they get you on campus.”
- iv. My area of concentration was more identified more with the African-American side of things, but as far as my ability to be in other social environments I felt like I was a chameleon; I could adapt to any situation.
- v. “It took me almost a year and a half because...It's just the surgery then was just totally different. Even though you're at a college, if you don't have the finances to get the top, top, top, top people, it is what it is.”
- vi. “What pissed me off about them drug testing me, I would pass two of them and then they would still come back after me. Like I would be fine; I'm getting my grades; I'm not bothering anybody; I'm to myself, like I'm not going out partying and trying to fight.”
- vii. “And that's why I got fed up my final year because I was like, *you're not drug testing my point guard every year and he's white*. B. A., they didn't drug test him for four years, it was so blatant of a double standard of treatment.”

a. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Resiliency* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I mean it was basically like a military when I got there. I mean I was up early, right to class. We might have a two-a-day practices. So we got a two-hour practice in the morning at six o'clock before I've got an

eight-thirty class.”

- ii. “Ultimately, there was a situation that involved me dating someone and this person that I was dating was the daughter of a very prominent businessman in the community. And I remember him getting wind of that and having very negative, almost...I won't say he used tactics of bullying. But he definitely was discouraging of that relationship.”
- iii. “If a player gets involved or implicated in a scandal or sexual assault situation, any type of situation that is negative especially if that player is high profile, it's obviously going to be news. I feel as though I probably came across one teacher that really was about teaching and trying to get people to understand the material more. I feel like a lot of the other professors had so many students that they weren't really worried about everybody.”
- iv. “And then there were some teachers I came across who knew I was a basketball player. So I feel like they made it a little bit harder on me sometimes—somewhat. Yeah, I feel as though sometimes they wouldn't let me make up certain assignments because I was leaving on road trips and stuff like that. I had to go to my academic counselor and she had to e-mail the professor I had problems with like maybe two—yeah, like two teachers. I'm not too sure about other students, but I know for us—actually, some teachers didn't have the time or tolerance.”
- v. Re: Difficulties with parent’s divorce and college academic support:

Yeah, somewhat, and it's also because he wasn't living in the household with me anymore and my mom was going through a lot of things. So it was a lot of drama

- f. *Low Level*: A low level of *Resiliency* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “And then I'm struggling to stay awake in class because I'm so tired and half the time I'm standing up because I might be getting a charley horse because I'm so sore from the workout. Practice ended at six or six-thirty. The rest of the time I'm walking around with ice packs and just trying to find something to eat.”
 - ii. “Well, they call it a whipping boy—some call it a whipping boy; some just say—there's always a guy on a team that a coach uses either to make an example out of or to—there's always somebody that's not necessarily the coach's favorite player or the coach's favorite person, period. On a lot of levels, looking back on it, T. probably definitely felt that he could make me become a better player than what I was giving him at that particular time and pushed me further than I thought I necessarily needed to be pushed and tried to provoke that in a way that I would respond to as far as a positive, to try to be a positive lesson to me.”
- 6. *Sociability* - For the purpose of this study, “Sociability” is defined as participants stating they were able to mingle and get along with other students on campus. High, Medium and Low Levels of *Sociability* were categorized as follows:
 - a. *High Level*: A high level of *Sociability* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “So as far as being that I grew up in a mixed racial, a biracial family, I was able to adapt and I felt identity with both sides. Obviously, I felt more of an identity with the African-American community because that's what people see me as; I mean they definitely don't see anything else other than what I am and I'm an African-American basketball player. So I identified more with the African-American side of things, but as far as my ability to be in other social environments I felt like I was a chameleon; I could adapt to any situation.”
- ii. “Yeah, everything was okay. I was able to balance out. I'm pretty good getting in relationships with people. So I didn't have a problem getting used to diversity. It was all cool to me. I didn't get a culture shock or anything like that.”
- iii. “Well, I went to high school in a very rich community. So I'd say about 75 percent of the people there were white and probably 20 percent were either Middle Eastern or Persian or Afghanistan and then 10 percent was black. So mainly white people. My parents arranged that I go to school in that area of town because they felt that I would get a better education than the all black area that I mu family lived in. The experience of being in the all-white environment prepared me for the Division I school that I had my scholarship at. I got along fine as I did in high school, however some of the other blacks struggled with the different culture that they skipped class and some flunked out?”

- b. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Sociability* was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. Some friends, not many.
 - ii. “I would go to the Student Union and would play pool with other ethnicities but never entered into intimate or personal conversations. Most of the time we there was small wagering going on, no more than a couple of dollars, enough to buy a sandwich, it seemed that was the only reason we talked to outsiders of the basketball team.”
- c. *Low Level*: A low level of *Sociability* was noted such terms and statements as:
- i. Not really any friends, did not go out much.
 - ii. “I had very little in common because I came from a black community, very little social events that was offered that I was interested in.”
7. *Athletic Aspirations*: for the purpose of this study “High Athletic Aspirations” is that a person that was a fierce competitor, competing for a starting position also defined as participants stating they had aspirations to play basketball in the NBA. High, Medium and Low Levels of family support were categorized as follows:
- a. *High Level*: A high level of *Athletic Aspirations* was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “Well, if I can recall, my freshman year was a doozy because I'm in college. I'm like, *I'm the man*. All my friends and family...I'm the dude. You know what I mean? So I'm in the position where nobody sleeps and I'm supposed to be the man. It was like...I can't even describe it. It was like, *okay, dude, you're here*.”

- ii. “I wanted to go to the NBA.”
 - iii. “It was not even in my picture; I was thinking about basketball every day. I just wanted to go to the NBA. I saw everybody else going. I’d see all these other kids I used to grow up with and I thought I was just as good as them and I see all them going to the NBA. I’m like, *why the hell I can't go to the NBA?*”
 - iv. “I always wanted to be a franchise player. I didn't care about a degree. I saw how LeBron and Kevin Garnett and Kevin Durant, all these big-time players, they didn't have a college degree, but they're big-time names and they're making millions of dollars.”
 - v. Practice was at our high school was all about preparing our players to eventually be skilled enough to go from high school to the NBA...We got out of school at like 2:45. So probably, it would be around 3:30. In addition, at the start of the year, practice would be about three hours, but during the season, it would boil down to like two hours a day sometime 6 days a week, going light on the sixth day.”
 - vi. “Well, I have dual citizenship, so I can go play in Sweden. Yeah, I am.”
- b. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Athletic Aspirations* was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “Up until I was about twenty years old, twenty, maybe twenty-one years old, there had been nothing in my life, and I mean nothing in my life that I had—no goal that I had set out to accomplish that I had not accomplished. I mean I wanted to play varsity and be the star player

my sophomore year in high school and that's exactly what happened. I wanted to make the track team and be competitive and then that's what happened. I wanted to date a certain girl and that's what happened. So in my mind this was just another thing that I was going to do whatever it took to accomplish. And so going into college in my mind it was a steppingstone. It was a steppingstone in order to cross through the ranks of passage, so to speak, to get to where I knew in my mind I was going.”

- ii. “In high school I'd probably stay on the court for about two or three hours and then when I'd got home so after school I'd probably stay on the court for about two or three hours and then when I'd get home I probably spent at least two and a half hours to three studying.”
- iii. Re: Team competitiveness and future aspirations: “Well, New Mexico State was...It was an eye-opener because I never saw (22:38), but it was good. We all got along and the coach, Menses, was a good guy. He stirred a lot of positive vibes and stuff. But as far as the competition goes, there was great competition. It got me better. It wasn't...I mean we all worked; we all had to try to take each other's spots. But at the end of the day it wasn't anything personal. I mean on the court it was, but off the court it wasn't like that. But we all competed a lot. And then at Fullerton, it was pretty good, too. But our season didn't go well and it was just like eventually a lot of people just pretty much quit. But as far as the intensity in competition, it was pretty intense, too, probably

not as intense as New Mexico State because there were more athletes on the team, but it was still pretty intense at Cal State Fullerton.”

c. *Low Level*: A low level of *Athletic Aspirations* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. No interest plying in the NBA.
- ii. “After 20 years of my life dedicated to this sport, I am interested in finishing my degree and starting an AAU team, sharing with the youth what it takes to improve first; their academic progress and a distance second what it takes to move to the next level of play. I will share my experience and let them decide what their best path to their future success is. I am finishing up my last class to graduate and if I had it all to do over, I would have put more emphasis on graduating on time. I fill that I am blessed to remove myself from the challenges of the NBA quest, now while I am healthy without any major injuries.”

8. *Academic Success – College*: for the purpose of this study “Academic Success” is defined as participants stating they had maintained their eligibility and earned their Bachelor’s Degree. High, Medium and Low Levels of *Academic Success – College* were categorized as follows:

a. *High Level*: A high level of *Academic Success – College* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “Yeah, I got my degree. And I think me blowing out my knee was a blessing in disguise. I still say that because I was allowed five years and in those five years I think that—because one year, my freshman year I

knew it would have been a wash. It is what it is.”

- ii. “Damn it, I got it. You see what I'm saying? If they and I see them, I don't even say nothing to them. That's the competitiveness I got, because you thought I wasn't going to do it and I did it. Now you see me when I graduated.”
- iii. Education pretty much and it was a dream of mine to always get an athletic scholarship. So I just took the time out and I always put in a lot of hard work to get a scholarship because I knew my parents couldn't pay for my college education.
- iv. “I remained eligible,”
- v. “I graduated”
- vi. “I earned my degree.”
- vii. Coming from a family that our family business is education, I knew that I was going to attain my degree.

b. *Medium Level:* A medium level of *Academic Success – College* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I am working to complete my degree.”
- ii. “I wish I knew then what I know now...that education should have been my priority and not the NBA. Now I have a degree but it is a degree in general education because I was determined to be a One and Done player and on to the big money as a franchise player.”

c. *Low Level:* A low level of *Academic Success – College* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I don’t care about a degree let me be in the top 10 picks and I will buy myself a degree maybe two.”

Table 3 and Table 4 are visual representations of the themes and the level of responses for each theme.

