

YOU HAVE TO BE TWICE AS GOOD:
ACADEMIC MOTIVATION AND ATHLETIC IDENTITY OF
BLACK MEN AT A PWI

A Capstone presented to the Faculty of the
School of Education and Human Development
University of Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

DASHAN JAMEL AXSON-LAWRENCE
He/Him/His
Brownsville, East New York, Brooklyn, New York

Master of Science, University of Georgia, 2018
Master of Education, University of West Georgia, 2014
Bachelor of Art, South Carolina State University, 2012

University of Virginia
September 16, 2024

YOU HAVE TO BE TWICE AS GOOD:
ACADEMIC MOTIVATION AND ATHLETIC IDENTITY OF
BLACK MEN AT A PWI

©Copyright by
Dashan Jamel Axson-Lawrence
September 16, 2024

Docusign Envelope ID: 2625F55F-4AB5-4FD6-B805-00C26730B051

University of Virginia
 School of Education and Human Development Registrar
 Office of Admissions and Student Affairs

Ehd-registrar@virginia.edu
 Ridley Hall 102D
 417 Emmet Street
 Charlottesville, VA 22903

Capstone Approval Form

Student Full Name: Axson-Lawrence, Dashan Jamel [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Department Name: Education Leadership, Foundation & Policy



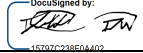
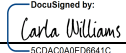
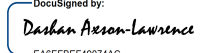
Degree Program: Higher Education (EDD)

Date of Defense: 09/16/2024

This doctoral capstone has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the School of Education and Human Development in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Approved Title of Doctoral Capstone:

YOU HAVE TO BE TWICE AS GOOD: Academic Motivation and Athletic Identity of Black Men at a PWI.

	Name	Department/University	Signature
Chair	Christian Steinmetz	EDLF/EHD/UVA	 Signed by: 1154EB48D781444...
Co-Chair (if applicable)			
Committee Member	Brian Pusser	EDLF/EHD/UVA	 Signed by: 570A7A0F329E4F6...
Committee Member	Derick Williams	EDHS/EHD/UVA	 DocuSigned by: 167027238E04402...
Committee Member	Carla Williams	Athletics/UVA	 DocuSigned by: 5CDAC0A0ED0641C...
Committee Member			
Committee Member			
Committee Member			
Student	Dashan Jamel Axson-Lawrence	EDLF/EHD/UVA	 DocuSigned by: 5A6E8F8E40037AC...

DEDICATION

Dr. Maya Angelou once said, “If one is lucky, a solitary fantasy can totally transform one million realities.” Reflecting on this quote, I think about my own journey and my goal to be a representation for those who look like me and have been told that they can't succeed. With that in mind, I dedicate this research study to all the little Black boys who have been told their dreams cannot be achieved because of where they come from, or that they won't amount to anything because of the color of their skin. I want you to know that the world around you can be hard and may often seem against you. Just know that you can do anything you set your mind to. Regardless of where you started, that is not where your story will end. Use those challenges as fuel to prove to those who doubted you that you are more than enough and show them what you are truly capable of achieving. Always remember that you are your ancestors' wildest dreams.

I would also like to offer a second dedication to the memory of Lavel Davis Jr., DeSean Perry, and Devin Chandler. This study was motivated by the time I spent with you all and watching you grow at the University of Virginia. As I reflect on your lives and your dreams, I am here to make sure that though you were not involved in this study, it is because of you this study exists.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

There is an African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child." This means that an entire community works together to provide a safe and healthy environment for a child, playing a crucial role in their development over the years. Throughout my life, I have been blessed to have many people believe in me and support me through all my trials and tribulations—mentors, teachers, professors, friends, family, and more. To everyone who has prayed for me or spoken words of encouragement, I thank you. While I cannot list everyone in these acknowledgments, I want you all to know that I deeply appreciate everything you have done for me. You have been truly instrumental in helping me reach this point.

First and foremost, I want to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who is the head of my life. Without Him, none of this would be possible. Thank you for keeping me focused and being my light in times of darkness. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my committee. Without your support, I wouldn't have reached this milestone and earned the title of DOCTOR. Brian, I've had the privilege of learning from you since the beginning of this doctoral program. From day one, you've challenged me to excel and instilled in me the importance of staying true to myself and my research focus, never shying away from unsettling truths. Your emphasis on centering the experiences of Black male voices has been instrumental. Derick, your decision to join my committee and be a part of this work has meant the world to me. Your constant validation of the value of this research, your passion for supporting this student population, and your exemplary character have inspired me immensely as I continue in education. I have always said that representation and seeing people who look like you is important. Your involvement in this journey has reinforced just how crucial it is to have such representation during significant milestones in both personal and academic journeys. For all that you have done for me, I say thank you. Carla, affectionately known as my "Auntie Carla," I remember it like it was yesterday. I walked into your office and asked you to be a

part of my committee. You initially said, "I mean... I can help you as much as I can, but I am a busy woman. So, I am going to have to decline, but I can be an ex-officio member." Honestly, I didn't know what that meant, but I was determined to have you on this committee. I asked so many times that you eventually agreed, for which I am incredibly grateful. I cannot express enough gratitude for your involvement in this journey. From UGA to now at UVA, your guidance has been invaluable. Thank you for opening your office to many unannounced visits—truly a lot of unannounced visits. Despite your busy schedule, you always made time for me, giving me a hug and saying, "I am proud of you," which means so much. Thank you for being a mentor and my mom away from home. I cherish our bond and will continue to pop into your office unannounced because you can't get rid of me. Lastly, Christian, from our initial meeting to see if this was the program for me, you have been my biggest supporter. I am eternally grateful for you equipping me with the necessary tools for success, instilling the courage to pursue this research, and, above all, for being authentically yourself at every turn. Your presence has been a beacon of light in times of darkness and uncertainty. No matter how many times I said, "I want to quit"—57 times, to be exact—you always reminded me that this is part of the journey and that I could do it. Thank you for the countless laughs and for imparting your wisdom throughout this journey, especially sharing your love for Dave Matthews with me. I will only admit this once, but I've realized the truth in your saying, "Your advisor is always right," and to trust the process. Here's to making it this far and getting this thing done (inserts fist bump).

Next, I extend my deepest appreciation to the 97 research participants across various sports who diligently completed surveys and to the 12 individuals who generously shared their lived experiences. I am profoundly thankful, as this study would not have been possible without your contributions. When embarking on this research endeavor, my primary objective was to amplify the voices of a student population often overlooked, ensuring their narratives were heard and valued. As

a former student-athlete and collegiate athletics administrator, I aimed to create something that would serve as a supportive resource tailored to the needs of Black male student-athletes. Your willingness to participate and candidly share your perspectives has been invaluable. I hope I have honored your contributions and effectively captured the essence of our dialogues. Your trust and cooperation have been instrumental, and I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to shed light on your stories.

Next, I'd like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my friends, who have been unwavering pillars of support throughout this journey. My cherished "A1's," Shakeem, Branden, and Collin, what can I say that hasn't been said over our more than ten years of friendship? We've shared laughter, secrets, and unbreakable bonds that time nor distance can diminish. Thank you for your understanding when academic commitments and exhaustion caused me to miss important events. The sacrifices you've made for our friendship do not go unnoticed, and I am truly grateful. To Luceandy (Lu) and Kenyatta (Ken), fondly known as "The Table," thank you for putting up with me for all the years. You both have served as my sounding board, my voices of reason and my companions in processing life's challenges. Your perspective and guidance have been invaluable in helping me navigate the complexities of life. I could always count on you both to tell me the real and keeping me humble, which is not an easy task. You have stood by me through the highs and lows, and your presence means the world to me. Also, I would like to give a special shoutout to my family/friend Katherine (Kat), words cannot express the impact that you have had on me during my time here at UVA, both professionally and personally. Thank you for being a voice during the storm and making life here in Charlottesville just that much better.

Next, I want to thank my family for their support throughout the years. To Grandma Pat, affectionately known as "Old Lady," my beacon of love, strength, and endurance, I am endlessly grateful for your unwavering support and encouragement. Despite not always understanding what I

was doing in school or why I was still pursuing my studies after all these years, you never failed to express how proud you were of me. When times get tough, you would always remind me that “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Your belief in me has been a constant source of motivation. Words fall short of expressing the depth of my love and gratitude for you. As we share this moment today, I am reminded of how blessed I am to have you in my life and to be your favorite grandchild (LOL).

To Aunnie, you have always been a role model to me. Since the very beginning, you have been my motivator, my tutor, and the cool aunt. Your encouragement has been instrumental in my pursuit of excellence. You pushed me to strive for greatness and to push beyond my limits academically and in life. Makayla and Joshua, I dedicate every achievement I attain to you both. I hope to serve as a shining example of the things you can achieve with determination and hard work. To my late Grandma Edna, although you are no longer with us in the physical realm, I know that your presence is always with me. Your influence and guidance continue to shape my journey. I am constantly reminded to "not be out here making you look crazy" and always feel a sense of accountability, knowing you would expect nothing less than my best, especially when it comes to my education. Thank you for instilling in me the value of education and for always pushing me to exceed my limits—a gift I carry with me every day. I hope you are looking down and feeling proud of everything I have accomplished.

And to my mom, no words can fully express my gratitude for your unwavering love and support. You have been my rock through every challenge, always believing in me even when I doubted myself. You've consistently reassured me that “I got this,” even when I really didn't feel like I did, LOL. Your faith in me has carried me through countless trials and tribulations. More importantly, thank you for constantly pushing me to be the best version of myself every single day. I

hope to continue making you proud. I will always be your “Sonshine,” but you might need to start calling me “Doctor Sonshine” now.

And how could I forget? A special thank you to my best friend, my study partner, constant distraction and zoom intruder during this process Femi Morrison Axson-Lawrence, who is the best dog a man could ask for! Xoxo

TABLE OF CONTENT

DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
ABSTRACT	xvi
PROLOGUE	xvii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
Background.....	3
<i>Graduation Success Rates and Federal Graduation Rates</i>	<i>3</i>
The Graduation Success Rate (GSR).....	3
The Federal Graduate Rate (FGR).....	6
Statement of Purpose.....	7
Research Questions.....	8
Theoretical Framework.....	9
Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Framework	10
<i>Wood's "The Miseducation of the Negro"</i>	<i>12</i>
Overview of Methods.....	13
Limitations and Delimitations	14
Navigating Access to Community	15
Definition of Terms	17
Summary	21
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	21
Introduction	21
Theoretical Framework.....	22
<i>Community Cultural Wealth Framework</i>	<i>25</i>

Sports Impact in the Black Community.....	28
Woodson’s The Miseducation of the Negro	29
<i>The Miseducation of the Black male Student-Athlete</i>	31
Cultural Relevance Education.	32
The Underachievement of Black Males in K-12 Education.	33
Motivation and Black Male Student-Athletes	35
The Intersectionality of Student-Athlete Development	37
Black Male Identity Development	39
<i>African Americans Struggle with Identity</i>	40
<i>Black Male Athletic Identity Development</i>	42
History of Black Men in Sports	44
<i>The National Collegiate Athletic Association</i>	45
<i>The NCAA’s Relationship with Black Student-Athletes</i>	46
Black Men in NCAA Revenue Generating vs. Non-Revenue Generating Sports.....	47
<i>Revenue Generating Sports</i>	48
<i>Non-Revenue Generating Sports</i>	49
The Black Male Student-Athletes Experience at PWIs	50
Black Students Pursuit of PWIs.....	52
<i>Black Male Student-Athletes Pursuit of PWI’s</i>	53
Before College: Preconditions Faced by Black Male Student-Athletes	55
<i>Economic Factors</i>	56
<i>Family and Community Impact</i>	57
Commercialization of College Sports	58
<i>The Impact of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL)</i>	59

Conclusion	60
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY.....	63
Introduction	63
Research Paradigm: Transformative	63
Purpose of Study	65
Research Questions	65
Introducing the Methodology	66
<i>Explanatory Sequential Research Design.....</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Quantitative Analysis.....</i>	<i>69</i>
Sample Selection.....	70
Survey Instrumentation.....	72
<i>The Academic Motivation Scale.....</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Athletic Identity Measurement Scale.....</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>Community Cultural Wealth Scale.....</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Survey Pilot Testing.....</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>Data Collection Method.....</i>	<i>80</i>
Quantitative Sample Selection.....	80
Surveys.....	80
<i>Data Analysis Plan.....</i>	<i>82</i>
T-Tests Method.....	82
Correlation.....	83
<i>Conclusion.....</i>	<i>83</i>
Qualitative Analysis.....	83
<i>Phenomenological Research Design.....</i>	<i>84</i>
Qualitative Sample Collection.....	85

Instrument	86
Interview Pilot Testing.....	87
<i>Data Collection Method</i>	87
<i>Data Analysis Plan</i>	88
<i>Categorization and Coding</i>	89
<i>Trustworthiness, Credibility and Dependability</i>	89
Researcher Positionality	90
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS	93
Overview of Research Study	93
A Deeper Look into the Research Site: Jesse Owens University (JOU)	94
Quantitative Analysis	95
<i>Research Question 1: Differences in Academic Motivation</i>	95
<i>Research Question 2: Differences in Athletic Identity</i>	101
<i>Research Question 3: Relationship Between Academic Motivation Athletic Identity</i>	102
Revenue Generating Sports.	102
Interplay of Academic Motivation, Athletic Identity and Community Support	103
<i>RQ4: Impact of the community on their academic and athletic pursuits?</i>	103
Standard Multiple Regression.....	103
<i>Counter Storytelling: Connecting Community Cultural Wealth and Academic Motivation</i> ..	104
<i>Exploring the Art of Storytelling through One-on-One Interviews</i>	106
<i>Participant One-on-One Interview</i>	107
Makai.	111
Medgar.	112
Mandela.....	113
Garvey.	114

DuBois.	115
Ellington.....	116
Qain.	117
Poitier.....	118
Baldwin.	119
Thurgood.....	120
Robeson.....	121
Cornell.	123
<i>Themes Revealed from Interviews</i>	<i>124</i>
Theme 1: Social Capital: Community Support and Resources.	127
Theme 2: Linguistic Capital: Identity and Cultural Influences.	132
Theme 3: Resistant Capital: Challenges and Resilience.	137
Theme 4: Familial Capital: Social Networks and Family Dynamics.....	143
Theme 5: Aspirational Capital: Representation and Pride.	148
Theme 6: Navigational Capital: Intersectionality and Balance.	153
Perspectives and LAST WORDS from Black Male Student-Athletes	158
Conclusion	159
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION	161
Introduction – The Last Lap.....	161
<i>Research Question 1: Academic Motivation: Revenue vs. Non-Revenue Sports</i>	<i>161</i>
<i>Research Question 2: Athletic Identity: Revenue vs. Non-Revenue Sports</i>	<i>163</i>
<i>Research Question 3: Relationship Between Academic Motivation and Athletic Identity</i>	<i>164</i>
<i>Research Question 4: Community Impact on Academic and Athletic Pursuits</i>	<i>165</i>
Recommendations for Jesse Owens University (JOU)	167
<i>Enhanced Academic Support Programs</i>	<i>167</i>

<i>Career Development and Post-Graduation Support</i>	169
<i>Mental Health and Wellness Initiatives</i>	171
<i>Athletic Department Collaborations</i>	172
<i>Diversity and Inclusion Training</i>	173
<i>Strengthening Community and Alumni Connections</i>	174
Recommendations for Future Research	177
<i>Academic Motivation and Athletic Identity of Black women</i>	178
<i>The Value Placed on the Degree from Highly Selective Institutions</i>	178
<i>Black men at Historically Black Colleges and Universities</i>	178
Limitations	179
Reflection on Study	180
Conclusion	181
APPENDIX A: Participant Consent Form	180
APPENDIX B: Interview Protocol	183
APPENDIX C: Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)	187
APPENDIX D: Athletic Identity Scale (AIMS)	188
APPENDIX E: Community Cultural Wealth Survey (CCWS)	191
REFERENCES	187

LIST OF TABLES

- Table 1 The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), crafted by Vallerand et al. (1992), serves as a valuable instrument for gauging the motivation levels of college students.
- Table 2 The components of the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) are outlined according to Ramos and Habig (2019).
- Table 3 Mean and standard deviation results of each item in the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS).
- Table 4 Mean and standard deviation results of each item in the Athletic Identity Scale (AIMS).
- Table 5 Logistic Regression Predicting Communities Impact on Academic Motivation
- Table 6 Demographic information on research participants
- Table 7 Primary Theme connected to Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) Framework

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1 Graduation Rates among African American Male Student-Athletes and Other Subgroups at Power Five Institutions for the 2014 – 2015 Academic School Year.
- Figure 2 Yosso’s Community Cultural Wealth Model, which demonstrates an array of skills, abilities, and contacts posed and utilized by communities of color to survive in society.
- Figure 3 Explanatory Sequential Design (two-Phase Design) is an approach that uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

ABSTRACT

Advisor: Dr. Christian Steinmetz

This study explores the lived experiences of Black male student-athletes engaged in sports at a Power Five Division I predominantly white institution (PWI). By centering these individuals' voices, we aim to uncover valuable insights into their academic motivation and athletic identity across both revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. Guided by Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) Framework and Woodson's (1933) "The Mis-Education of the Negro," the research examines how community influences shape the academic motivation and identity development of Black men and influence their drive to excel in academics or sports at the collegiate level. Through numerical data and the narratives of Black male student-athletes, the study provides targeted suggestions to enhance the support of this group. The results will enrich existing literature and guide campus stakeholders in understanding Black male student-athletes beyond the surface level, supporting their development and success beyond athletic ability, both on and off the field.

Keywords: Athletes, Black Males, Student-Athletes, Academic Motivation, Athletic Identity, Student-Athlete Development, Community, Identity Development, Holistic Support, Holistic Advising

PROLOGUE

Olivia Pope (Kerry Washington), a fictional character created by Shonda Rhimes in ABC's political drama series "Scandal¹," is a formidable crisis manager based in Washington, D.C. She heads her own firm, Olivia Pope & Associates, renowned for its expertise in "fixing" political crises and scandals involving the world's elite. In Season 3, Episode 1, titled "It's Handled," Olivia is confronted by her father, Rowan Pope (Joe Morton), a figure of significant power in his own realm. Rowan is known for his adeptness at resolving problems, particularly involving his daughter.

Setting: Rowan Pop has just picked up Olivia Pope off the street and taken her to an airport hangar where there is a private jet.

Rowan Pope: You've gotten yourself into a bit of trouble, Olivia, and I'm here to fix it.

Olivia Pope: No.

Rowan Pope: *[speaking very rapidly]* Now listen to me. You raised your skirt and opened your knees and gave it away to a man with too much power. You're not rare. You're not special. Your story's no different than a thousand other stories in this town, so you know how this goes. You could call this in your sleep. First, they'll smile, be warm, sympathetic, on your side, letting you know that they will fight for you. They will lull you into a false sense of security. And then, once your belly is exposed, they will GUT you and everyone you know. And they will be swift about it.

¹ *Scandal* is an American political thriller television series starring Kerry Washington. Created by Shonda Rhimes, it aired on ABC from April 5, 2012, until April 19, 2018. Kerry Washington's character, Olivia Pope, is based on Judy Smith, an American crisis manager, lawyer, author, and television producer. A former deputy press secretary in President George H. W. Bush's administration, Smith is primarily known as the founder, president, and CEO of the crisis management firm Smith & Company.

And by the time you realize you should be fighting back, well, you're already bleeding to death. That is the presidency versus you. Whose victory do you think they will fight for? Whose body do you think they will bury? That is the presidency versus you.

Olivia Pope: He would never

[she's cut off]

Rowan Pope: *[Mocking]* "He would never" You and I both know that he is not in charge. He is never in charge. POWER is in charge. Power got him elected. I know more than you could possibly imagine about things of which you cannot dream. He told you that you would be first lady, and you believed him! Did I not raise you for better? How many times have I told you 'You have to be' - what? You have to be - what?

Olivia Pope: Twice...

Rowan Pope: *[shouting]* What?

Olivia Pope: Twice as good.

Rowan Pope: **Twice as good as them to get half of what they have.**

In my opinion, this episode of *Scandal* was one of the best for several reasons. Not only did the actors deliver exceptional performances, but they also conveyed a message deeply ingrained in marginalized communities, particularly the Black community, for decades. The phrase "Twice as good" embodies a prevalent belief that Black people must always put forth twice the effort of their white counterparts to attain the same level of success. While society may accept mediocrity from others, Black people must always go above and beyond to be accepted or acknowledged. This concept resonates deeply with me, as it was instilled in me at a young age.

Growing up, I was frequently reminded of this saying, not to discourage me but to highlight the challenges that come with being Black, more specifically a Black man in America. This phrase emphasizes the necessity of diligence in every aspect of my life—personal, academic, professional, and athletic—knowing that the odds would often be stacked against me. As a former NCAA Division I track and field athlete, my journey is a testament to the resilience and determination ingrained within the Black community. Initially, my mom got me involved in sports to keep me busy and out of trouble, but it became much more than that. It became a passion of mine that allowed me to compete against some of the nation's best athletes, travel, meet people that I would not typically have met and, most importantly, alleviate some of the financial burdens my mother would have faced as I pursued my goal of going to college.

As a former Black male student-athlete, my story is not unique. Like many others, I came from a less-than-ideal community, was celebrated for my athletic and academic abilities, and used my sport to stay on track and pursue higher education. Yet, despite proving myself in both academic and athletic spheres, I still found myself having to prove myself repeatedly. However, no matter the obstacles set before me I always overcame. There's a pervasive misconception that the sole purpose of Black male student-athletes attending college is to play sports, and that success, such as academic achievement, is given to us because of our athletic profile and not because of the work that was put in classroom.

This episode, much like the lived experiences of many Black male student-athletes, reminded us of the systemic barriers we face while also highlighting the resilience and determination ingrained within the Black community. Through perseverance and unwavering dedication, we strive to defy expectations and carve out our own paths to success, one hurdle at a time. Hearing “that you have to be twice as good to get half of what they have” serves as both a reminder to always strive for self-improvement and a testament that every accomplishment is earned, not given.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

“Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign. But stories can also be used to empower, and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people. But stories can also repair that broken dignity.” — **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009)**

In 1933, Carter G. Woodson published "The Mis-Education of the Negro," examining the impact of society on the development of “Black individuals during his time” (Woodson, 1933). Woodson (1933) argued that due to the lack of representation in American schools, Black people's knowledge was primarily shaped by White culture rather than their own. This dynamic fostered dependency on White people, regulated Black people to second-class citizenship, and encouraged the acceptance of less important roles in society (Rashotte, 2007; Turner, 1991; Woodson, 1933). This concept of societal impact, or social influence, suggests that people adapt their behaviors to align with societal expectations (Rashotte, 2007; Turner, 1991; Woodson, 1933). Woodson's claim that individuals in society conform to societal needs parallels the notion that Black male student-athletes are encouraged to rely more on their athletic identity, emphasizing strength over academic competency (Harrison et al., 2002). Therefore, understanding community influences becomes crucial when examining Black male student-athletes academic motivation and athletic identity. The decisions, behaviors, and identity of Black male student-athletes are significantly shaped by their backgrounds and experiences before and during college enrollment, as highlighted by Fisher and Padmawidjaja (1999), Cross (1991), Harrison et al. (2002), Sellars (1992), and Kelly & Dixon (2014). When engaging in interactions, individuals bring their entire selves to the conversation, encompassing their social environment. This is particularly evident in collegiate athletics within higher education institutions (Cross, 1991; Harrison et al., 2002; Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999; Kelly & Dixon, 2014; Sellars, 1992).