Table 3

List of Themes and Level of Responses I

Name	Academic High School Level	Family Support Level	Structured Life Level	Academics Support Level
Julius	H	H	H	H
Bernard	H	H	H	H
Hendley	H	M	H	L
Ervin	H	H	H	H
Trenton	H	H	H	L
John	H	M	H	H

Note. Identifies the common themes all participants shared regarding support from home, high school personnel, college personal and their aspirations for college academic success and professional basketball career. Themes: Academic High School = Academic Aspirations and Preparation - High School and Academics College =Academic Success – College above. Levels are coded as High = H, Medium = M or Low = L.

Table 4

List of Themes and Level of Responses II

Name	Resiliency Levels	Sociability Levels	Athletic Aspirations Levels	Academic Success Levels
Julius	H	H	H	L
Bernard	H	M	H	H
Hendley	H	H	H	H
Ervin	H	H	H	H
Trenton	H	H	H	M
John	H	H	H	H

Note. Identifies the common themes all participants shared regarding support from home, high school personnel, college personal and their aspirations for college academic success and professional basketball career. Themes: Academic Success College = Academic Success above. Levels are coded as High = H, Medium = M or Low = L.

Summary of each participant’s statements used to determine Themes and Level of Responses:

1. *Julius:* Academic High School was an H level because he came out of high school with a 3.5 grade point average, who also received an H level for Family support because of his uncle especially, who graduated from the same Division I school that he was attending. Julius graduated from high school received H for Structured Life because he continued to adhere to the rigors of three institutions of higher learning. He mentioned that the J.C. he went to get him ready for the Division I School academics and level of play he transferred to in the same state. He continued to be on track to graduate until he left one Division I School to transfer to his uncle’s Division I alma mater; he still received an H in Academic Support from the second Division I School. Julius received the only L for Academic Success because of his losing credits through his second transfer and the changing of his major.

2. *Bernard*: Came from a family of educators, his mom and dad during high school demanded A's and B's from him, when Bernard got a C in a class his first year of high school, his father took him off the high school basketball team even though he had tremendous potential to be a great basketball player at 6'8". Bernard's parents' relationship with his teachers made a big difference in Bernard's growth academically especially that his advisors in high school were colleagues of his parents. Although Bernard transferred from an in state Division I College to another Division I College out of state with a full scholarship, he graduated. Every theme Bernard received an H as a code for each theme. His High Level in each theme is what assisted his one goal he promised to his parents, that he would graduate with a four-year degree. He transferred because he wanted to pursue a platform at a high profile Division I school to get noticed by pro scouts for the next level of play in the NBA, his personal goal.
3. *Hendley*: Was a solid student who ended up with a great professional job in the city of his alma mater, with a degree for the industry he is employed. Hendley was a great college player but his goal was to graduate and start his professional business career. He like the other research participants went through his share of adversities through his college career and was supported by his family and the one institution he maintained his 4-year scholarship with. Hendley was an impact player that was willing to do whatever was required of him to do for his team, even sit the bench. He was a crowd favorite because of his unselfish play and sacrifice for his team Hendley was coded across the board of themes with an H for high intensity that was a part of his Resiliency, Sociability, Athletic Aspirations, and ultimate Academic Success for graduating on time and maintaining a 3.2 G.P.A. at graduation. Hendley, endured two

college coaches, which caused his sitting more often on the bench as a senior.

Hendley, did not get distracted on and off the court he was a solid willing participant of a Division I scholarship.

4. *Ervin*: Was a starter as a freshman and was compared to the great Magic Johnson, some said he was a better all-around player than Magic. Ervin unfortunately injured his knee and continue to play with the injury in a game that he felt his team needed him to win despite the caution and warning of the team doctor. Ervin, was high intensity on and off the court, he loved his social life especially with the opposite sex on campus. He received an H coding in every theme category. He received allot of love and support from his family, coaches, and teammates when he was dealing with a career ending injury. Resiliency was his middle name because of how far he had fallen and how he took his energy and effort from the court and put it into his studies and ultimately graduated on time. His Athletic Aspirations had the potential to be One and Done after his freshman year but his parents wanted him to obtain his degree and he did. Ervin is currently passing on his intensity and love for the game as a head basketball coach at a high school in the city of his alma mater.
5. *Trenton*: Wanted an NBA contract and admitted he had no ambition or intention to stick around on a Division I scholarship to obtain a four-year degree. Trenton unfortunately got the reputation of having a bad habit of smoking marijuana. The news media at one institution led with a story in a few news cycles that Trenton transfer to another school Division I School, hoping his past would be left at the previous Division I school. Unfortunately, when a student athlete is as talented as Trenton who was highly sought after with a declaration status of One and Done,

unfortunately for him his complete reputation followed him to the next Division I institution. Trenton was coded with all H's except for Academic Support and Academic Success. Trenton Academic Support was coded M because of his eventual degree he obtained. Essentially, it may have been a degree in basket weaving because he was given grades in classes that lead to an unknown general educational degree. Trenton, also was coded an M even though he graduated because he failed to pursue a real major that would have rendered him a degree that would have prepared him to be an asset to an industry.

6. *John*: John graduated on time and in four years received all H's for his Resiliency through his adversity of his parents' divorce and his going to two Division 1 schools and succeeding athletically as a starter for both program and academically for using all of the tools through each university to graduate on time. John was prepared by his parents especially his dad who received his degree on scholarship at a high profiled Division I university. John was coached by his dad as a role model to play at an experienced skill of one that would have the potential to play at the NBA level. His coding as H for across the board especially in Resiliency and Athletic Aspirations was because of his Family Support's mentoring before college, and through the parents' separation.

In addition to identifying eight themes, the analysis also pointed to differing levels within each theme. Therefore, each theme was also coded as High, Medium or Low levels. Each theme and level is defined below:

9. *Academic Aspirations and Preparation - High School*: for the purpose of this study "High School Aspirations and Preparation" is defined as participants stating they aspired

to earn a bachelor's degree and they received academic support from their high school coaches, teachers, parents, and family members to prepare for the academic and athletic environment at a Division 1 University. High, Medium and Low Levels of Academic Aspirations and Preparation – High School were categorized as follows:

- a. *High Level*: A high level of Academic Aspirations and Preparation was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “My dad was a pretty strict guy as far as academics went, being an educator himself. We were not allowed to get a C. In fact, my freshman year in high school, I got a C. I remember getting four A's, a B and a C, and my dad took me off the basketball team.” “Academically being successful in the classroom was a foregone conclusion growing up with academic people, a family of educators.”
 - ii. “(High) School life was typically easy. A lot of students gave me a pass because I was a student athlete. I was always the best athlete in the school. Whether it was basketball, football, soccer or whatever, I was always the best one, the most popular athlete, and they always just typically revolved around myself. Didn't have any troubles with any type of ethnicity or any type of gang or anything like that because they just always took care of me or looked out for me. But then teachers looked at me as a typical stereotype; lazy, unmotivated, just cares about sports, doesn't really care about schoolwork, even though that I was totally opposite of myself and my upbringing.”

- iii. Re: High School Study Habits: “Approximately about two to three hours a day; that's because it was just tedious homework, not a lot of big projects. A lot of things I did during school or in class because teachers gave us time to do work in class or when I was at lunch or break and I didn't feel like doing other things that the high school kids were doing; I was just doing my homework.”
 - iv. Re: High School GPA: “Grade point average was around a 2.9, I believe. I'm not a hundred percent sure, but it was around there.”
- b. *Medium Level:* A medium level of Academic Aspirations and Preparation was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “I had an idea of what I wanted to do. I just definitely knew I wanted to be out of journalism or film, some type of media production, and that's what I ended up getting my degree in. I didn't officially declare it until, I think, my sophomore year, but I definitely knew I wanted to be in media and television. It was really, could I challenge myself to have the same set of standards and the same set of consequences for myself when I failed to achieve the academic excellent that I had mandated while under my parents' roof? Could I challenge myself to be just as strict on myself as they were on me?”
 - ii. “My two sisters who graduated with degrees from UNC would call me and challenged me in high school to improve my G.P.A. and to take classes that would prepare me for college level classes.”

- iii. “I ended up with a 3.5 high school G.P.A., with help and advice from my uncle who played at-----telling me if he could do it I should be able to graduate as well. My two sisters who graduated with degrees from UNC would call me and challenged me in high school to improve my G.P.A. and to take classes that would prepare me for college level classes.”
- iv. “I ended up with a 3.5 high school G.P.A., with help and advice from my uncle who played at-----telling me if he could do it I should be able to graduate as well. I should have taken more advance classes that my high school guidance counselor advised me to take, looking back at the situation, I would have had an easier transition from high school to college if I would have taken more college prep classes.”

c. *Low Level:* A low level of Academic Aspirations and Preparation was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I had no interest in that (degree).”
- ii. “My advice by family members is to play well for one year and go pro.”
- iii. “I should have taken more advance classes that my high school guidance counselor advised me to take looking back at the situation, however I would have had a tougher time making the transition from high school to college if I had not taken the classes that I did, thanks to her.”

10. *Extended Family Support:* For the purposes of this study “Support from Extended Family” is defined as participants stating family members and surrogate family such as coaches, teammates, professors, provided advice and encouragement to persevere and succeed. High, Medium and Low Levels of family support were categorized as follows:

- a. *High Level*: A high level of Family support was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “After I blew out my knee I was a train wreck. I was a train wreck. That was another story. But what it did was...I had people in my ear and the main two were my mom and dad that said, "Listen, that happened for a reason. You might want to start thinking about school a little bit more." And I did. I was lost. I was just literally lost because I couldn't understand, *why me?* Then I started second-guessing myself. I thought maybe I should've went to the NBA. I was a wreck. I honestly was lost. I didn't care about nothing. I really didn't. That's why I kind of understand certain kids when they're lost because I was a lost soul. Had it not been for my mom and dad and two coaches and a professor, ain't no telling where I'd be. We might not be having this discussion right now. I'm being very honest. That's how far off the deep end I went. And I never said this to anybody. That's how far off the deep end I was, to where it was just like, *the hell with everything, me, everything*, because all I knew was basketball. I didn't know nothing else; I just knew basketball. So when that happened and I couldn't do it, it was like, *why am I here?* But it took certain people outside of my mom and dad and my little sister to tell me I'm better and I'm bigger than basketball because had it not been, like I said, we may not be having this conversation.”
 - ii. “Well, my senior year of high school my mom and my dad got a divorce. So it was a lot of stuff going on. But even though my dad moved out, he

was still encouraging me to get a scholarship and get an education and my mom was doing the same, but we just all weren't in the same house anymore.”

b. *Medium Level:* A medium level of Family Support was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “So I probably needed more support from my family, and I'm talking about more emotional support and spiritual support, than what I led on. They were definitely there for me when I needed them; I just didn't call on them enough.”
- ii. “I should have taken more advance classes that my high school guidance counselor advised me to take, looking back at the situation, I would not have had an easier transition from high school to college if I would take more college prep classes.”
- iii. “I just knew school was going to be paid for, room and board was going to be paid for. It just took a lot of stress off my mom, who had to pay out of my pocket for my brother to go to college. So I just knew that that was going to be my best bet for her to be financially stable to pay for him to go to college and for me being close to coming out of college and for me to go to a college of my choosing.”
- iv. “I wanted to major in psychology. I was pretty big on that.”

c. *Low Level:* A low level of Family support was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I was the first in my family to go to college, the advice I got was to hang in there.”
- ii. Not really, not much, very little, none.

11. *Structured Life*: For the purpose of this study, structured life is defined as participants stating they maintained a daily schedule and routine for attending classes, working out, studying and attending basketball practice. High, Medium and Low Levels of Structured Life were categorized as follows:

- a. *High Level*: A high level of *Structured Life* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “I mean it was basically like a military when I got there. I mean I was up early, right to class. We might have a two-a-day practices. So we got a two-hour practice in the morning at six o'clock before I've got an eight-thirty class. Then probably got two more classes that day and then an afternoon practice.”
 - ii. “A typical day...Weight training in the morning, weight conditioning in the morning around five, six. Classes from eight to twelve-thirty. Practice from about one-fifteen to four. Study hall from five to six-thirty. Extra workout or a film session from seven-fifteen until about nine-thirty. And if you have any, finish your homework after that, finish it up.”
- b. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Structured Life* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “Regarding bedtime: “Oh, probably around eleven, twelve, around there. Studying...Probably about five to eight hours depending on the day and

depending on how much homework I had and how many projects I had to do. Anywhere from five to eight hours a day.”

- ii. “But we would normally have morning practice; that would be about two or three hours. Then after that we would have class; we'll have class from either twelve to five. And then after five, five to nine we'll have study hall. So we'll have to have a certain amount of numbers of study hall each week on top of class. 3) So from Monday through Friday I would wake up at about 7:30 because I had 8:00 classes. I'd usually have two classes in the morning. So I'd get out at around eleven. Then I would head over to the gym and we'd have a weight room session at about 11:30. So I had like 15 minutes to walk from class to get to the gym and get all my stuff. Really we'd have a weight room session for about 45 minutes to an hour depending on how heavy we worked the day before. And then after that around like 12:15 to 12:30-ish we'd go to the film room for about 30 minutes, but that also became how bad we did—if we did good or bad, because of the coach. If we had a bad practice, then we'd stay in the film room longer. So that depended and that was up in the air. But then we'd get on the floor for about two and a half hours every day, starting there up to about three hours. So then after that—we'd get done around three. Then as soon as I'd be done with that I'd go to study hall for about two hours and I'd get out around five or six depending on how much work I had. And then I live right down the street. I live like a five-minute walk from the school. So I'd get home around 6:10 and then depending on if I

had a lot of work, I'd study. If not, I'd just probably call it a night around like seven and then I wouldn't have anything to do after that. Yes. Yeah, that's about right.”

- iii. RE: Extra practice after regular practice: “Well, I would say probably three or four times we'll have a practice. But if we did really bad, we'd have to go back later at night. This only happened like around four or five times we'd have to go back but at a later time, at like I want to say ten, and we'll probably practice for an hour and a half. We had a few of those practices.”
- iv. RE: Quality of extra practices: “Really probably mental mistakes because we'd be so tired and a lot of people didn't feel like being there. So we made mental mistakes.”
- v. RE: Effort put forth in the extra practices: “Yeah, but this was like later on in the season. None of that really happened during the season like while we were really training as hard as you can. This happened towards the end when season was somewhat about to start, but it hasn't started yet.”
- vi. Re: Summer basketball: “A lot. Probably about six to eight hours a day depending on the day and depending on what's going on whether we're in season or out of season or AU basketball, which had me on the road probably half the time out of a given month between camps and tournaments.”

- g. *Low Level*: A low level of *Structured Life* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “For the freshmen we were required to go to study hall two hours four times a week, mandatory study hall.”

12. *College Academic Support*: For the purposes of this study, “College Support and Advocacy” is defined as participants stating they had support from professors, counselors and academic advisors and personally determined to get their degree. High, Medium and Low Levels of *College Academic Support* were categorized as follows:

- h. *High Level*: A high level of *College Academic Support* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I had a professor that made me enjoy it. I had a professor at----- that made me enjoy it. It's a lady of Afro-American decent. She made all of my classes fun, actually, because...Professors that I had, some of them were duped of the Caucasian race, but this one lady over here always believed in us athletes. It was great. It was great.”

- ii. “The counselor, she would be so specific with everything we needed. We'd have to meet with her pretty much every day. So we didn't have any room for errors because if we did she'd tell the coaches. So she was always on us. A lot of people—well, some people didn't like her. I didn't have a problem with her. I really liked her. But some people didn't like her because she would let the coaches know that they were on their stuff. But she definitely helped us out. And we had (activities) and stuff.”

- i. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *College Academic Support* was noted such terms and statements as:

- i. Some, not a lot, if I asked.

ii. “Well, because, education pretty much and it was a dream of mine to always get an athletic scholarship. So I just took the time out and I always put in a lot of hard work to get a scholarship because I knew my parents couldn't pay for my college education.”

j. *Low Level*: A low level of *College Academic Support* was noted by such terms and statements as:

i. “The institution as well as the coach emphasized winning ball games period.”

ii. “Actually, I felt like the counselors weren't too good. They didn't really help us out enough. They made us do it on our own. We didn't really have a lot of tutors like that. So it was more of the academic counselors. The basketball was okay. We were fine. But as far as the academics; that's the reason why I had to switch my major because something happened—I don't remember; it was a long time ago—but anyway, I couldn't major in psychology because of the teacher—I mean not the teacher—the counselor was trying to put me in different classes.

iii. RE: Discussions with college counselors: “Yeah. I felt like they had bigger priorities, like other players to worry about. So since I was a freshman, I felt like they worried about me less. So, yeah, I feel like they weren't really consistent with what they did. I felt they were more worried about other people, other players.”

iv. RE: Discussions about support prior to accepting scholarship: “Yeah. And my dad didn't really think that was a good school for me anyway. So I

didn't listen to what he had to say. So I ended up going, anyway. But he advised me. Since he had experience with the (New Mexico) culture and everything, he felt like that wasn't good for me. But I went anyway. So after that I was like, *I probably need to leave.*”

- v. Re: Parental support for college academics: “Yeah, somewhat, and it's also because he wasn't living in the household with me anymore and my mom was going through a lot of things. So it was a lot of drama.”

13. *Resiliency*: For the purposes of this study, “Resiliency” is defined as participants stating their ability to keep going in spite of negative experiences with coaches, teammates, the school environment, grades or personal life and issues like racism, prejudice, and low academic expectations. High, Medium and Low Levels of *Resiliency* were categorized as follows:

- k. *High Level*: A high level of *Resiliency* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “Ultimately, Coach and myself, we did not get along.” “It's funny. It's funny because I felt like he patronized the white players, and maybe it was an issue of community acceptance because this was a white community.”
 - ii. “Basically, an incident occurred where a number of my teammates were involved with some type of sexual misconduct. All my black teammates and myself were pulled into this meeting where he commenced to berate us and tell us that basically we are a target on this campus and that we basically had to toe a line that not necessarily everyone else has to toe because of the color of our skin and the politics of the color of our skin. And I had nothing to do with the incident that occurred, but he took it

upon himself to basically call a meeting where all the brothers were in that meeting and none of the white players were in that meeting.”

- iii. “Coming in, there's a saying, an unspoken saying or it might be a spoken that says, "College coaches, they will kiss your ass to get you on campus and then kick your ass once they get you on campus.”
- iv. “It took me almost a year and a half because...It's just the surgery then was just totally different. Even though you're at a college, if you don't have the finances to get the top, top, top, top people, it is what it is.”
- v. “What pissed me off about them drug testing me, I would pass two of them and then they would still come back after me. Like I would be fine; I'm getting my grades; I'm not bothering anybody; I'm to myself, like I'm not going out partying and trying to fight.”
- vi. “And that's why I got fed up my final year because I was like, *you're not drug testing my point guard every year and he's white*. B. A., they didn't drug test him for four years, it was so blatant of a double standard of treatment.”

b. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Resiliency* was noted by such terms and

statements as:

- i. “I mean it was basically like a military when I got there. I mean I was up early, right to class. We might have a two-a-day practices. So we got a two-hour practice in the morning at six o'clock before I've got an eight-thirty class.”
- ii. “Ultimately, there was a situation that involved me dating someone

and this person that I was dating was the daughter of a very prominent businessman in the community. And I remember him getting wind of that and having very negative, almost...I won't say he used tactics of bullying. But he definitely was discouraging of that relationship.”

- iii. “If a player gets involved or implicated in a scandal or sexual assault situation, any type of situation that is negative especially if that player is high profile, it's obviously going to be news. I feel as though I probably came across one teacher that really was about teaching and trying to get people to understand the material more. I feel like a lot of the other professors had so many students that they weren't really worried about everybody.”
- iv. “And then there were some teachers I came across who knew I was a basketball player. So I feel like they made it a little bit harder on me sometimes—somewhat. Yeah, I feel as though sometimes they wouldn't let me make up certain assignments because I was leaving on road trips and stuff like that. I had to go to my academic counselor and she had to e-mail the professor I had problems with like maybe two—yeah, like two teachers. I'm not too sure about other students, but I know for us—actually, some teachers didn't have the time or tolerance.”
- v. Re: Difficulties with parent’s divorce and college academic support:
Yeah, somewhat, and it's also because he wasn't living in the household with me anymore and my mom was going through a lot of

things. So it was a lot of drama.