Notably, Black male student-athletes encounter unique influences compared to their peers. They navigate heightened expectations of their athletic ability, which can profoundly impact their college experience (Sellars, 1992). Woodson's research highlighted the pivotal role of experiences and environment in the development and education of Black individuals (Cross, 1991; Harrison et al., 2002; Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999; Kelly & Dixon, 2014; Sellars, 1992). Consequently, a nuanced understanding of societal influences becomes imperative when exploring Black male student-athletes academic motivation and athletic identity. Notably, Black men dominate player demographics in high revenue-generating college sports like football and men's basketball (Sellars, 1992; Harper et al., 2013). Despite constituting 60% of football and basketball rosters at ²Power Five Institutions, Black male athletes' representation in the student body is only 3% (Cooper, Davis, and Dougherty, 2017; Perry, 2014). Furthermore, their presence in athletic leadership roles is disproportionately low, with just 10% of Head Coaches, 18% of Assistant Coaches, and 17% of Athletic Directors positions across Division I institutions (NCAA, 2022).

This research study employs Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) model as its conceptual framework and leverages Carter G. Woodson's "Mis-Education of the Negro" as a perspective to examine the impact of community on the academic motivation and athletic identities of Black male student-athletes. The primary objective of this study is to provide valuable insights that can assist higher education practitioners in effectively supporting, motivating, and engaging Black male student-athletes at Power Five Division I predominantly white institutions and beyond.

² The Power Five refers to the top five highest-earning athletic conferences in college football within the United States: ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12, and SEC. They are part of the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS). Note: This definition reflects the conferences included in the Power Five as of September 2023.

Background

Historically, Black student-athletes have been recruited by colleges and universities for their ‘exceptional’ athletic abilities (Murty, Roebuck, & McCamey, 2014). Coaches believed these athletes had the potential to excel at the highest level, secure victories, and bring national recognition and championships to their institutions (Lapchick, 2008; Murty et al., 2014; Paule & Gilson, 2010). Since integrating college sports in the early 1950s, educational institutions have aimed to build robust, diverse, and competitive collegiate athletic programs nationwide while providing students access to higher education (Lewis, 2010; Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2007). Though athletic programs are more diverse, Black men are recruited more frequently than individuals of other ethnicities in collegiate athletics, emerging as the most prominently visible participants in Division I college sports (Harrison, 2008; Lomax, 2000; Person & Lenoir, 1997; Sellars, 1992). Their substantial influence on the popularity and value of sports, particularly at the college level, is undeniable. Each year, college coaches travel nationwide to recruit top high school athletes, showcasing their institutions’ academic and athletic benefits. They promise these young Black men a brighter future through sports participation, including prospects such as turning professional, securing NIL deals, national notoriety, and much more (Lewis, 2010). While these athletes are often praised for their athletic accomplishments, many have yet to achieve comparable success in the classroom (Lewis, 2010).

Graduation Success Rates and Federal Graduation Rates

When evaluating the academic success of students in college and universities, there are two metrics that play a major part in providing this information: the Graduation success rate (GSR) and the Federal Graduation Rate (FGR). These two metrics are very similar and provide the same purpose, however, they measure students’ achievement in very specific ways.

The Graduation Success Rate (GSR). The Graduation Success Rate (GSR) is a metric developed by the NCAA to more accurately measure the academic success of student-athletes

compared to the Federal Graduation Rate (FGR). The GSR was designed to better capture the unique circumstances of student-athletes, including:

- **Transfer Students:** The GSR accounts for student-athletes who transfer into an institution and includes them in the graduation cohort of the school they graduate from. It also removes student-athletes from the cohort if they leave the school while in good academic standing.
- **Academic Support:** The metric acknowledges the impact of specialized academic support programs designed for student-athletes, which can significantly influence their academic outcomes.

Despite these measures, disparities persist. According to Harper (2018), Black men comprised only 2.4% of full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students at 65 universities, but represented 55% of football and 56% of men's basketball teams at those "Power Five" NCAA Division I institutions. Their graduation rates, however, were significantly lower: only 50.2% of Black male student-athletes graduated within six years, compared to 66.9% of all student-athletes, 72.8% of undergraduates overall, and 55.5% of Black male undergraduates overall (Harper et al., 2013; NCAA, 2021; Reynolds et al., 2012). Moreover, an overwhelming majority—around 96%—of NCAA Division I colleges and universities graduated Black male student-athletes at lower rates than all student-athletes, and approximately 97% graduated them at lower rates than undergraduate students overall (Harper et al., 2013; NCAA, 2021; Reynolds et al., 2012). These statistics highlight the need for targeted interventions to support Black male student-athletes' academic success and ensure equity in educational outcomes.

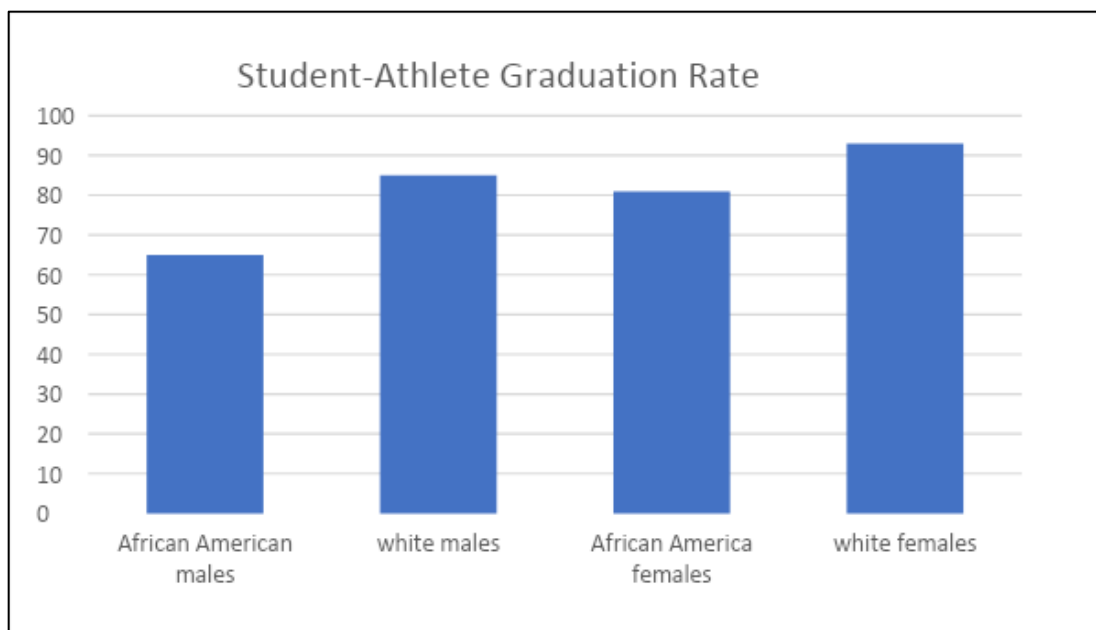
This data highlights that despite increased participation in Division I sports at Power Five institutions, Black men in revenue-generating³ sports, such as football and men's basketball, have the lowest graduation success rates among all student-athlete subgroups (Harper et al., 2013; Harper, 2018; NCAA, 2021; Reynolds et al., 2012). See figure 1. The disparity in graduation success rates is connected to Black male student-athletes' primary focus on sports rather than academics (Cooper, 2019; Lewis, 2010). Despite their dreams of fame and fortune, the reality is that only a fraction of student-athletes will go on to compete at the professional and Olympic levels. With approximately 480,000 student-athletes in the NCAA, the chances of becoming a professional athlete are slim (NCAA, 2022). For instance, during the 2019 football draft season, there were 73,712 football student-athletes across all Division I FBS football teams, out of which only 16,380 (3.8%) were draft-eligible, and 254 (1.6%) were drafted to the professional ranks (NCAA, 2022).

College athletics, particularly within the NCAA, has long emphasized its commitment to nurturing the growth of student-athletes, regardless of their ethnicity. The organization's core belief, captured in the motto "Almost all of us will be going pro in something other than sports," underscores a holistic approach to student-athlete development. However, reviewing the above data raises concerns regarding the comprehensive support available to Black male student-athletes navigating their paths beyond the sports arena. These statistics suggest the concern that higher education institutions may prioritize the athletic prowess of these Black men instead of their holistic development. More importantly, it shows the need to reimagine support for this student population that caters to their development outside their athletic accomplishments and success.

³ Revenue-generating sports, also known as "revenue-producing sports," primarily include male-dominated sports like football and men's basketball. These sports are often criticized for their perceived lack of educational value and exploitation of participating athletes (Menke, 2016).

Figure 1:

Graduation Rates among African American Male Student-Athletes and Other Subgroups at Power Five Institutions for the 2014 – 2015 Academic School Year.



Note: From Trends in the graduation success rates at Power Five Division I institutions. NCAA. (2014b). Retrieved from <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/research/graduation-success-rate>.

The Federal Graduate Rate (FGR). In contrast, the Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) is a standard metric used by the U.S. Department of Education to measure the graduation rates of all students, including student-athletes, at colleges and universities nationwide. The FGR calculates the percentage of first-time, full-time students who complete their degrees within six years of initial enrollment. However, the FGR has limitations when applied to student-athletes. Unlike the GSR, which is specifically designed to consider the unique experiences of student-athletes, the FGR does not account for transfer students or exclude those who leave an institution in good academic standing. As a result, the FGR may report lower graduation rates for student-athletes compared to the GSR, as it needs to reflect the educational progress of those who transfer or maintain eligibility after leaving their original institution.

In conclusion, while the NCAA claims to support the academic success of student-athletes, its use of the Graduation Success Rate (GSR) misrepresents the true academic standing of these students, particularly Black male student-athletes. By creating and promoting the GSR, the NCAA has constructed a narrative that paints a more favorable picture than the one shown by the more accurate Federal Graduation Rate (FGR). Data manipulation must reflect a genuine commitment to understanding and addressing these student-athletes' unique challenges. The FGR, which offers a clearer and more honest assessment, reveals the significant gaps in academic achievement and highlights the need for more targeted support and resources. The NCAA's reliance on its metric undermines trust and neglects the opportunity to implement meaningful changes that would genuinely benefit Black male student-athletes. For real progress to occur, it is essential to move beyond superficial success rates and focus on providing the necessary support systems to foster genuine academic development. Only then can we ensure that these students' educational experiences and outcomes are as successful as their athletic achievements.

Statement of Purpose

While some research has addressed the needs of Black male student-athletes to align support strategies within higher education institutions (Adler & Adler, 1991; Harper & Kuykendall, 2012; Lapchick, 1987), a notable gap persists regarding the impact of community on their academic motivation and athletic identity, particularly among those participating in both revenue and non-revenue-generating sports. Understanding the influence of their environment and upbringing is crucial, as these factors significantly shape their college engagement, academic choices, and perception of athletic identity. As Woodson argued, the educational experience of Black students was not authentic. It relied on imitation rather than cultivating a genuine connection with their experiences, thus hindering their ability to acquire essential knowledge that would promote their overall success (Bassey, 2013).

Furthermore, the failure to integrate Black students' cultural environments into educational curricula nationwide has led to a lack of cultural connection. This disconnection makes it easier for these students to become detached from their educational experiences (Bassey, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2009), resulting in a general lack of investment in their educational journey. The excessive emphasis and celebration of Black youth participation in sports have had unintended consequences for the Black community, as it has instilled unrealistic athletic aspirations in the minds of Black youth, shaping their beliefs throughout their growth and development (Edwards, 1983; Anderson, 1990).

In conclusion, this study illuminates the intricate interplay among the community, academic motivation, and athletic identity for Black male student-athletes at predominantly White institutions. This mixed-methods approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the experiences of Black male student-athletes. This research seeks to inform the development of culturally relevant and effective support initiatives and programs in higher education, particularly within university athletic departments and student-athlete development units.

Research Questions

These research questions will serve as the foundation for this study, aiming to provide insights into the influence of community on the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in both revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. The questions are as follows:

- Research Question 1: What are the differences in the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- Research Question 2: What are the differences in the athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- Research Question 3: What is the relationship between academic motivation and athletic identity?

- Research Question 4: How do Black male student-athletes describe the impact of community on their academic and athletic pursuits?

These research questions will serve as a guide while investigating the diverse experiences of Black male student-athletes to uncover the intricate factors influencing their academic aspirations, athletic self-perceptions, and the community's role in shaping their collegiate journey. Through a meticulous exploration of these questions utilizing a mixed methods approach, this study seeks to gain a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by these Black men at PWIs. The information discovered from this research has the potential to guide the further development of tailored support mechanisms, fostering their comprehensive growth and development within higher education institutions and athletic departments.

Theoretical Framework

Despite facing systemic barriers due to segregation, Black men have historically demonstrated remarkable athletic ability when allowed to participate in organized sports. Icons such as Jack Johnson (Boxing), Tom Molineaux (Boxing), Jesse Owens (Track and Field), and Joe Louis (Boxing) excelled in their respective fields. They used their platform to uplift and bring light to the possibilities of success in their community (Harris, 1997). Sports has always served as a prominent pathway for upward mobility within the Black community, offering avenues for success and social advancement. However, this singular focus on athletics has sometimes led Black athletes to overlook alternative career opportunities, perceiving sports as the only path to success and financial stability (Kelly & Dixon, 2014; Throsby, 1999).

According to Aspen Institute Project Play (2020), Black youth are three times more likely to participate in sports than their white peers, this is due to parents' beliefs that organized sports are the pathway to a brighter future, keep Black youth away from potential street activities, and offer avenues for social mobility (Caccamo, 2017; Harris, 1997). However, it is essential to recognize that

the road to professional sports is narrow for all college athletes, regardless of race or ethnicity, with only a tiny fraction with the potential or ability to make it to the next level (Cliburn, 2021). For instance, according to Exact Sports (2023), the likelihood of reaching the professional level in the two highest revenue-generating sports, Football and Men's Basketball, is extremely slim:

- Football: 73,712 participants; 16,380 eligible for the Draft; 254 drafted by the NFL; 1.6% turn professional (Capers, 2023).
- Men's Basketball: 18,816 participants; 4,181 eligible for the Draft; 60 drafted by the NBA; 1.2% turn professional (Capers, 2023).

These low percentages underscore the reality that while many Black men aspire to professional sports careers, only a tiny fraction achieve this goal. Most student-athletes will not become professional athletes, so they must recognize that their potential extends far beyond athletics. Understanding this can inspire them to prepare for successful lives and careers outside of sports. By balancing their athletic ambitions with academic pursuits, these athletes can develop the skills necessary for long-term success in any field.

This research employs Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Framework to examine the influence of community on the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes. By drawing on their community's cultural wealth—such as social, familial, and aspirational capital—these athletes can tap into collective strengths that reinforce the value of academic achievement alongside athletic success.

Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Framework

The Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) Framework recognizes, and values the diverse cultural knowledge, experiences, and strengths that individuals from marginalized communities bring to their education and social lives. It challenges the deficit perspectives prevalent in mainstream educational research (Yosso, 2005). Individuals from marginalized backgrounds, like communities of

color, possess various forms of cultural wealth that contribute to their resilience and success. These assets help them navigate and thrive in systems that may not fully understand or appreciate their cultural backgrounds. Yosso identified six key forms of CCW (Yosso, 2005):

1. **Aspirational:** Hopes, dreams, and determination to succeed despite barriers.
2. **Navigational:** Skills to navigate complex social systems and institutions.
3. **Familial:** Family support and intergenerational knowledge fostering a sense of belonging.
4. **Social:** Networks and relationships that provide social support and opportunities.
5. **Linguistic:** Valuable language skills and diverse communication styles.
6. **Resistant:** Critical consciousness and cultural pride in response to oppression.

This framework shifts the focus from shortcomings to strengths, emphasizing individuals' capabilities and resilience (Yosso, 2005). When applied to Black male student-athletes' academic and athletic experiences, the CCW framework offers valuable insights into how their cultural strengths influence their motivation and athletic identity. By recognizing and appreciating their cultural wealth, educators, coaches, and communities can provide more effective support and empowerment for these young men in sports and beyond (Yosso, 2005).

The CCW framework has been employed in various studies, such as the work of Brooms and Davis (2017), where they explored the college aspirations of Black males attending different types of institutions. This study used the framework to investigate how Black male students' college aspirations and expectations were shaped by aspirational, social, and familial capital. Additionally, in Harry's (2023) work, she advocates for broadening the strengths-based perspective of athletes of color from low socioeconomic backgrounds based on Yosso's (2005) CCW model. This approach focuses on aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant capital (Harry, 2023).

Wood's "The Miseducation of the Negro"

When considering the community influences on the education and development of Black male student-athletes, Carter G. Woodson's work in "The Miseducation of the Negro" provides a valuable lens. Woodson, a renowned American historian, journalist, and educator, dedicated his 40-year-long career to shedding light on Black studies in academia and their significance in Black lives (Goggin, 1993). "The Miseducation of the Negro" offers insights into how Black people, during Woodson's time, were educated both formally and informally within society (Bassey, 2013; Goggin, 1993). Woodson emphasized that the learning process consists of three key elements: the learner, the values and aims of the society, and the foundational knowledge of the subject matter or environment (Bassey, 2013). Unfortunately, due to the inherent inequality in American schools, Black individuals were not effectively educated, largely because of a lack of representation and systemic racism in the educational curriculum. Instead of learning about their culture, Black people were exposed to education through a white lens, imbibing white ideas, attitudes, and beliefs through cultural indoctrination (conditioning) (Bassey, 2013; Goggin, 1993; Woodson, 1933). Consequently, this conditioning made Black individuals dependent and relegated to a second-class status in society (Bassey, 2013; Goggin, 1993; Woodson, 1933).

Woodson argued for including students' cultures and backgrounds in their education. By incorporating their cultural experiences, students can be empowered intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically, creating an inclusive environment that fosters the academic success of underrepresented students (Bassey, 2017; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009). In analyzing the situation of Black male athletes, Woodson concluded that they were merely provided with the information deemed necessary by others, as they were subjected to the will of those in power (Bassey, 2013). Moreover, he believed that the American education system lacked structures and support that would benefit Black students' short- and long-term goals (Bassey, 2013). It is crucial to

acknowledge that historically, the American education system was inherently unequal, crafted initially to serve a specific demographic: white men (Bassey, 2013; Goggin, 1993).

Despite some changes in the educational system, there continues to be a want in adopting a more individualized approach that considers minorities and other underrepresented groups (Bassey, 2013; Goggin, 1993). As mentioned earlier, the premise of "The Mis-Education of the Negro" underscores the significance of incorporating the experiences of Black individuals for effective learning in society. This concept of cultural inclusion is indebted to the groundbreaking work of Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b). Furthermore, recent developments, such as Paris's (2012) theory of culturally sustaining pedagogy, highlight the growing necessity of integrating culturally based education on a broader, global scale.

Overview of Methods

This study aims to explore the impact of community on the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes attending predominantly white institutions, with a specific focus on distinguishing between revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. To achieve a comprehensive understanding, this study will adopt a mixed methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods. A mixed methods approach offers several advantages. First, the quantitative aspect will allow me to gather data that can be measured and quantified, providing concrete statistical insights into the participants' academic motivation and athletic identity. Secondly, the qualitative component will enable research participants to directly share their perspectives, recounting how communal influences have impacted their personal development, academic engagement, and athletic journey.

This methodology enables me to capture rich and diverse narratives that quantitative data alone might not fully capture. Additionally, delving into the influences that shape Black male student-athletes' academic motivation and athletic identity provides valuable insights into their

navigation of collegiate experiences. Recognizing these dynamics is pivotal for professionals in higher education institutions and athletic departments, guiding the development of tailored support systems. Such systems can address Black men's unique challenges and opportunities, fostering their holistic growth and ultimate success.

Limitations and Delimitations

I chose this research, which focuses on gaining insight into the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes engaged in revenue—and non-revenue-generating sports at a Power Five Division I institution because of my personal and professional connection to the world of college athletics. At one point, I was a Division I track and field athlete, competing in a non-revenue-generating sport. During my undergraduate career, at times I struggled balancing my academic and athletic identities. In my mind, these two pursuits could not coexist harmoniously. However, thanks to the support and guidance of various individuals, I managed to find a way. Moreover, my past role as an athletics administrator, providing comprehensive support to teams primarily composed of Black men, profoundly influenced my perspective. While working with these students, I prioritized helping them gain a deeper understanding of their dual roles as athletes and scholars. Above all, I aimed to instill in them the belief that they need not prioritize one facet of their identity over the other; they could excel in both. I also emphasized that achieving their goals might require making sacrifices in either area at times.

My aspiration for this study is to offer insights into how we can enhance support for this unique student demographic. I want to create a space for Black male student-athletes to feel comfortable sharing their stories, supported by robust research and data, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and empowering environment for them to go beyond the sport.

Navigating Access to Community

The success of the research study, which revolves around the lived experiences of Black male student-athletes at a Power Five Division I institution, was heavily contingent on garnering the support of the ⁴Athletic Director (AD). I met with the AD in the initial proposal stage to make sure that they were comfortable with me conducting this research, which would include Black men within their department. This meeting served as a platform to thoroughly delve into the research study's objectives and potential advantages, specifically emphasizing its implications for the athletic department staff/coaches and its student-athletes. The AD and I shared a mutual belief that understanding the influences shaping the academic motivation and athletic identity among Black male student-athletes can yield substantial benefits for the individuals and the broader realms of education and athletics. Below are the nine key benefits discussed:

- **Tailored Support and Interventions:** Identifying factors influencing Black male student-athletes' motivation and athletic identity allows educators, coaches, and administrators to provide targeted support and interventions. Addressing these factors can help enhance motivation, performance, and overall well-being.
- **Academic Achievement:** Balancing academics and athletics can be challenging for student-athletes. Knowing the factors that impact academic motivation, and athletic identity can help coaches and athletic administrators develop strategies to promote academic success among Black male student-athletes, ensuring they meet their educational goals while excelling in sports.

⁴ Athletic Directors (ADs) oversee sports programs at educational institutions, managing budgets, promotions, scheduling, and staff. While they coordinate with academic departments, they primarily handle organizational tasks like transportation, team supervision, and coach hiring.

- **Psychological Well-being:** Understanding the factors affecting academic motivation and athletic identity can contribute to the psychological well-being of Black male student-athletes. By addressing identity, self-esteem, and pressure challenges, educators, coaches, and administrators can help prevent burnout and promote a healthier mindset.
- **Positive Role Modeling:** Educators and coaches can act as positive role models when they have insights into the factors influencing Black male student-athletes. This can be particularly important for these students, as having relatable mentors who understand their unique experiences can foster a stronger sense of belonging and motivation.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Promoting diversity and inclusion within sports and education is essential. By understanding the specific factors affecting Black male student-athletes, institutions can create more inclusive environments that acknowledge their experiences and challenges, ultimately contributing to a more diverse representation in athletics.
- **Athletic Performance:** Academic motivation and athletic identity are closely linked to performance. By addressing the factors that impact these aspects, coaches can help Black male student-athletes perform at their best, potentially leading to improved competitive outcomes and greater personal satisfaction.
- **Life Skills Development:** Engaging in sports provides a wealth of chances to cultivate essential life skills. These skills encompass teamwork, discipline, time management, and resilience. Additionally, the creation and execution of leadership programs and initiatives play a crucial role. By grasping the factors that influence academic motivation and identity, educators, coaches, and administrators can effectively incorporate these invaluable skills into student-athletes' lives.
- **Future Opportunities:** Black male student-athletes frequently encounter challenges when pursuing athletic careers beyond their educational institutions. Understanding their academic

motivations and identities can offer valuable direction and resources, equipping them for potential prospects in professional sports or associated domains. Moreover, this understanding can show how to adeptly assist Black male student-athletes who reenter college following a professional career with the aspiration of attaining their degrees.

- **Research and Policy:** Insights into the factors impacting Black male student-athletes can contribute to academic research and inform policy decisions to improve educational and athletic experiences. This data can lead to evidence-based strategies and initiatives that benefit this demographic in the long term.