1. *Low Level*: A low level of *Resiliency* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- iii. “And then I'm struggling to stay awake in class because I'm so tired and half the time I'm standing up because I might be getting a charley horse because I'm so sore from the workout. Practice ended at six or six-thirty. The rest of the time I'm walking around with ice packs and just trying to find something to eat.”
- iv. “Well, they call it a whipping boy—some call it a whipping boy; some just say—there's always a guy on a team that a coach uses either to make an example out of or to—there's always somebody that's not necessarily the coach's favorite player or the coach's favorite person, period. On a lot of levels, looking back on it, T. probably definitely felt that he could make me become a better player than what I was giving him at that particular time and pushed me further than I thought I necessarily needed to be pushed and tried to provoke that in a way that I would respond to as far as a positive, to try to be a positive lesson to me.”

14. *Sociability* - For the purpose of this study, “Sociability” is defined as participants stating they were able to mingle and get along with other students on campus. High, Medium and Low Levels of *Sociability* were categorized as follows:

- d. *High Level*: A high level of *Sociability* was noted by such terms and statements as:
 - i. “So as far as being that I grew up in a mixed racial, a biracial family, I was able to adapt and I felt identity with both sides. Obviously, I felt more of

an identity with the African-American community because that's what people see me as; I mean they definitely don't see anything else other than what I am and I'm an African-American basketball player. So I identified more with the African-American side of things, but as far as my ability to be in other social environments I felt like I was a chameleon; I could adapt to any situation.”

- ii. “Yeah, everything was okay. I was able to balance out. I'm pretty good getting in relationships with people. So I didn't have a problem getting used to diversity. It was all cool to me. I didn't get a culture shock or anything like that.”
- iii. “Well, I went to high school in a very rich community. So I'd say about 75 percent of the people there were white and probably 20 percent were either Middle Eastern or Persian or Afghanistan and then 10 percent was black. So mainly white people. My parents arranged that I go to school in that area of town because they felt that I would get a better education than the all black area that I mu family lived in. The experience of being in the all-white environment prepared me for the Division I school that I had my scholarship at. I got along fine as I did in high school, however some of the other blacks struggled with the different culture that they skipped class and some flunked out?”

e. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Sociability* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- iii. Some friends, not many.

- iv. “I would go to the Student Union and would play pool with other ethnicities but never entered into intimate or personal conversations.

Most of the time we there was small wagering going on, no more than a couple of dollars, enough to buy a sandwich, it seemed that was the only reason we talked to outsiders of the basketball team.”

- f. *Low Level*: A low level of *Sociability* was noted such terms and statements as:

- i. Not really any friends, did not go out much.
- ii. “I had very little in common because I came from a black community, very little social events that was offered that I was interested in.”

15. *Athletic Aspirations*: for the purpose of this study “High Athletic Aspirations” is that a person that was a fierce competitor, competing for a starting position also defined as participants stating they had aspirations to play basketball in the NBA. High, Medium and Low Levels of family support were categorized as follows:

- d. *High Level*: A high level of *Athletic Aspirations* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- vii. “Well, if I can recall, my freshman year was a doozy because I'm in college. I'm like, *I'm the man*. All my friends and family...I'm the dude. You know what I mean? So I'm in the position where nobody sleeps and I'm supposed to be the man. It was like...I can't even describe it. It was like, *okay, dude, you're here*.”
- viii. “I wanted to go to the NBA.”
- ix. “It was not even in my picture; I was thinking about basketball every day. I just wanted to go to the NBA. I saw everybody else going. I'd

see all these other kids I used to grow up with and I thought I was just as good as them and I see all them going to the NBA. I'm like, *why the hell I can't go to the NBA?*”

- x. “I always wanted to be a franchise player. I didn't care about a degree. I saw how LeBron and Kevin Garnett and Kevin Durant, all these big-time players, they didn't have a college degree, but they're big-time names and they're making millions of dollars.”
 - xi. Practice was at our high school was all about preparing our players to eventually be skilled enough to go from high school to the NBA...We got out of school at like 2:45. So probably, it would be around 3:30. In addition, at the start of the year, practice would be about three hours, but during the season, it would boil down to like two hours a day sometime 6 days a week, going light on the sixth day.”
 - xii. “Well, I have dual citizenship, so I can go play in Sweden. Yeah, I am.”
- e. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Athletic Aspirations* was noted by such terms and statements as:
- i. “Up until I was about twenty years old, twenty, maybe twenty-one years old, there had been nothing in my life, and I mean nothing in my life that I had—no goal that I had set out to accomplish that I had not accomplished. I mean I wanted to play varsity and be the star player my sophomore year in high school and that's exactly what happened. I wanted to make the track team and be competitive and then that's what happened. I wanted to date a certain girl and that's what happened. So

in my mind this was just another thing that I was going to do whatever it took to accomplish. And so going into college in my mind it was a steppingstone. It was a steppingstone in order to cross through the ranks of passage, so to speak, to get to where I knew in my mind I was going.”

- ii. “In high school I'd probably stay on the court for about two or three hours and then when I'd got home so after school I'd probably stay on the court for about two or three hours and then when I'd get home I probably spent at least two and a half hours to three studying.”
- iii. Re: Team competitiveness and future aspirations: “Well, New Mexico State was...It was an eye-opener because I never saw (22:38), but it was good. We all got along and the coach, Menzies, was a good guy. He stirred a lot of positive vibes and stuff. But as far as the competition goes, there was great competition. It got me better. It wasn't...I mean we all worked; we all had to try to take each other's spots. But at the end of the day it wasn't anything personal. I mean on the court it was, but off the court it wasn't like that. But we all competed a lot. And then at Fullerton, it was pretty good, too. But our season didn't go well and it was just like eventually a lot of people just pretty much quit. But as far as the intensity in competition, it was pretty intense, too, probably not as intense as New Mexico State because there were more athletes on the team, but it was still pretty intense at Cal State Fullerton.”

f. *Low Level*: A low level of *Athletic Aspirations* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- iii. No interest plying in the NBA.
- iv. “After 20 years of my life dedicated to this sport, I am interested in finishing my degree and starting an AAU team, sharing with the youth what it takes to improve first; their academic progress and a distance second what it takes to move to the next level of play. I will share my experience and let them decide what their best path to their future success is. I am finishing up my last class to graduate and if I had it all to do over, I would have put more emphasis on graduating on time. I fill that I am blessed to remove myself from the challenges of the NBA quest, now while I am healthy without any major injuries.”

16. *Academic Success – College*: for the purpose of this study “Academic Success” is defined as participants stating they had maintained their eligibility and earned their Bachelor’s Degree. High, Medium and Low Levels of *Academic Success – College* were categorized as follows:

d. *High Level*: A high level of *Academic Success – College* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “Yeah, I got my degree. And I think me blowing out my knee was a blessing in disguise. I still say that because I was allowed five years and in those five years I think that—because one year, my freshman year I knew it would have been a wash. It is what it is.”
- ii. “Damn it, I got it. You see what I'm saying? If they and I see them, I

don't even say nothing to them. That's the competitiveness I got, because you thought I wasn't going to do it and I did it. Now you see me when I graduated.”

- iii. Education pretty much and it was a dream of mine to always get an athletic scholarship. So I just took the time out and I always put in a lot of hard work to get a scholarship because I knew my parents couldn't pay for my college education.
- iv. “I remained eligible,”
- v. “I graduated”
- vi. “I earned my degree.”
- vii. Coming from a family that our family business is education, I knew that I was going to attain my degree.

e. *Medium Level*: A medium level of *Academic Success – College* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I am working to complete my degree.”
- ii. “I wish I knew then what I know now...that education should have been my priority and not the NBA. Now I have a degree but it is a degree in general education because I was determined to be a One and Done player and on to the big money as a franchise player.”

f. *Low Level*: A low level of *Academic Success – College* was noted by such terms and statements as:

- i. “I don’t care about a degree let me be in the top 10 picks and I will buy myself a degree maybe two.”

Summary of each participant's statements used to determine Themes and Level of

Responses:

7. *Julius*: Academic High School was an H level because he came out of high school with a 3.5 grade point average, who also received an H level for Family support because of his uncle especially, who graduated from the same Division I school that he was attending. Julius graduated from high school received H for Structured Life because he continued to adhere to the rigors of three institutions of higher learning. He mentioned that the J.C. he went to get him ready for the Division I School academics and level of play he transferred to in the same state. He continued to be on track to graduate until he left one Division I School to transfer to his uncle's Division I alma mater; he still received an H in Academic Support from the second Division I School. Julius received the only L for Academic Success because of his losing credits through his second transfer and the changing of his major.
8. *Bernard*: Came from a family of educators, his mom and dad during high school demanded A's and B's from him, when Bernard got a C in a class his first year of high school, his father took him off the high school basketball team even though he had tremendous potential to be a great basketball player at 6'8". Bernard's parents' relationship with his teachers made a big difference in Bernard's growth academically especially that his advisors in high school were colleagues of his parents. Although Bernard transferred from an in state Division I College to another Division I College out of state with a full scholarship, he graduated. Every theme Bernard received an H as a code for each theme. His High Level in each theme is what assisted his one goal he promised to his parents, that he would graduate with a four-year degree. He

- transferred because he wanted to pursue a platform at a high profile Division I school to get noticed by pro scouts for the next level of play in the NBA, his personal goal.
9. *Hendley*: Was a solid student who ended up with a great professional job in the city of his alma mater, with a degree for the industry he is employed. Hendley was a great college player but his goal was to graduate and start his professional business career. He like the other research participants went through his share of adversities through his college career and was supported by his family and the one institution he maintained his 4-year scholarship with. Hendley was an impact player that was willing to do whatever was required of him to do for his team, even sit the bench. He was a crowd favorite because of his unselfish play and sacrifice for his team Hendley was coded across the board of themes with an H for high intensity that was a part of his Resiliency, Sociability, Athletic Aspirations, and ultimate Academic Success for graduating on time and maintaining a 3.2 G.P.A. at graduation. Hendley, endured two college coaches, which caused his sitting more often on the bench as a senior. Hendley, did not get distracted on and off the court he was a solid willing participant of a Division I scholarship.
10. *Ervin*: Was a starter as a freshman and was compared to the great Magic Johnson, some said he was a better all-around player than Magic. Ervin unfortunately injured his knee and continue to play with the injury in a game that he felt his team needed him to win despite the caution and warning of the team doctor. Ervin, was high intensity on and off the court, he loved his social life especially with the opposite sex on campus. He received an H coding in every theme category. He received allot of love and support from his family, coaches, and teammates when he was dealing with

a career ending injury. Resiliency was his middle name because of how far he had fallen and how he took his energy and effort from the court and put it into his studies and ultimately graduated on time. His Athletic Aspirations had the potential to be One and Done after his freshman year but his parents wanted him to obtain his degree and he did. Ervin is currently passing on his intensity and love for the game as a head basketball coach at a high school in the city of his alma mater.