In summary, understanding the factors that impact this student-athlete population's academic motivation and athletic identity is essential for providing targeted support, promoting academic and athletic success, enhancing psychological well-being, fostering diversity and inclusion, and preparing these individuals for future opportunities.

Definition of Terms

Within the context of this study, this section lists and defines key terms used throughout the research. These definitions are provided to ensure clarity in meaning and consistency in usage.

Academic Motivation. The term *Academic motivation* is the internal drive that leads students to engage in learning, persist in challenges, and strive for academic success. Personal goals, interest in the subject, self-belief, and external factors like rewards or recognition shape it. Motivated students typically put in more effort and achieve better academic outcomes (Deci et. al, 1991; Vallerand et. al, 1992)

African Americans. The term *African American* constitute one of the most significant ethnic groups in the United States. Primarily descendants of enslaved individuals forcibly brought from Africa to labor in the New World, they endured severe limitations on their rights and were

systematically deprived of their rightful share in the economic, social, and political advancements of the United States (Waters, Kasinitz, & Asad, 2014).

Athletic Identity. The term *Athletic identity* refers to the degree to which an individual identifies with the role of being an athlete. It shapes how they see themselves and influences their behaviors, priorities, and decisions. A strong athletic identity can provide motivation and focus but may also limit exploration of non-sport roles and careers if overly dominant (Lamont-Mills & Christensen, 2006).

Black. The term *Black* encompasses the descendants of African-derived people, including aboriginals, slaves, and immigrants across various regions of the world. It is also used to refer to individuals of mixed race with African ancestry, found in diverse nations across the globe (Hall, 2006).

Community. The term *community* refers to a group of people who share common interests, characteristics, or values and are typically connected by geographical proximity, cultural ties, social interactions, or a sense of belonging. Communities can manifest in various forms, such as local neighborhoods, social or online groups, cultural or ethnic associations, etc. The concept of community implies a sense of shared identity, mutual support, and interaction among its members (Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary, 1993).

Collegiate sports. The term *collegiate sports* are recognized as structured, competitive team sports in which the participants represent their postsecondary institutions, engaging in contests against teams from other academic establishments.

Division I. The term *division NCAA Division I* are schools typically boast the largest student populations, manage substantial athletics budgets, and excel in providing generous research opportunities. Moreover, they often offer the highest number of scholarships compared to other NCAA schools. Teams from these programs compete at the highest level of athletic competition,

enjoy extensive media coverage, and grant athletes' greater access to professional scouts than smaller schools.

GSR. The term *Graduation Success rate*, commonly abbreviated as GSR, refers to the data comparison of the number of students who entered a college or university each year and the number of those who graduated within six years of their initial enrollment (Thacker, 2014).

Historically Black College and University. The term *Historically Black College and University*, commonly abbreviated as HBCU, refers to institutions of higher education in the United States that were established before 1964 with the primary mission of serving the African American community. HBCUs were founded during a time when racial segregation and discrimination were prevalent, and African Americans were denied admission to predominantly White institutions. HBCUs played a crucial role in providing educational opportunities for African Americans, as they were among the few institutions that welcomed and supported Black students. These colleges and universities have a rich history of promoting educational equity and have produced numerous prominent Black leaders, scholars, and professionals (Clayton, McClay, Davis, & Tevis, 2023).

National Collegiate Athletic Association. The term *National Collegiate Athletic Association*, commonly abbreviated as NCAA, refers to membership-driven organization that governs intercollegiate athletics across three divisions (I, II, and III). Today, the NCAA comprises 1,098 colleges and universities and 102 athletic conferences (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2024).

Non-Revenue Generating. The term *non-revenue generating* sport, often referred to as a non-revenue sport, does not generate significant revenue for the university or athletic department. In contrast to revenue-generating sports like football, basketball, and baseball, which tend to attract large audiences, television deals, and sponsorships, non-revenue sports typically have lower attendance and limited media exposure, leading to less financial income for the university. Non-

revenue sports include Olympic sports such as swimming, track and field, cross country, tennis, golf, volleyball, wrestling, and gymnastics (Paule & Gilson, 2010).

Name, Image and Likeness. The term *Name, Image and Likeness*, commonly abbreviated as NIL, refers to the ability of college athletes to profit from their name, image, and likeness. This concept allows athletes to earn compensation for activities such as endorsements, sponsorships, and appearances, separate from any athletic scholarships or other financial aid their university provides. The NCAA's traditional rules prohibiting athletes from monetizing their NIL have been subject to increasing scrutiny and debate, leading to recent changes in policies and regulations surrounding NIL rights (Jessop, Baker, Tweedie & Holden, 2023)

Power Five Institutions. The term *The Power Five* refers to the top five most prominent and highest-earning athletic conferences in college football within the United States. These conferences are part of the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) of NCAA Division I. The institutions belonging to “The Power Five” include the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, Pac-12 Conference, and Southeastern Conference (SEC). *[This definition represents the current structure of the Power Five institutions as of September 2023]*

Predominately White Institutions. The term *Predominantly White Institutions*, commonly abbreviated as PWIs are educational institutions, such as colleges or universities, where the majority of the student population is composed of students who identify as White or Caucasian. In the context of the United States, PWIs have historically been institutions with a higher percentage of White students than students from other racial or ethnic backgrounds (Benton, 2001).

Revenue Generating. The term *revenue generating* refers to the three most lucrative male sports—baseball, basketball, and football—have significantly contributed to the publicity and revenue generated by university sports programs. Through media contracts, sponsorships, endorsements, playoffs, tournaments, bowl games, and championships, these sports offer the

potential to generate substantial amounts of revenue for universities (Harrison, Rasmussen, Connolly, Janson, Bukstein & Parks, 2010).

Segregation. The term *segregation* refers to the enforced separation of different racial, ethnic, or religious groups within a community, organization, or society. This separation can occur in various aspects of life, including housing, education, employment, and public facilities such as restaurants, schools, and transportation. Segregation often results in unequal treatment and opportunities for the segregated groups, perpetuating social and economic disparities. Historically, segregation has been used as a means of maintaining power and privilege for dominant groups while marginalizing and discriminating against minority groups (Thompson-Miller & Feagin, 2018).

Student-Athletes. The term *student-athlete* refers to individuals that bears the dual responsibilities of being both a student and a young athlete. In essence, they are required to be enrolled in and attend college courses while actively participating in a competitive intercollegiate sport.

Summary

This research explores the experiences of Black men participating in revenue and non-revenue-generating sports at a Power Five Division I institution. The overarching objective is to understand the obstacles they confront comprehensively. The study aims to identify potential disparities in resource allocation and support systems, leveraging this insight to formulate targeted interventions and policies. The goal is to advance inclusivity and equity in college athletics and higher education by addressing these critical issues. Through this investigation, I aim to illuminate the lives of this underrepresented demographic. By acknowledging the unique challenges faced by Black male student-athletes, this research aims to cultivate an environment in college athletics that empowers and supports all participants, regardless of their race or the revenue potential of their

respective sports. Ultimately, this research aims to create a more inclusive and equitable athletic community within Division I sports programs.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.” – **Malcolm X (1990)**

Introduction

Society has always played a crucial role in shaping individuals’ perceptions and experiences, as well as influencing how they navigate the world (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). This influence is particularly significant for Black male student-athletes who face the complex intersection of race, athletics, and education. This research study aims to explore the differences in academic motivation and athletic identity among Black male student-athletes participating in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports at Power Five Division I predominantly white institutions (PWIs). By exploring the multifaceted factors that shape their experiences, this study seeks to contribute to our understanding of how community influences impact Black male student-athletes’ educational and athletic pursuits.

Renowned civil rights activist Angela Davis (2016) powerfully emphasized the deeply embedded nature of racism in our society. Her statement is a stark reminder that racism operates on both overt and subtle levels, permeating various aspects of individuals’ lives (Davis, 2016). It not only shapes opportunities and expectations but also influences how individuals perceive themselves based on race. For Black people, including Black male student-athletes, this reality manifests in systemic barriers and discriminatory practices that significantly impact their educational journeys and athletic experiences, often operating in ways that are not immediately evident (Davis, 2016).

This research study specifically targets Black male student-athletes at Power Five Division I PWIs, which are historically characterized by white culture and values. Within this context, the influence of the community on academic motivation and athletic identity holds particular

significance. Societal expectations, cultural narratives, media portrayals, and social dynamics collectively shape Black male student-athletes' choices and priorities, thereby influencing their academic and athletic trajectories. Moreover, the study acknowledges the disparities in visibility, support, and resources between revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports programs (Harrison et al., 2010; Paule & Gilston, 2010). Revenue-generating sports often garner more attention, financial investment, and institutional support than non-revenue-generating sports (Harrison et al., 2010; Paule & Gilston, 2010). It is not understood if or how these disparities may impact Black male student-athletes academic motivation and athletic identity differently, potentially resulting in distinct experiences and outcomes.

The primary goal of this research study is to enhance our understanding of the intricate interplay between community influences, academic motivation, and athletic identity among Black male student-athletes in PWIs. By shedding light on these dynamics, we can identify potential areas for intervention and support, ultimately fostering Black male student-athletes holistic development and success within the complex educational and athletic landscape. To gain insights into the impact of community, I will utilize Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework, which offers a valuable perspective on how various forms of communal capital influences Black male student-athletes athletic and academic pursuits. The intersection of race, masculinity, and sports has garnered increasing attention in educational research in recent years. Among the student-athlete population, Black men constitute a unique subgroup with distinct experiences and challenges. Understanding the educational journeys of Black male student-athletes, particularly those attending PWIs, is crucial for uncovering the complex intersections between their athletic pursuits and academic achievements.

Theoretical Framework

The section begins by introducing an overview of Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth framework, followed by a discussion on the influential power of sports and its impact on

Black communities. Establishing this contextual foundation is vital as we navigate this research, delving into how societal influences shape Black male student-athletes academic motivation and athletic identity (Caccamo, 2017; Harris, 1997; Kelly & Dixon, 2014; Thorsby, 1999;). A conceptual review follows, delving into the societal impact on the education of Black males in the American education system, the formation of academic and athletic identities among Black male student-athletes, and the historical context surrounding the involvement of Black men in both revenue and non-revenue generating college sports (Bassey, 2013; Bassey, 2015; Dec et al., 2000; Gay, 2010; Goggin, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Woodson, 1933). The chapter subsequently transitions into a discussion centered on Black male student-athletes experiences at PWIs. This exploration seeks to uncover the motivations behind this student demographic's aspiration to attend such institutions and comprehend the conditions that impact them upon entering higher education establishments (Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999; Freeman, 1999; Melendez, 2008;). Concluding the review is an analysis of how the commercialization of collegiate sports, including aspects like NIL deals and record contracts, has significantly altered the perspective of Black male student-athletes regarding the purpose of pursuing higher education and obtaining a degree (Wolverton, 2009).

Black male student-athletes come from diverse backgrounds, and it is crucial to understand that various preconditions impact these men both before college and during enrollment. These circumstances could significantly affect their decisions, influence their behavior, or shape their identity (Cross, 1991; Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999; Harrison et al., 2002; Kelly & Dixon, 2014; Sellars, 1992;). Moreover, coping with the heightened expectations of their athletic profile can significantly impact their overall college experience (Kimball & Freysinger, 2003). According to Gayles, Comeaux, Ofoegbu & Grummert (2018), understanding what student-athletes bring to college and how their background can significantly impact their academic and college experience is paramount to their overall success. This background or pre-college experience is described as an

individual's "capital" (Gayles et al., 2018). Capital can be defined as the skills, knowledge, and experience an individual or population possesses, viewed in terms of their value or cost to an organization or country (Gayles et al., 2018; Lifschitz et al., 2014; Yosso, 2005). However, an individual cannot solely determine their own human capital. Instead, society plays a crucial role in determining the value of a person's skills and knowledge and whether it brings value to that organization. The idea of capital, in any form, can determine an individual's upward or downward movement through society's levels of ⁵social stratification or ⁶social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977; Gayles et al., 2018).

The concept of the relationship between education, family, and class and how it contributes to individual capital was first identified by Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) cultural capital framework. Cultural capital is the "accumulation of knowledge, behaviors, and skills that one can tap into to demonstrate one's cultural competence, and thus one's social status or standing in society" (Cole, 2017, p.1; Gayles et al., 2018). Cultural capital plays a central role in explaining social and cultural reproduction, where privileged individuals tend to maintain their advantages, and those who are disadvantaged often remain so. However, understanding privilege and college access requires considering other forms of capital, such as economic and social capital, which also significantly contribute to educational opportunities and social mobility. Specifically, this describes the

⁵ Social stratification refers to a society's categorization of its people into groups based on socioeconomic factors like wealth, income, race, education, ethnicity, gender, occupation, social status, or derived power (social and political) (Grusky, David, Manwai, & Szonja Szelényi, 2008).

⁶ Social reproduction describes the reproduction of social structures and systems, mainly based on preconditions in demographics, education, and inheritance of material property or legal titles (as earlier with aristocracy) (Bourdieu, 1990).

relationship between an individual's education, family, and class and how it contributes to the relationship of social inequality in society (Bourdieu, 1977; Gayles et al., 2018).

Community Cultural Wealth Framework

Bourdieu's (1977) model of cultural capital aimed to describe social inequalities in society and perpetuated the assumption that Black people lack the social and cultural capital required for social mobility. While his framework provides insights into why Black people's academic and social outcomes might be relatively lower than White people, it has been criticized for overlooking historical disparities that have put Black people at a constant disadvantage compared to their peers (Bernal et al., 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Yosso, 2005). A different approach was taken by Yosso (2005) when discussing the impact of cultural capital. While Bourdieu's framework views White middle-class communities as culturally wealthy and others, specific people of color or working-class communities, as culturally poor, Yosso's alternative framework, Community Cultural Wealth (CCW), challenges this perspective. Yosso argues that the characteristics Bourdieu considered as cultural deficits are, in fact, "assets," "valuable," and sources of wealth within Black communities (Bernal et al., 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Yosso, 2005).

Critical Race Theory⁷ serves as the foundational framework for CCW, providing insights into the societal interplay between race, power, and privilege (Gayles et al., 2018; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016). CCW encompasses six forms of capital: aspirational (e.g., hopes and dreams), familial (e.g., immediate family and home community), social (e.g., peers), linguistic (e.g., language and

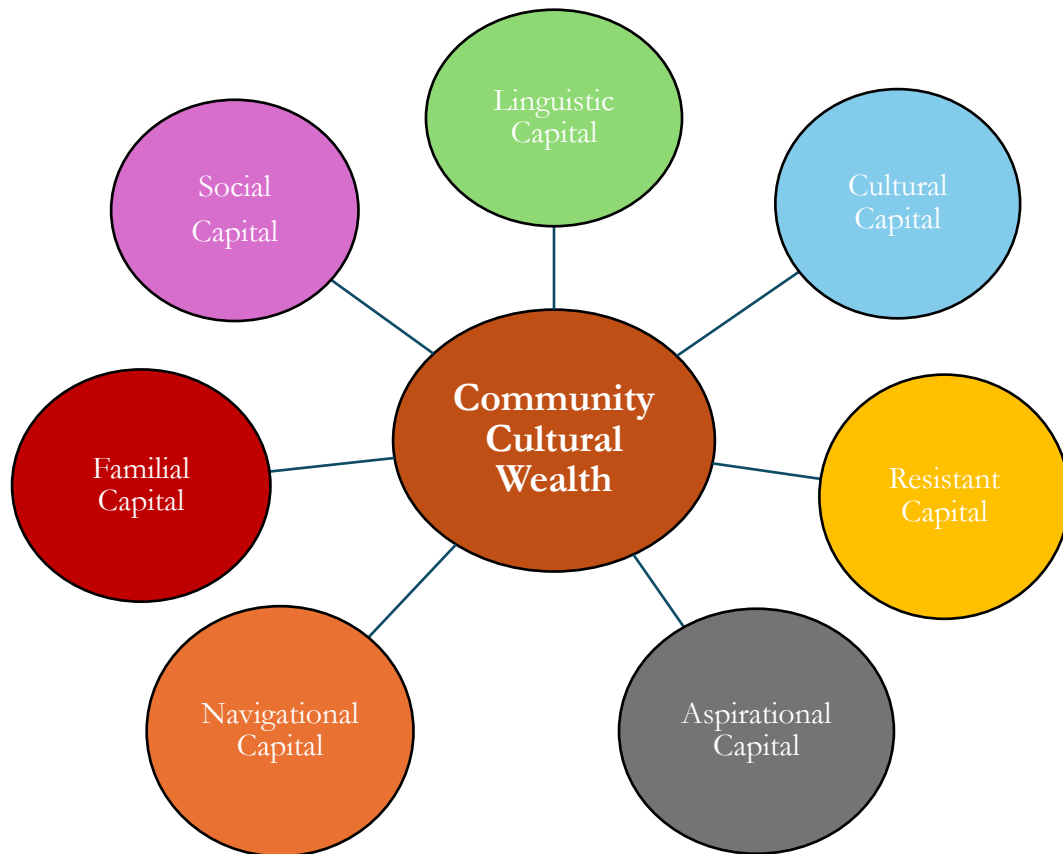
⁷ Critical race theory (CRT) is an intellectual and social movement that analyzes the law and legal systems from the perspective that race is a socially constructed category rather than a biologically grounded characteristic. It contends that this construct is used to oppress and exploit people of color. Critical race theorists argue that racism is inherent in the United States' laws and legal institutions, as they perpetuate social, economic, and political inequalities between whites and nonwhites, particularly African Americans (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2023).

communication skills), resistant (e.g., ability to overcome societal barriers), and navigational (e.g., ability to navigate social institutions) (Gayles et al., 2018; Yosso, 2005). To transform the experiences of students of color, Yosso (2005) argues that practitioners must wholeheartedly commit to addressing racial injustices prevalent in higher education institutions. When engaging with Black male student-athletes, regardless of their chosen sport, it becomes apparent that they enter college with experiences that many of their peers do not share (Gayles et al., 2018; Yosso, 2005). See figure 2.

Brooms and Davis (2017) used Yosso's (2005) CCW framework to understand Black males' lived experiences at historically white institutions, more specifically to understand better how alternative forms of cultural capital enhance the college aspirations of Black men. The researchers wanted to determine if communities of color have a range of resources that they can use to meet their various needs (Brooms & Davis, 2017). After the study, the researchers found that Black men do benefit from a variety of forms of capital, such as aspirational capital, social capital, and familial capital from Yosso's (2005) CCW model, that they harness to enhance their college aspirations, in terms alter their college experiences. In addition, they found that the use of these three forms of capital across three findings, including the role and influences of the media (television and movies), early exposure to college, and family support and motivation (Brooms & Davis, 2017). Ultimately, the data from this study found that students, especially Black male students, pre-college experiences play a critical role in what they expect in college, how they transition to college, and how they persist (Brooms & Davis, 2017).

Figure 2:

A model of community cultural wealth demonstrates that an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts possessed and utilized by communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression (Yosso, 2005; Oliver & Shapiro, 1995).



Harry's (2023) integrative review emphasized the importance of expanding the CCW framework. The central objective of the work was to reveal how athletes from racially and economically minoritized backgrounds CCW within intercollegiate athletics. An integrative literature review, as commonly understood, dives into established and emerging subjects within a field, shedding light on their potential applications across various domains of study (Torraco, 2016). In her research, Harry (2023) discovered several scholarly works that support this framework in the realm of athletics. Among her findings, one standout example is Cooper, Porter, and Davis's (2017)

work, which applied the concept of CCW to the experiences of Division I Black female athletes, showcasing its remarkable relevance. Although their study focused on Black female athletes, the insights garnered from their research hold the potential to resonate with athletes of color no matter of gender. Notably, the notion of aspirational capital, encompassing the ability to uphold aspirations and dreams for the future, is also pertinent to Black men in Division I sports. Harry (2023) contributes significantly to a more profound comprehension of how the CCW framework extends its embrace to encompass a more comprehensive array of athletes through this integrative review. Moreover, her work prompts the exploration of similar themes within intercollegiate athletics.

The CCW model holds significance within multiple facets of higher education. However, its full potential remains untapped when comprehending the multifaceted influences that shape decision-making, behavior, adaptation to new environments, and the holistic college experience for Black male Division I student-athletes. As a result, it becomes imperative to grasp the drivers that have impacted or will impact their current mindset and delve into the elements that underpin academic motivation and athletic identity among Black male student-athletes.

Sports Impact in the Black Community

In the 1900s, segregation posed significant obstacles for Black male athletes seeking to participate in organized sports. Despite the challenges, when given the opportunity, Black athletes demonstrated their exceptional value to the world of athletics (Harris, 1997). Figures like Jack Johnson, Tom Molineaux, Jesse Owens, and Joe Louis competed with the weight of their entire race on their shoulders, knowing that failure could be seen as a defeat for their Black community (Harris, 1997). Sports played a crucial role in the Black community then, and they hold immense importance today.

Athletics as being to the Black community what technology is to the Japanese and what oil is to the Arabs (Harris, 1997). Particularly in the United States, sports have propelled the Black

community forward, particularly Black men. However, while sports have provided an avenue for upward mobility, they have also been seen to limit Black athletes' aspirations beyond athletics. Kelly and Dixon (2014) and Throsby (1999) have stated that, in ways, Black people have been indoctrinated to believe that sports offer the easiest path to success and financial stability, potentially hindering their pursuit of alternative careers. Moreover, the Aspen Institute Project Play indicates that Black youth are three times more likely to participate in organized sports than their white counterparts. Engaging in sports has not only motivated Black parents to encourage their children to pursue these activities but has also provided Black youth, especially Black men, opportunities for social mobility (Harris, 1997; Caccamo, 2017). Sports have proven to be a vehicle for protecting Black youth and allowing them to use their athletic gifts to provide them a better life by using their athletic gifts (Harris, 1997).

As previously mentioned, the Black community has effectively leveraged sports to uplift Black boys and improve their overall social and economic standing. This strategic use of sports capitalizes on a highly esteemed societal asset: the athletic prowess of Black males. It's crucial to recognize that athletic performance is shaped by a mix of genetic, environmental, and cultural factors, exhibiting significant variation among individuals within any group (Siegal, 1994; Hoberman, 2000). This emphasis on athleticism, however, has occasionally overshadowed their academic capabilities, a trend noted by scholars like Hoberman (2000). The intense focus on sports and the promotion of athleticism clearly illustrates an aspect of Yosso's (2005) CCW framework. Precisely, it aligns with the concept of resistance capital, where the encouragement to leverage athletic skills contributes to improving the current social status of Black men.

Woodson's *The Miseducation of the Negro*

To understand the impact of community on the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes, it is crucial to view it through a lens rooted in historical and present-day

realities. Woodson's "The Mis-Education of the Negro" (1933) provides a valuable framework for this examination. This perspective highlights the discrepancies these athletes face daily, especially within the education system. By exploring community influences on their education and development, we can see how they often encounter initial disadvantages and are steered toward prioritizing athletics as a pathway to success. Woodson's work delves into his observations of how Black people, particularly during his era, acquired knowledge through formal and informal social channels (Bassey, 2013; Bassey, 2015; Goggin, 1993). The inequality present in American schools resulted in Black people receiving an ineffective education marked by a lack of representation and systemic racism entrenched in the educational curriculum. Consequently, their learning was predominantly shaped by a white cultural perspective rather than their own. This condition led to the phenomenon of indoctrination, wherein Black people adopted white ideas, attitudes, and beliefs, which can be considered modern day slavery (Bassey, 2013; Bassey, 2015; Goggin, 1993).