11. *Trenton*: Wanted an NBA contract and admitted he had no ambition or intention to stick around on a Division I scholarship to obtain a four-year degree. Trenton unfortunately got the reputation of having a bad habit of smoking marijuana. The news media at one institution led with a story in a few news cycles that Trenton transfer to another school Division I School, hoping his past would be left at the previous Division I school. Unfortunately, when a student athlete is as talented as Trenton who was highly sought after with a declaration status of One and Done, unfortunately for him his complete reputation followed him to the next Division I institution. Trenton was coded with all H's except for Academic Support and Academic Success. Trenton Academic Support was coded M because of his eventual degree he obtained. Essentially, it may have been a degree in basket weaving because he was given grades in classes that lead to an unknown general educational degree. Trenton, also was coded an M even though he graduated because he failed to pursue a real major that would have rendered him a degree that would have prepared him to be an asset to an industry.
12. *John*: John graduated on time and in four years received all H's for his Resiliency through his adversity of his parents' divorce and his going to two Division 1 schools

and succeeding athletically as a starter for both program and academically for using all of the tools through each university to graduate on time. John was prepared by his parents especially his dad who received his degree on scholarship at a high profiled Division I university. John was coached by his dad as a role model to play at an experienced skill of one that would have the potential to play at the NBA level. His coding as H for across the board especially in Resiliency and Athletic Aspirations was because of his Family Support's mentoring before college, and through the parents' separation.

Chapter V

What Motivated Me to do This Research?

I engaged in this research because as a former black student athlete on a basketball scholarship and a team member of a high profile Division I University in the early seventies, I faced challenges on and off the court, dealt with the personalities and egos of coaches, professors and members of the student body as a whole. Although many times these experiences took me on an emotional roller coaster ride, I persevered and was able to become successful in the classroom, on the court, develop relationships within the school community and ultimately obtained my four-year degree on time, despite having three college coaches in 4 years.

Some of my basketball colleagues were not as fortunate. I witnessed black student athletes participate in their own exploitation, by putting all their efforts into making it into the NBA and ignoring their academics and ultimately failing to graduate. Many of these student athletes just wanted to showcase their basketball talents for NBA coaches and ignored any other goals such as earning a college degree. These players skipped class and put little effort into their academics. For many of these student-athletes, strong family support meant most parents helped their son's by encouraging them to put all their eggs in the NBA basket. Not all parents pushed their son's this way but a large percentage of the parents I met did push their son's to put all their efforts into making it into the NBA. For those colleagues of mine I started an association that raised millions of dollars to send former players back to school to obtain their degrees when their eligibility ran out after the fourth year last and final year of the scholarship arrangement in the seventies. The fifth year option to graduate was later added by the NCAA.

In retrospect my parents wanted me to get an equal start in school with young white students in what was then the Jim Crow Las Vegas era of the early 1950's. This time period in

Las Vegas was characterized by a separate but equal policy where there was in essence two Las Vegas' one for blacks and one for whites. My parents saw evidence that young blacks in the predominately black area of Las Vegas received less school resources i.e. up to date text books that had all the pages intact, and were not defaced with pen and pencil marks that made them extremely difficult to read. The impact of the Jim Crow philosophy in those days reinforced one groups' superiority and the other groups' inferiority to a point of self-hate syndrome that renders young blacks having a conscience distain for what they saw in the mirror. That self-hate syndrome was indoctrinated in the mines of blacks since slavery and unfortunately apart of segments of the black community that are uneducated to the diabolical origin of design of slavery in this country. That self-hate syndrome is one major cause of the low self-esteem; buying into the stereotype of being less intelligent the majority culture. Fortunately, my sample of research participants did not suffer from the remnants of Jim Crow as in the seventies.

In an attempt to prevent these feelings developing in me, my parents chose to send me and my brother to a private school. The parochial school curriculum focused on excellence in academics and strong discipline, sometimes in the form of corporal punishment. In those days, discipline in Catholic schools involved a strong focus on the academic fundamental tasks i.e. reading writing and arithmetic. The school philosophy was to focus on mastering and excelling in the building blocks for young minds to navigate the academic world of post high school education.

It was encouraging to discover through my research that all participants received the same type of Support from Family that helped me succeed through the Division 1 experience and ultimately graduate. The College Support at the Division 1 School I attended was offered back in the seventies was good support and because of my early unique academic upbringing, the

environment was not a culture shock to me as it was with most of the Black student athletes that were my teammates back in the early seventies. The College Support of the participants of this study also made a difference in their ultimate success of graduating with their four-year degree. Unfortunately, one participant did not receive strong College Support and Advocacy and did not graduate.

Fortunately for me, I had a head start on many of the black student athletes entering a Division I institution for the first time in the early seventies. During my junior and senior year in high school in 1969 and 1970, I had already taken college courses through a program called Upward Bound. The program was launched in the summer of 1965 after the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (The Federal War on Poverty), and was transferred to the Department of Education after the enactment of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Notable alumni of Upward Bound programs include Oprah Winfrey, John Quiñones, Angela Bassett, Jose Hernandez, Troy Polamalu, Kenny Leon, Donna Brazile, Gwen Moore, David C. Pierre and Viola Davis. Upward Bound was effective in gaining acceptance for its teaching methods, such as the low-tech and low-cost Astronomy program for high school students in southern California, that was subsequently adopted by Dr. Daniel Barth at Mount San Jacinto College.

After completing the Upward Bound program I was confident, determined and prepared for college work because I already obtained fifteen college credits before I was selected for a four-year basketball scholarship at a Division I University. During my college years I witnessed black student athletes participate in their own exploitation, which is one of the reasons I interviewed six black student athletes at Division I institutions to see if they still faced similar challenges and if this self-exploitation still continued in the twenty-first century.

I discovered through follow-up conversations and additional query that indeed the self-exploitation did exist through the practice of “One and Done.” The One and Done practice allows student athletes to declare for the NBA after one year of college experience. The practice is intended to showcase a player’s talent in an attempt to get a position on an NBA team. The focus is on basketball, not college.

The participants in this study expressed their view that the One and Done policy was a gamble of feast or famine. The participants expressed their families would not allow them to sign a declaration that would put their sons in a place of being exploited. However, the current participants expressed the view that One and Done is a common practice in many Division One universities. The One and Done policy reminded me of the self-exploitation of Division 1 Black Student Athletes during my era in the seventies that taught black children the only way out of a poor existence was the money and glory of the NBA. Coaches in those days, told young impressionable Black Student Athletes embarking on a Division 1 Scholarship that he could have two great winning years and then declare his professional status.

Fast forward to now, even with the great strides of Proposition 48 the shell game continues to take advantage of the have nots who are unaware of the statistical data of how many jobs are actually in the NBA and many players there are trying to make it in the NBA. Black Student Athletes are mesmerized by high aspirations and dreams of playing in the NBA. For example, during the researcher’s quest to find participants, the researcher interfaced with many coaches. One coach in particular, said that every player on his team thinks that he could play in the NBA. High Aspirations to make it in the NBA maybe a necessary component of the competitive confidence a talented younger player needs to excel in the competitive world of basketball. The participants in this study all had high aspirations for playing in the NBA, but also

had high aspirations to earn a college degree and expressed that if they made it to the NBA it would be considered icing on their cake.

Similar to some of the black student athletes I interviewed, I had three college coaches in the four years that I played. This put pressure on coaches to win and scholarship student athletes to try out almost every year to maintain their scholarship. Their blood sweat and tears that positioned the image of university nationally through winning literally help build the campus of my alma mater, directly and indirectly. I wanted to see if the student athletes I interviewed experienced as my uncle would often say “The same the same soup, just warmed over”.

My alma mater was serious-minded in the seventies when it came to winning games and going to post season play to maximize profits for the school. I wanted to see through my case studies, if black student athletes had a series of cultural clashes as I had when I soldiered through a white university, with white southern traditions of waving the confederate flags, as the cheerleaders were lead to the floor by a mascot wearing a confederate uniform. I remember most of the black student athletes along with some white student protesting together to have the flag and mascot changed. The protests appeared to have an effect. The mascot was changed and we felt it was a needed victory for black student athletes to feel as though they were embraced by the institution. However, coming off the victory of getting the mascot changed and the flag removed, the momentum led to voting for the first time in school history a black homecoming queen. Although she won and she was at her rightful place during the annual homecoming game, her rein was marred with protest by the student body bringing in an animal saying it was their homecoming queen.

Yes, I had to manage my temperament with the student body as a whole and the stereotypical behavior of some of the professors I had taken classes from at the university. I

recall the blatant disdain by one of my instructors who didn't mind embarrassing me when I attended his first class meeting. This instructor commented on my height and that I should sit in the back so other students could see the board. It was apparent to me that there were instructors that stereotyped black student athletes as individuals who didn't deserve what they considered a free education.