Woodson argued that such an educational approach perpetuated dependence and relegated Black people to second-class status in society (Bassey, 2013; Bassey, 2015; Goggin, 1993; Woodson, 1933). His work emphasized the importance of incorporating students' cultures and backgrounds into teaching. Integrating a student's culture and experiences empowers them intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically. This inclusive approach to education fosters an environment that supports the academic success of underrepresented students and allows them to be involved in their educational process (Bassey, 2017; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

When applied to Black male student-athletes, the insights from "The Mis-Education of the Negro" highlight the need to address systemic educational disparities and create an environment that respects and values their cultural identity. Incorporating their perspectives and experiences can significantly contribute to their overall growth and development, enabling them to thrive academically (Ladson-Billings, 2009). By embracing an inclusive educational model, we can support

student-athletes in overcoming limited opportunities and empower them to succeed in all areas of life, particularly academics. To fully understand the educational challenges faced by student-athletes—especially student-athletes of color—it is important to reference Anthony Jack's concept of the "doubly disadvantaged" in *The Privileged Poor* (Jack, 2019). Many student-athletes must navigate the dual challenges of under-resourced schools and inadequate preparation, while simultaneously managing the rigorous demands of both college academics and athletics. Jack's work highlights how marginalized students, even those attending elite institutions, face systemic barriers that others do not (Jack, 2019).

The Miseducation of the Black male Student-Athlete

“The Miseducation of the Negro” and the experiences of Black male student-athletes delves into the complex intersection of race, education, and athletics. “The Miseducation of the Negro,” presents a searing critique of the American educational system’s failure to provide Black people with a meaningful and empowering education, perpetuating systemic inequalities (Woodson, 1933). When examining the plight of Black male student-athletes, we find a modern-day manifestation of the challenges highlighted in Woodson’s work. Young Black men often confront a dichotomous reality: while excelling in sports and showcasing remarkable athletic abilities, they encounter educational environments that may not adequately cater to their specific needs (Bimper Jr, Harrison, & Clark, 2013; Rubin, 2016).

Historically, Black male student-athletes have faced barriers to accessing quality education, mirroring the broader struggles of the Black/African American community (Kim, & Hargrove, 2013; Scott, Taylor, & Palmer, 2013). They may encounter inadequate resources, limited college and career counseling, and a lack of diverse representation among educators and mentors (Kim, & Hargrove, 2013; Scott et al., 2013). As a result, their academic journey may be undermined, and opportunities for intellectual growth may be hindered. Moreover, the intense focus on sports can

create a double-edged sword for Black male student-athletes. While athletic talent can open doors and provide opportunities for scholarships and college recruitment, it can also divert attention away from their academic pursuits, which is the hallmark for attending college (Kim, & Hargrove, 2013; Scott et al., 2013). This could reinforce stereotypes and perpetuate the notion that their value lies solely in their physical abilities, rather than their intellectual potential.

Cultural Relevance Education. Incorporating students' cultures and backgrounds into teaching is crucial, especially when discussing the importance of supporting the academic engagement of Black men. This idea is encapsulated in the Cultural Relevant Education (CRE) concept. CRE is a conceptual framework that acknowledges the significance of integrating students' cultural backgrounds, interests, and lived experiences into all aspects of teaching and learning (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Asante, 1990; Dover, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Two key focuses have emerged within the CRE framework, guiding educators in their practices. The first focus revolves around culturally responsive teaching, as developed by Geneva Gay (Gay, 1975; 1980; 2000: 2002; 2010; 2013). Culturally responsive teaching employs the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to create meaningful and compelling learning experiences (Gay, 2010). While initially centered on the curriculum, Gay's work evolved to emphasize instruction and teachers' role in fostering the growth and development of their students. Culturally responsive teaching comprises six dimensions: socially and academically empowering students, setting high expectations, incorporating multidimensional cultural knowledge and perspectives, validating every student's culture, transforming schools and societies by leveraging students' strengths, and emancipating students from oppressive educational practices and ideologies (Gay, 1975; Gay, 2010).

The second focus within the CRE framework is the work of Gloria Ladson-Billings. She defined culturally relevant pedagogy as empowering students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and

politically by using cultural references to impart knowledge. This pedagogical approach emphasizes collective growth rather than individual advancement. Ladson-Billings' framework is comprised of three components: a focus on long-term academic achievement, ensuring students acquire skills and knowledge beyond current academic benchmarks; a focus on cultural competence, encouraging students to recognize and honor their own cultural beliefs while engaging with broader cultural perspectives; and a focus on addressing socio political inequalities, helping students recognize, understand, and critique current social disparities (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b). This framework can be applied in various social contexts, informing curricula, classroom instruction, teacher education, and educational research (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

As Ladson-Billings (2016) recent work indicates, the framework has evolved to encompass a new perspective derived from Paris's (2012) theory of culturally sustaining pedagogy. This shift acknowledges the need to consider global identities, embracing developments in arts, literature, music, athletics, and film, among others, while not solely focusing on racial or ethnic groups as times change (Ladson-Billings, 2014). By incorporating these frameworks, educators can create a more inclusive and empowering educational environment that supports Black male student-athletes academic success and overall development.

The Underachievement of Black Males in K-12 Education. Various factors influence the underachievement of Black men in K-12 education and their identity development. Before we can understand these reasons, it is crucial to acknowledge the historical discrimination Black/African Americans have faced since their enslavement and subsequent experiences. Harmon and Ford (2010) emphasize that during slavery, Black people were prohibited from reading due to the fear that literacy would threaten the slave system, which relied on the dependence of slaves on their masters (Cade, 1935; Harmon & Ford, 2010).

Furthermore, during the era of segregation, Black/African Americans were educated in schools that lacked the support and resources compared to their white counterparts (Harmon & Ford, 2010; Orfield, 2001). These disparities in educational opportunities and resources have had long-lasting effects on the educational outcomes of Black men. In addition to historical factors, several other elements contribute to the underachievement of Black men in K-12 education and their identity development. These factors include socioeconomic disparities, limited access to quality education, cultural biases and stereotypes, institutional racism within the education system, lack of positive role models, and limited support structures (Fergus & Noguera, 2010; Howard, 2013; Howard & Reynolds, 2013; Noguera, 2012; Noguera, 2001; Noguera, 2008).

Socioeconomic disparities frequently intersect with race, as many Black families grapple with economic challenges that directly influence their access to educational resources and opportunities. The limited availability of quality education, encompassing substandard school facilities and a dearth of rigorous academic programs, compounds the obstacles hindering the educational advancement of Black males (Fergus & Noguera, 2010; Howard, 2013; Noguera, 2012; Noguera, 2001; Noguera, 2008). Compounding these challenges are cultural biases and stereotypes that cast a negative light on the academic capabilities of Black men, resulting in diminished expectations and inadequate support from teachers and administrators (Noguera, 2012). Institutional racism, whether overt or subtle, persists within the education system, fostering unequal treatment and restricting opportunities for Black male students. Furthermore, the absence of positive role models exemplifying success and achievement in academic settings can profoundly impact the self-perception and aspirations of Black males. The need for relatable figures in these roles deprives them of vital representation, making it challenging for them to envision themselves achieving similar success (Fergus & Noguera, 2010).

The challenges Black men face in their educational journey are magnified by the lack of essential support structures such as mentors, counselors, and community resources (Fergus &

Noguera, 2010). This is compounded by educational systems that have marginalized disadvantaged communities. Despite these obstacles, Black men demonstrate resilience by making the most of the resources at their disposal, even if they aren't fully equipped for academic success. This concept is closely tied to the study's framework, exemplifying navigational capital. In essence, Black men utilize the skills they've developed to navigate through a system that was not originally intended to promote their progress.

Motivation and Black Male Student-Athletes

Understanding the impact of motivation on the participation of Black male student-athletes in sports versus academics is crucial for addressing the educational disparities in American schools. Historically, Black students have faced inequitable education compared to their white counterparts, leading some Black students to find solace and success in their athletic abilities (Beamon & Bell, 2006; Harris, 1997). Motivation, which drives individuals to engage in specific activities, plays a significant role in this context (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Motivation can be seen as the driving force that energizes individuals and propels them toward their goals, while a lack of motivation renders a person inactive (Deci et al., 1991).

Motivation varies among individuals based on their interests, upbringing, and learning experiences (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Two primary types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, stem from different reasons or goals that provide meaning and purpose for individuals to act. Intrinsic motivation arises when individuals are driven by personal challenges rather than external pressures or rewards (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). It emerges from the relationship between individuals and their activities, fueling their satisfaction and enjoyment (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation involves external factors that influence behavior, such as rewards or social pressure (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

In a recent study conducted by Simons, Van Rheenen, and Covington (1999), the self-worth theory was employed to explore the achievement motivation of Division I athletes, highlighting how self-perception and the need for validation influence their performance and engagement in sports. The results uncovered those athletes falling into the category of “failure acceptors” – primarily motivated not by striving for success or avoiding failure – demonstrated a more substantial commitment to their sport than “success-oriented” student-athletes. The latter group aimed for success more than they aimed to avoid failure. Interestingly, this specific group of students cited their participation in their respective sports as the primary motivation for attending college (Gaston-Gayles, 2004; Simons et al., 1999). Recognizing and understanding the intrinsic motivational factors that drive the collegiate aspirations of Black male student-athletes is crucial for enhancing their academic engagement. By pinpointing and harnessing their interests, establishing ambitious academic objectives, and fostering a sense of accomplishment, educators and mentors can seamlessly integrate these students’ passion for sports with their academic pursuits. This approach paves the way for discovering significance and contentment throughout their educational journey.

While extrinsic motivation, driven by external demands or rewards, can initially compel compliance, it may not sustain long-term academic engagement. However, extrinsic motivation can be transformed into a more autonomous form that aligns with the individual’s values and aspirations. Educators can foster a sense of intrinsic motivation by helping Black male student-athletes recognize the personal importance of academic achievement and its relevance to their own growth and future opportunities (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Encouraging identification regulation, where students understand the connections between academic pursuits and their goals and values, can enhance motivation. By nurturing this more autonomous form of extrinsic motivation, Black male student-athletes can develop a sense of ownership and personal investment in their academic endeavors (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The aim should be to facilitate

integrated regulation, where academic goals and values become fully assimilated and aligned with the student's identity. By assisting Black male student-athletes in integrating their academic aspirations with their values, interests, and needs, educators can empower them to set and pursue meaningful academic goals that harmonize with their athletic pursuits.

The role of motivation is crucial in shaping the involvement of Black male student-athletes in both sports and academics. To create an environment that fosters academic engagement and success, educators and mentors must grasp the nuances of various types of motivation, particularly those that influence individual behavior (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). By nurturing intrinsic motivation through utilizing personal interests, challenges, and a sense of accomplishment, the level of academic participation can be significantly elevated. Additionally, transforming extrinsic motivation into more self-directed forms, like identification regulation, can further intensify students' commitment and personal investment in their academic pursuits. This can be achieved by aligning educational objectives with Black male student-athletes' values, interests, and aspirations (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). A clear manifestation of this concept is aspirational capital, an element of Yosso's (2005) CCW model. It involves understanding the factors that motivate academic engagement and success in Black male student-athletes. Their resilience in upholding their dreams and aspirations while striving to achieve their goals becomes paramount in this context and encourages them to succeed in sports (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Yosso, 2005).

The Intersectionality of Student-Athlete Development

Being a student-athlete encompasses more than just academic and athletic pursuits. For Black male student-athletes, this journey involves navigating multiple identities and pressures to meet expectations of several people (Cooper, 2016; Howe, 2020; Howe, 2023). Balancing academic responsibilities with athletic commitments is particularly challenging as they constantly strive to reconcile their academic and athletic identities (Adler & Adler, 1987; Howe, 2020; Howe, 2023). This

dual role often leads to conflicting expectations from coaches, teachers, family members, and peers (Harrison et al., 2002; Sage, 1987). The weight of excelling academically and athletically while representing their race and community can be overwhelming. Amid these challenges, these young men are determined to find a sense of belonging and purpose as they navigate the complexities of their identities (Houston et al., 2020; Howe, 2020; Howe, 2023).