Some of those instructors didn't mind telling student athletes what they felt about them being in their class. Those are the teachers that gave me incentive to attend their classes, study, take their unprofessional abuse and graduate. Unbeknownst to them, I had already taken college courses through Upward Bound, which prepared to do college work. Although this behavior was a shock to me, my parental upbringing and the educational experiences they provided me with from kindergarten through the twelfth grade prepared me for anything these professors thought of me.

Unfortunately, some of my college teammates had a totally different perspective of about being a black student athlete at a Division I University. Some of my teammates literally would not take classes to advance them towards a degree, but somehow they remained eligible to play on scholarship. They had this fixation on the one and done mentality; playing their heart out for one year and then expecting to play professionally in the NBA the following year. It's that fixation on going after your dreams and playing pro ball in the NBA that still resonates with young black student athletes today.

As I began to ask the last few questions of the participants for this case study, I realized all of the Black Student Athletes had this fixation in their minds to play in the NBA. As I began to look deeper into this phenomenon, I sought out research that supported the fixation of playing in the NBA by high school and collegiate student athletes. In his research, Flint (2014) engages

us by stating that the number of children wanting to go into the NBA has risen with the sport's popularity. Although kids dreaming big and working hard on their game is great, the statistics on the number of players that actually make it to the pros is daunting. I know no one wants to think they'll ever get injured or worst yet, that they simply aren't good enough, but the reality is no matter how much you are dominating the local, state or even national scene the odds are stacked against you.

Here's a peek inside exactly what the odds are of playing professional basketball.

- High School Players: 545,844
- College Players: 17,500
- Draftees: 48

If we break this down into percentages, it is even more impressive.

- Players make the jump from high school to college: 2.9%
- Players make the jump from college to the pros: 1.3%
- Players make the jump from high school to the pro: .03%

This means out of every 10,000 kids playing basketball in high school only 3 will make it to the pros. The results of the interview data will be presented in the next chapter and will give you an insight in the harsh reality these Black Student athletes faced when they came to realize that their dreams would not become a reality.

What Have I Learned From This Case Study?

I have learned that today's Black student-athletes still face many challenges to successfully navigate their path from high school to college graduation. The participants revealed important factors of their success in all three areas of this study, 1) their academic preparation

before receiving a Division One Scholarship, 2) their academic and athletic life during the scholarship experience, and 3) their life after the scholarship experience.

During the participant's high school experience, the participants expressed strong academic preparation, a strong desire to graduate from college, and strong family support were critical for their success. During the participants' college years, they expressed a strict structured life, strong academic support from coaches, academic advisors, family and coaches; a high level of resiliency, a sociability network and high athletic aspirations all contributed to their ability to earn their college degrees.

After their scholarship experience, the participants reported perseverance and resiliency as the chemistry that resulted in their success to completing their four-year degree. The participant that did not graduate expressed that his transferring from school to school caused his strategic plan of succeeding academically put on the back burning to his quest at potentially making the in NBA or professional basketball overseas.

I have learned tough academic standards of Proposition 48 required student athletes to hit the books harder and caused college coaches to adhere to a straight forward recruiting process. College coaches can no longer cut corners, or find unique and creative ways of helping student athletes be eligible to participate in the upcoming year on their college campuses. It was now up to high school teachers, counselors and strong family support to ensure these student athletes take the necessary courses to meet or exceed the minimum score on the ACT and SAT required by the NCAA for any athlete to be able to receive an athletic scholarship.

Participants Julius and Bernard discussed their family support and the value of a college education. Julius explains that his grandfather raised him and placed a high value on education. He goes on to say he grew up in a home where education was always a first priority. Bernard's

father paid closer attention to his Son's grades and had strong consequences for unacceptable grades. He said his Dad, an educator, was a strict guy on academics. He and his siblings were not allowed to get less than a C average. He remembers bringing home a C and his Dad would not allow him to be on the basketball team.

The black student athletes in this case study said that they were glad that they could use their families as sounding boards when it came to big decisions dealing with their scholarship, negative school culture, and a host of concerns that had as overworked student athletes. The participants whose parents/family stayed involved during their Division 1 scholarship, helped to mitigate the blind trust in the coach and institution to really have their sons interest at heart especially their academic interest.

John discusses this blind trust in the coach and the reality of their relationship once he stepped foot on the University campus. He states:

I just felt like it was a fake relationship. Before I got there and he saw me play, he told me what he could see me doing on the team and how I could contribute. He was telling me a lot of good things. I felt like he was a great talker, like he was just a great talker, but some of the things he didn't really mean.

Julius gives his insight into this blind trust commenting:

I went through three coaches there Initially our relationship started off really good and then once he figured out who my mentor was, I think that's kind of when it went downhill. I wouldn't say that he was...I don't think he was racist. I just think it was more of a control for him. So, because he couldn't really necessarily control me and I had in my mind made up that I was going to get through the adversity of dealing with that.

Trenton's words are a little harsher as he states:

You know how coaches are; *well, we need you, we need you.* But you're really a piece of meat. And then he tried to manipulate me to the point that he had cut a guy and I had another kid's scholarship that didn't even finish school yet. He took that kid's scholarship and gave it to me just so I could play.

Student athletes' daily schedules required them to juggle academics, practice, studying, travel to games, conditioning workouts and also take on other duties as a scholarship or star player. The participants expressed that they did not think the average non-student athlete or college professor understood the planning, focus and organization that goes into the everyday life of a student athlete. The academic and practice schedule is rigorous, most student athletes are asked to make other commitments like; extracurricular appearances at hospitals, K to 12 schools and entertaining recruits when they make visits to the University. The student athletes on division 1 teams often have twelve or more hour days. Some of the athletes discuss their demanding schedules as I interviewed them:

Trenton gives insight to his schedule by stating:

But we would normally have morning practice; that would be about two or three hours. Then after that we would have class; we'll have class from either twelve to five. And then after five, five to nine we'll have study hall. So we'll have to have a certain amount of numbers of study hall each week on top of class.

Ervin chimes in with her perspective of what his mind frame was toward his schedule and how he felt about being a student athlete:

I don't think I was competitive in the classroom. I think I didn't compete and that's that. Again, if you're not around that nature to be competitive in the classroom, then you won't be. We were competitive on the basketball court and/or playing baseball or football. The

classroom...And I'll say the percentages. I don't know what they are. But I'm willing to bet that in the eighties, seventies, there's a lot of kids that were like me. You weren't competitive in the classroom, but on your field of play, you are very competitive. I didn't care if Johnny got an *A*. As long as El got a *B*, I was cool, or a *C*, it's cool.

Hendley shares his schedule while participating as a student athlete:

Studying... spent probably about five to eight hours depending on the day and depending on how much homework I had and how many projects I had to do. He also comments on the support he received from faculty stating, "they supported me a hundred percent of the way. They might have asked me a couple of times throughout my years, like, *Are you sure you want to do it this fast? Are you sure you want to put this heavy of a load on yourself?*" I was like, "I'm committed to this plan as a freshman; I'm just going to follow through with it.

Although the black student athletes faced adversity and worked through many challenges with coaches, cultural clashes on and off campus, I learned the academic personnel they collaborated with at the university, assisted them through counseling and encouraging them to focus on graduating and not just helping keep them eligible for the basketball season. Evident of this support comes from the black student athletes being interviewed for this case study.

Julius never felt he was treated badly because he was an athlete. He goes on to say he thinks "the teachers actually cared about our education at the time".

Bernard comments specifically about the professors he encountered while attending classes at the division I university when he states: "The professors are excellent; I mean incredible professors. (Professor PM), who I still stay in contact with periodically, he's

incredible. He wrote for the Oakland Tribune. He wrote for the New York Times. I mean he definitely challenged me.”

Hendley goes more into depth explaining his accolades of the professors who dealt with him while on the campus of the Division I school he attended by stating:

It was pretty good. It was definitely pretty good. Like I said, academic advisers in the athletic program, they definitely gave me everything that I needed to succeed. I've had professors and mentors that I've met through my years that did help me out as well.

Whenever I needed anything, they were very...I wouldn't say, lenient, but they were very understanding of the time commitment that I had to put in because they said it's not the same as someone who has a full-time job or a part-time job because they know that out there they're going to be working.

As I listened to the answers of my subjects, I was often drawn back into my days as a black student athlete, and how I felt walking into the classrooms, engaging with other students, professors, the media and fans outside the school community, and wondering what was really going on in their minds as they engaged with me.

Most of the time student athletes are usually around other student athletes on campus. For some, depending on what school they go to, it can be a culture shock dealing with totally different demographics and community cultures than the one they grew up in. The participants shared their thoughts on the cultural dynamics (cultural clashes) at the university and outside communities into which they were asked to assimilate.

Julius was brutally honest with his response with the campus culture at the university he attended by stating: “It was fair. The blacks knew who—it was almost a little bit segregated.

The blacks hung out with the blacks, the whites hung out with the whites, and the Hispanics hang out with the Hispanics.”

Bernard states that because:

I grew up in a mixed racial, a biracial family, I was able to adapt and I felt identity with both sides. Obviously I felt more of an identity with the African American community because that’s what people see me as. But as far as my ability to be in other social environments, I felt like I was a chameleon; I could adapt to any situation.

Hendley shared a totally different perspective of his campus life:

I think for myself it's kind of hard to say because I was never really on campus or really never really mingled with a lot of students because I was just so busy with athletics. Like every time people wanted to hang out or every time people wanted to talk, I was always busy running to a meeting or I was always busy running to practice or to weights or I was busy doing some type of community event that they had me doing, which I was doing probably three or four times a week. So it was always—I could never really enjoy the college experience. I was always in class or doing something athletic related.

Ervin, from the old school era of playing basketball shares his unique perspective when first arriving on campus stating:

My high school was very diverse. We had Afro-American, Caucasian, Hispanic, Filipino, and Samoan. We were very diverse. When I came to college, it was culture shock. Hell, white in college. I think there was about thirty blacks. No, I take that back. I'm being funny. There were more Caucasians at my institution in 1982 than I've ever seen in my life. When I walked onto the campus, like, *Jesus Christ, this is a gang of white folks*. You know what I mean? Because that's all it was. And you knew when you

see an Afro-American, black, male or female, they're into athletics; you knew it whether they're in track, whether it be in football, basketball. That was it. You knew that they were into sports. So everybody else was like, "Okay, damn, how do I—now, I know how to get in with the other crowd because I had that in my high school. But how do I mingle with all these white people? You go meet people; they're all white. You go to the gym; they're all white. I'm like, *damn*. Everywhere I went there was a white cloud. You know what I mean? So it was a culture shock.

John describes a more mellow approach to adapting to the culture by stating:

Yeah, everything was okay. I was able to balance out. I'm pretty good getting in relationships with people. So I didn't have a problem getting used to diversity. It was all cool to me. I didn't get a culture shock or anything like that.

I also learned that every one of my subjects thought that he could play at the NBA level. Yes, when I first arrived I had visions of starting as a freshman and ultimately be good enough to someday play in the NBA, but from a very young age my parents instilled in me to also hit the books, so if God forbid I had a career ending injury or I was not going to be able to play pro ball for whatever reason, I would have something to fall back on. All of the subjects I interviewed did not fulfill their dreams and play in the NBA. Many were left disappointed; some bitter wondering what would be their next steps to survive.

Julius went to a couple of overseas camps, but then realized after working so hard for the past 15 to 20 years and the toll it had on his body, he just figured he didn't want to work as hard anymore. It was so grueling on my body. He ended up coaching kids, started his own travel AU program.

Bernard realized it was a positive experience obtaining his degree, networked, and

aligned himself with some pretty good people and alumni. Hendley struggled with the lack of support he felt from the University, coaches and staff after his life after the Division I scholarship experience. He had multiple tryouts with professional teams, but was not selected to go any further. He felt everyone he had developed a relationship on campus while playing, were too busy after his playing days were over and he felt alone and isolated. Ervin discussed the bitterness he felt towards the people who thought he wasn't going to get his degree. He also talks about being injured, the sardonic affect he felt it had on him not being able to make it to the NBA and his ability to make a lot of money. Although Trenton obtained his degree, he realized the NBA was not going to be attainable, he didn't know what do, so he hit rock bottom, he became broke with no money to survive on. He felt he had no one to tell him, *if all fails, I got your back*, so he became an electrician with his mom's friend.

Implications of This Study

The results of this study have implications for several groups and stakeholders:

- 1) High School Coaches and Administrators:
 - a. High school coaches and administrators can be instrumental in the success of student athletes participating through the adoption of specific items listed in the Theme- Academic Aspirations and Preparations. Coaches and administrators can put in place strong academic support for student-athletes who could benefit from essential academic preparation and high academic aspirations. Coaches and administrators should focus on preparing student athletes for the academic success in for Division I schools. In the competitive arena of high school athletics, a strong track record of college academic success could be beneficial to the school's entire athletic program.

- b. High School Coaches and Administrations should focus on the specific items in the Theme, Structured Life, by providing a program structure that requires students to set aside time for academic study and sports activities during the sport season and throughout the school year.
- c. High School Coaches and Administrators should focus on helping students develop the skills necessary to be resilient in college and improve their sociability on campus with non-athletes which will improve their student-athlete's chances for success in college. Providing opportunities for student-athletes develop the ability to fight through tough situations and make friends with non-athletes will better prepare their players for success in college and make themselves more effective mentors.

2) College Coaches

- a. College Coaches can and will have a better understanding, awareness, and less cultural clashes with Black Athletes once they can grasp the importance of this research and the themes that surfaced through the candid talk of the participants of the research. Structured Life, Extended Family Support and College Academic Support can and will enhance the relationship between important stakeholders, such as the student-athletes, parents, and assistant coaches. Lastly, coaches must understand the importance of resiliency to the success of student-athletes. Therefore, coaches should provide policies and practices that assist their players successfully deal with hardships and challenges of life as a D1 college student-athlete. Coaches need to be understanding and sensitive to the ups and downs of life as a young vulnerable student-athlete who often experience many types of

adversity and needs the support and skills to successfully deal with these issues.

- b. College Coaches should try to create an environment free of prejudice and racism where all players feel welcome and supported by the coaches, all players, the school and the student body. This type of environment can help galvanize the team effort more effectively and lead to success on and off the court. Coaches can create a win-win scenario when communication is embraced by the all members of the team without the distraction of cultural bias or ignorance.
 - c. Coaches must be aware of the cultural mix and status of the team. If the team includes a One and Done participant, the coach must be aware team spirit may suffer because one participant is transitioning from the team through personal ambition. The One and Done player is only a 3 to 4-month ordeal due to the length of the basketball season. Will the One and Done have the grade point average to continue academics for the next semester...probably not? The team chemistry can be vulnerable if the coach does not understand how strong the Athletic Aspirations theme drives selfish ambition.
 - d. Coaches should focus some time on the sociability of the student-athletes so players have a higher comfort level on campus and more support for success. Student-athletes benefit by a rich rewarding experience that can balance the need for young impressionable student athletes to enjoy the diversity of a multicultural academic environment.
- 3) College Academic Support Personnel:
- a. College academic support personnel should provide a customized tutoring program that assesses each players academic strengths and weaknesses and is

designed to meet these specific needs for each student-athlete. During mandatory study halls, academic support personnel should address the specific needs of each student-athlete and not establish a program of, “one size, fits all.” The academic background and skills of student-athletes will range from low to high and a general academic program will not meet the academic needs of all student-athletes. To maximize success, student-athletes need a program that meets each student’s needs. For example, some students will need additional help in reading, or writing or math but not all students. Academic support must be personalized to meet the needs of each student-athlete.

- b. College academic support personnel should include other assets on campus and at home if possible to increase the impact of the support on the student-athletes. Academic support should be year-long and included during travel to athletic events.

4) NCAA

- a. NCAA personnel should develop and implement educational programs for coaches and athletic directors to address the specific items established within the Themes in this research that contribute to academic and athletic success.
- b. NCAA personnel help coaches understand and implement programs that increase player’s sociability with the community by including activities such as team and player appearances at hospitals, local schools, television shows, and other extracurricular activities that help players become a part of the community.
- c. NCAA personnel should develop programs that reward programs with high student academic success and graduation rates. This type of program will help

coaches focus on academics and athletic success. If college success is really a top goal for the NCAA, their policies, practices and rewards should represent this goal.

Conclusion

The data reflects that the student athletes that participated in this case study had strong Family Support with high expectations of doing well academically, as five out of six participants graduated. College Support and Advocacy is also needed from the Division 1 Black student athlete to transcend the new academic environment and develop a Structured Life balancing academia and his basketball scholarship. The data reflected that the participants developed resiliency and Adaptability from the Support and Advocacy of their institutions which ultimately led to 5 out of 6 having Academic Success. The more involved Family are with their son's academic journey, that involvement will naturally lead them to conversations with the academic support individuals at their son's institution, which in this research project made the difference for all of the participants. The Family Support evident in this research project before college also made the difference as was evident by all the participants having a high enough GPA to enter Division I institutions. The data also reveals once they entered their Division I institution, they unanimously received academic support from professor, counselors, tutors and academic advisors. Participants in this case study went to these schools because it was a childhood dream of theirs to obtain a basketball scholarship to a Division 1 school.

For the participants in this study, as soon as they walked on campus, most people (including professors) thought because they were scholarship student athletes, they led a charmed life. Their perception is that athletes play all day and let the classes take care of

themselves. In reality, for the Black student athletes (and athletes interviewed for this case study), their obligations outside the classrooms are far greater than that of the average student.

The Black male student athletes that participated in this study said they thought they faced far more stressors than non- student athletes. When they first walked on campus they had to deal with the stereotypes society had placed on them for being Black and male. This was evident to them by what they perceived as negative stereotypes and images associated with them in the media. These images included; the mass incarceration of black males throughout the correctional institutions in America; being violent; the negative messages through music; and being labeled instinctive rather than intelligent in the world of athletics.

The participants in the study came from communities where the African Americans were the majority, which forced them to adapt to a whole new culture on and off campus. Adapting to a new culture caused fear and anxiety for some of the participants. These student athletes expressed they were not only in the minority but they were also a small subset of the minority by being Black Scholar Athletes. These student athletes were held to a whole host of expectations and pressures other Black students never experienced. In addition, the interactions between the white and black student athletes were not always positive. These student athletes, at times faced pernicious stereotypes. They were often looked at as “an exploited prized catch”, or as more lacking intellectual abilities possessed by white student athletes.

Did the Black student athletes I interviewed feel exploited and did they feel they were treated differently from the other students on campus? The answer was yes. Exploitation by stereotyping and other forms of racism are particularly insidious in the realm of intercollegiate athletics and most obvious in the sports of football and men’s basketball. University athletic programs are driven by revenue produced by successful athletic teams. As a consequence, it is

crucial to the universities that the best possible athletes are recruited and once there, provided with the best opportunities for athletic excellence. Too often the mission of the university, to educate all its students, is compromised, particularly with Black athletes, by overemphasizing athletic pursuits to the detriment of academics.

A common topic of discussion for most of the participants was the promises from coaches during the recruiting process that they would have an opportunity to play, but when they got to college, it was a different story. *Although many of the participants may have had struggles on and off the court, for example two thirds of the Student Athletes went to two or more Division I Schools five of the six students earned their Bachelors' Degree.*

Why did they leave the first school they attended? The students were doing fine academically and they had support their professors, academic advisors or counselors. However, these athletes thought they were sold false dreams of playing at a Division I power house and hopefully and making it to the NBA.

Today, many of our basketball student athletes wait in line to receive that big check from the NBA, which in reality the statistical data of basketball players making it the professional level is zero to extremely low. Research demonstrates chances of a college player earning a spot on a professional basketball team very low. In the study, out of 545,844 High School players in the country, only 2.9% made the jump from high school to college and only .03% made the jump from high school to the pros. Out of the 17,500 college players only 1.3% made the jump from college to professional basketball. (Need citation)

After in depth conversations with these Black Students Athletes, I would recommend the student athletes do in depth research on colleges prior to committing to the school. Athletes should read articles, do online research on media associated with the school, alumni, former

players, current players, and coaches. When the student athletes do their site visit, they should meet the Academic Advisors try to get a good understanding of the school culture and the academic expectations of the college.

Themes

1. *Academic Aspirations and Preparation - High School:* Academic Aspirations and Preparation was another theme that assisted the development during impressionable foundational years of most of the young men that participated in the research, instilled by their parents and high school teachers, coaches. The Structured Life theme that most scholarship athletes most hold fast to if they are going to successful complete their responsibilities of a student-athlete.
2. *Family Support:* Family Support was the theme participants talked about the most. The participants talked about the involvement of their families made the biggest difference in terms of making important decisions, encouragement during adversity, Family Support was the catalyst as well as the main reason why they graduated. Support of Family can also take a different turn when Families are looking for their sons to make it into the NBA as soon as possible. That brand of Family Support is not thinking about their son's attainment of a four-year degree but an NBA contract.
3. *Structured Life:* The structured life of these scholar athletes played a role in their success. Structured Life as a recipient of a division I scholarship is a must academically and athletically, if the recipient is to succeed in both.
4. *College Academic Support:* The College Academic Support is vital life line for organizing consistency and maintaining study halls, tutoring, and counseling for a busy student

athlete. The research data help define the role of a student athlete as an employee with job descriptions.

5. *Resiliency*: Resiliency was the needed theme that gave life to tolerance and perseverance needed throughout a myriad of circumstances and adversities. A student athlete has many responsibilities to maintain their scholarship, on and off the court, when you add ethnicity to the design the research revealed many inequities, double standards, and cultural clashes.
6. *Sociability*: Although for the most part the subjects were able to successfully conform to a multicultural environment or the theme of Sociability. The College experienced is enhance and enjoyed if student athletes balanced Sociability with Structured Life.
7. *Athletic Aspirations*: Athletic Aspirations was a driving theme throughout my interviews with the research participants. Athletic Aspirations was thriving even after individuals obtained their degrees. It was like I graduated for my parents and that is out of the way however I still have the burning desire to quench this “basketball jones”. It was almost akin to their heart beats, the bouncing of the ball. Although most of my participants will fare better with the option of a four-year degree than those who put all of their eggs in one-cylinder basket, having limited professional options. It was encouraging to discover that 5 out of 6 participants graduated from college hence a big improvement sample in comparison with most Black Student Athletes from my era in the seventies.
8. *Academic Success – College*. The catalyst of Academic Success per the research participants in most cases kept revisiting the appeal from their parents to graduate. Most of the research participants had both parents involved concerning their college

responsibilities whether their parents were married or divorced, involvement made the difference

All research participants received mostly high and medium Levels in the Extended Family Support, Resiliency, Structured Living, Academic Aspirations and Preparation in High school, College Academic Support, Athletic Aspirations, Sociability, and Academic Success. According to the data, it is a very difficult time to successfully navigate the process from high school student to college scholarship athlete and all eight theme areas were important to the process. The data indicates with high levels in all theme areas student athletes earn their degrees. Additional research would need to be conducted to see if students who received lower levels of support would be as successful.

The information gleaned from this research could be helpful for high school students who want to pursue a college scholarship in basketball and their families, high school coaches, Guidance Counselors, Athletic Directors and teachers and Division 1 college coaches, counselors, academic advisors, professors, and Athletic Directors.

High school students, parents, and school personnel could benefit by a better understanding of the challenges facing student athletes and the factors that prepare these future Division 1 scholarship players for success in college and on the basketball court. As was brought out in the research, future Black Student Athletes, must start with high school academic preparation, with parental involvement in the process, and must be committed to embrace all the necessary themes to pilot a successful journey that will take Resiliency, the need to be a willing participant in the rules of Structured Living at a Division I School on scholarship. The themes that surfaced through the research will be helpful starting at an early age. AAU youth tournaments are where you find Division I scouts and Division I Coaches nowadays. The AAU

traveling team for youths as young as 10 years old have the potential to be tracked by coaches and scouts of Division I schools. Scouts for Division I schools are going to these tournaments benefitting more than isolated high school basketball games. Parents must be aware of what Division I Schools offer through Athletic Scholarships. Parents must become more intense with Family Support, looking for those schools that have a track record of students graduating, and have a tradition and track record of being that Extended Family for young impressionable people away from home for the first time in an environment that can render them confused and disillusioned.

Coaches and Athletic Directors from Division I Schools could benefit from a better understanding of the challenges facing high school and college student athletes and the factors in high school and college that help prepare students for academic and athletic success in college and beyond. The data shined the light on instances of unprofessional behavior of coaches that alienated players shooting themselves and their programs in the foot unnecessarily. The communication with their players along with a relationship and communication with the parents can only improve the success rate of the Black Student Athlete on a Division I scholarship instead of the cultural clashes through miscommunication that was alluded to by the research participants. The coaches and administrators that are sincerely looking for the optimum student athlete should research the Family Support, the Academic Aspirations and Preparations from High School, the display of Resiliency that the student displayed throughout his high school years can be an indicator if the student can transition to a Division1 Academic Environment. Division I Coaches and Athletic Directors can benefit from this study by understanding the themes that surfaced through the research.

Recommendations for Further Research

Future research should:

1. Increase the sample size to add more experiences of student-athletes who did not graduate and had more varied experiences.
2. Conduct similar studies with all women and men in Division 1, Division II and Junior Colleges. Factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, country of birth could be helpful factors to better understand the experiences of student-athletes.
3. Additional research on the impact of the policy of “One and Done” should be continued to see its impact on the academic and athletic success of student-athletes, the college program and the NBA. Proposition 48 was a very positive step that help stabilize the exploitation of Black student athletes. With that said a research follow up question pertaining to the One and Done, is an arrangement that is equivalent to declaring your eligibility to be drafted early from my era. With proposition 48 being a step in the collegiate student athlete evolution, the One and Done is more of the same policies that can potentially continue some of the social ills that plague college Division I scholarships with exploitation of mostly Black student athletes per capita. The participants agreed that some players of One and Done was all about themselves and not the team. With that they concentrated on their stats, hindering good solid team play. Some of the participants said that the One and Done students did not go to class and if they did it was to maintain their eligibility for that one basketball season. Even if they wanted to come back the next year, most would be ineligible to play and are forced to take their chances in the pros. The participants also mentioned how contentious and border line dangerous practices could be competing against an individual that put all of his eggs in the One and Done status. The

One and Done status is a step backwards as far as the good measures that Proposition 48 contributed to Division 1 student athletes. The One and Done concept drains the team concept however it is immediate gratification for coaches and institutions however a gamble for those who declare One Year of show to get paid. “It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit”, Harry S. Truman.

4. Research on the recent boycott by University of Missouri football players and similar incidents could shed more light on the challenges faced by student-athletes in the areas of prejudice, racism, bullying, and threats of violence. I made mention of this current situation because during my four-year scholarship I had to make a similar stand with other mostly black athletes, because our administration saw nothing wrong with our university mascot in a confederate uniform that would run out on the floor with the cheerleaders waving a confederate flag. When student athletes find their voice they can be powerful employees of the Division I multibillion dollar entertainment machine. In essence, the exploitation of coaches and institutions using the carrot of winning games and possible brackets in the NCAA tournament, receiving a better win schedule results and loads of money for the institution has its shortcomings.
5. Research on the most successful sports programs in NCAA programs could shed light on how these programs have been able to overcome challenges to maintain high levels of academic success for their student-athletes.
6. Similar research in other NCAA sports could compare and contrast the challenges and success of scholar-athletes in other sports.

Appendix

Session One

1. Prior to entering college on an athletic scholarship:
 - a. What was your school life typically like before entering college?
 - a. How much time daily was devoted to study?
 - b. How much time daily was devoted to athletics?
 - c. What led you to consider entering college on an athletic scholarship?
 - d. What did you hope to accomplish by as a collegiate athlete?
 - e. What did you plan to study in college?

Session Two

2. Once you entered college:
 - a. What was a typical day for you once you entered college?
 - b. How much time daily was devoted to study?
 - c. How much time daily was devoted to athletics?
 - d. What was your experience related to competing, both as an athlete and as a student at the college level in your major field of study?

Session Three

1. After your athletic eligibility expired: What was your experience after your athletic eligibility expired? What was your experience in completing your college degree?
 - a. On a scale of zero to 5, five being the best, how would you rate the academic support you received while participating in athletics?

- b. On a scale of zero to 5, five being the best, how would you rate the academic support you received while participating during your scholarship at Division 1.

If you were placed in the position of being Athletic Director at your former institution, what would your program look like in terms of offering athletic and scholastic support for your

Follow up question:

What do you think about the One and Done status?

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Curriculum Vitae

Current Employment

- Founder, Wright Food Ventures
- Professor, College of Southern Nevada
- Franchise Owner, Carl's Jr. McCarran Airport

Career Highlights

- Dean & Associate Vice-President, College of Southern Nevada
- International Hospitality & Gaming Consultant
- Chairman & CEO, Shetakis Wholesalers
- Owner, Urban American Television Network
- Owner, Cigars of the World
- Coach, Singapore National Basketball Team
- Appointed recently by Governor Sandoval for the Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB for Tourism, Gaming and Entertainment)
- Vice Chair of the Better Business Bureau of Southern Nevada, Executive Committee

Education

- Doctoral Candidate -Workforce & Economic Development, UNLV
- Masters - Secondary Education, UNLV
- BS Hotel Administration, UNLV

Professor Wright is a distinguished member of the CSN faculty and has many remarkable administrative contributions to the local, national and international Hospitality industries. From positions as Dean of the Hospitality Institute to international lecturer and gaming consultant, Professor Wright has been frequently called upon by various state and federal governmental agencies to share his vast knowledge of Workforce Development, Gaming Regulations, Hospitality and Tourism Marketing, and Casino Operations. Professor Wright has traveled extensively to the Far East including China, Korea, and Singapore representing CSN and local gaming operations including the Bellagio Hotel & Casino and Caesars Palace Hotel & Casino.