Identity development is crucial for Black men, specifically Black male student-athletes as they grapple with questions of self-worth and self-definition (Harrison et al., 2002; Houston et al., 2020). They must confront societal stereotypes and biases that can influence their perception of themselves and how others perceive them (Harrison et al., 2002; Houston et al., 2020). Achieving a balance between their academic and athletic identities requires deep introspection and self-reflection as they strive to integrate their passions, values, and aspirations into a coherent whole. This journey of self-discovery goes beyond their athletic abilities or academic achievements and is a continuous process (Harrison et al., 2020; Cooper, Corral, Macaulay, Cooper, Nwadike & Mallery, 2019; Lee & Opio, 2011).

The challenges Black male student-athletes face extends far beyond the boundaries of the field or classroom (Houston et al., 2020; Harrison et al., 2002). Their experiences, both positive and negative, contribute significantly to shaping their identity. Triumphs, setbacks, relationships, and the lessons learned all play an integral role in their personal growth (Houston et al., 2020; Harrison et al., 2002). Moreover, acquiring life skills such as time management, discipline, resilience, and teamwork during their student-athlete journey proves essential for their current roles and future endeavors (Houston et al., 2020; Harrison et al., 2002; Lee & Opio, 2011).

By exploring identity development in Black male student-athletes, we gain valuable insight into the complexities they face. It is an opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments, acknowledge their challenges, and shed light on the multifaceted nature of their experiences. Recognizing and

addressing these student-athletes' unique perspectives and needs can foster a supportive environment that nurtures their growth and empowers them to thrive both on and off the field.

Black Male Identity Development

Harrison et al. (2002) argue that Black male student-athletes undergo a unique journey of racial identity development due to their dual roles as students and athletes. This complex journey is influenced by various challenges and experiences that intersect race, sport, and academics. The intersectionality of being Black and a student-athlete creates a distinctive set of circumstances that require careful examination (Stanton, Taylor, Lobb, Holmes, Brady & Scruggs, 2022; Tatum, 1997). Understanding the intricacies of racial identity formation for Black male student-athletes is crucial to effectively address the complexities they face within educational institutions and athletic contexts (Stanton, Taylor, Lobb, Holmes, Brady & Scruggs, 2022; Tatum, 1997). By exploring their nuanced experiences, we can highlight the importance of creating supportive environments that empower these individuals to thrive academically, athletically, and personally (Stanton et al., 2022; Tatum, 1997). Furthermore, research has demonstrated that identity development is a socialization process influenced by diverse experiences, including family, community, school, group dynamics, and social affiliations (Harrison et al., 2002; Stanton et al., 2022).

The concept of “becoming Black” was introduced in Cross’s (1995) racial identity model, which emphasized the process of African Americans developing a sense of self in relation to their Black identity, known as Nigrescence (Cross, 1995; Helms, 1990). Nigrescence involves a re-socializing experience that shifts one’s racial identity from a Eurocentric perspective to an Afrocentric perspective (Harrison et al., 2002). This theoretical framework proposes that Black individuals progress through a series of stages as they navigate their racial identity. It specifically focuses on the experiences and challenges faced by African Americans in understanding and embracing their Blackness. Understanding that Nigrescence is not a process that mirrors physical

growth and development is essential. Instead, it serves as a mechanism through which assimilated, deculturize⁸, and often miseducated African Americans transform into individuals with a more Afrocentric outlook (Cross, 1995; Harrison et al., 2002).

The Nigrescence model consists of five stages: Pre-Encounter, individuals may internalize negative messages about their Blackness, devaluing their racial identity and identifying more with the dominant White culture; Encounter, a significant racial event that challenges their beliefs, prompting them to question and explore their racial identity; Immersion-Emersion, actively seeking knowledge, individuals immerse themselves in Black culture, distancing themselves from the dominant culture to develop a positive Black identity; Internalization, developing a secure and positive Black identity, individuals integrate their racial identity with other aspects of their overall identity. They actively work towards social justice and empowering the Black community; Internalization-Commitment, individuals commit to social change and activism, dismantling systemic racism, advocating for racial equality, and uplifting the Black community (Cross, 1995; Harrison et al., 2002).

African Americans Struggle with Identity

Discussing the identity development of Black male student-athletes and the complexities that this student-athlete population faces having to balance multiple identities while meeting the expectation of themselves and society draws comparison to the ideas of double consciousness first introduced by W.E.B. Dubois. *Double consciousness* is a concept that was highlighted in W.E.B. Dubois's "The Soul of Black Folk," published in 1903. It refers to the experiences of marginalized individuals, specifically Black/African Americans, who are constantly aware of how they are

⁸ Deculturalization is a process in which an ethnic or cultural group is systematically stripped of its language, customs, traditions, and overall cultural identity. It involves the suppression, devaluation, or eradication of a particular group's cultural practices and beliefs by a dominant or more powerful group (Spring, 2021).

perceived by the dominant culture, white people, while always trying to maintain their self-perception (Du Bois, 1903a; 1903b; 2018).

Du Bois argued that Black/African Americans in the United States have a constant dual identity. They see things through their own eyes and the eyes of the majority culture, which often holds stereotypes and biases against them (Bruce, 1992; Pittman, 2016; Dayal, 1996). This dual perspective can lead Black/African Americans to feelings of “Two-ness” or “double consciousness.” In addition, this state arises from living where one’s identity is shaped, in part, by how others view them (Du Bois, 1903a; 1903b; 2018; Pittman, 2016; Dayal, 1996; Bruce, 1992). For example, an African American person might be aware of both their own unique cultural identity and the stereotypes and prejudices that may be projected onto them by the broader society. This awareness can lead to internal conflict and a constant negotiation of self-identity. Du Bois argued that this double consciousness was a central aspect of the Black/African American experience and could be a source of strength and pain. It has since become an essential concept in discussions of race, identity, and social psychology, and it has also been applied to other marginalized groups (Du Bois, 1903a; 1903b; 2018; Pittman, 2016; Dayal, 1996; Bruce, 1992).

Du Bois’ argument about dual identities navigating a shared space is grounded in historical context, a concept also explored by Erickson in his theory of Surrendered Identity Development. According to Syed and Fish (2018), African Americans have faced a denial of their sense of identity, which Erickson characterizes as a surrendered identity. This concept posits that fundamentally, there exists a historical heritage and cultural foundation that underpins African American identities (Syed & Fish, 2018). However, due to the legacy of the slave trade, this identity was effectively “surrendered” to white oppressors who have exerted control since that time (Syed & Fish, 2018). At its core, surrendered identity implies that there is an identity waiting to be rediscovered and

reclaimed. This offers hope for individuals seeking to establish a sense of self-continuity, which is crucial for healthy and balanced identity development (Syed & Fish, 2018).

The development of Black/African American identity has always involved a process of exploration, a continuous effort to establish an identity that is self-defined rather than dictated by societal norms. As Woodson (1933) pointed out in “The Mis-Education of the Negro,” there has historically been a tendency for Black individuals to receive their education steeped in white culture. This dynamic has posed a significant challenge for Black/African American people in their quest to comprehend their true selves and determine the image they wish to project in society (Syed & Fish, 2018; Woodson, 1933).

Black male student-athletes often grapple with multiple identities. Some are ascribed to them due to their athletic prowess and the perceived value they bring to society, potentially overshadowing their capabilities beyond sports. For these Black men to be authentically supported beyond the field, they must be allowed to chart their course and receive the necessary support to become the individuals they aspire to be in society.

Black Male Athletic Identity Development

According to Brewer, Van Raalte, and Linder (1993), athletic identity refers to the extent to which an individual identifies with their role as an athlete. It encompasses how one’s self-concept and self-worth are tied to their athletic abilities and achievements. It reflects an individual’s importance and significance in their athletic pursuits and how it impacts their overall identity (Howe, 2023). Literature on the athletic identity of Black male college athletes broadly defines identity as the degree to which they identify with a specific role or identity, which can be influenced by societal factors or upbringing (Howe, 2023).

For Black males who participate in youth sports, athletic identity becomes a fundamental part of their lives from an early age, and it continues to shape them until they transition out of sports

(Howe, 2023). As mentioned earlier, socialization into athletic identity begins at a young age, with society guiding Black boys to believe that sports offer a high-reward avenue that they are best suited to pursue, as well as the most promising path for upward mobility (Beamon, 2012; Cooper et al., 2017; Harrison et al., 2017; Howe, 2023). For instance, Beamon (2010) and Charleston (2014) highlight how the media portrays images of successful Black male athletes, but it frames a specific type of athlete that Black boys and young men aspire to emulate. The media consistently depicts Black male athletes as successful and wealthy solely within sports (Beamon, 2010; Charleston, 2014).

While the media plays a significant role in shaping how Black boys perceive and value sports, culture also profoundly impacts their athletic identity. It is argued that sports are highly valued within the Black community compared to the white community (Harrison et al., 2011; Howe, 2023). For Black male college athletes, this elevated value placed on athletic success over other areas becomes another driving force behind their heightened athletic identity. Family contributions also play a substantial role in shaping the athletic identity of Black men (Beamon, 2010). Black communities place significant value on the athletic abilities of Black males, and the reinforcement of athletic success is encouraged by community members, friends, and high schools (Beamon, 2010; Beamon & Bell, 2011). All this encouragement stems from the hope of potentially achieving a professional career in sports, which would increase their social capital and provide a return on their investment in terms of financial gain (Beamon, 2010; Beamon & Bell, 2011).

The development of racial and athletic Identities has a profound impact on Black male student-athletes. These individuals navigate the complexities of simultaneously being Black and student-athletes, facing unique challenges and experiences that intersect race, sport, and academics (Beamon, 2010; Beamon & Bell, 2011). It is crucial to understand the intricacies of their racial identity formation and their athletic identity development to effectively address the complexities they encounter within educational institutions and athletic contexts. We can enhance their overall

well-being and success by creating supportive environments that empower Black male student-athletes to thrive academically, athletically, and personally (Beamon, 2010; Beamon & Bell, 2011). This understanding and support foster their growth, provide opportunities for self-discovery, and promote social justice in educational and athletic spaces.

The main objective of this study is to delve into the experiences of Black male student-athletes, both in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. This research study explores how their sense of community influences their academic motivation and athletic identity. As Beamon and Bell (2011) pointed out, the community plays a pivotal role in shaping individual perspectives and interactions within society. This concept is like Yosso's (2005) notion of familial capital. It emphasizes that families and communities carry a collective history, memory, and cultural intuition that they pass on to younger generations, particularly youth. This transmission of knowledge and the importance of nurturing healthy relationships within the community are crucial for ongoing personal growth and learning (Yosso, 2005).

Within the context of the Black community, we've previously discussed the prevalent emphasis on athletics as a pathway to success, as highlighted by Harris (1997). Given the profound impact of the community, our study suggests that a similar emphasis on academics could lead to a shift in mindset among this group of students. Such a shift could foster a more inclusive and equitable environment for Black male student-athletes to excel on and off the field and make meaningful contributions to society.

History of Black Men in Sports

Black athletes have played a vital role in the success of athletics, both at the professional and collegiate levels. While college sports have been popular since the 1800s, they only became ingrained in American culture in the early 1900s (Johnson & Acquaviva, 2015). Unfortunately, due to segregation, Black individuals were barred from participating in mainstream sports. However, Black

men started appearing in collegiate sports as early as the late 1800s (Harrison et al., 2002; Johnson & Acquaviva, 2015; Njororai Simiyu, 2012). It was not until the 1950s that Black people were allowed to compete alongside their white counterparts.

This shift led to a historical trend of recruiting Black male student-athletes for their exceptional athletic abilities to colleges and universities (Lapchick, 2008). Many college coaches believed that Black athletes had the potential to compete at the highest level and win games and secure national championships due to their perceived “superior” athletic gifts (Lapchick, 2008). This belief was rooted in the notion that Black men and women possessed inherent genetic differences from their white counterparts (Lapchick, 2008). Historically, colleges and universities have strived to create strong, diverse, and competitive athletic programs nationwide while providing students with access to higher education (Lewis, 2010). However, despite efforts to diversify their teams, Black men and women continue to be recruited more than any other ethnic group in collegiate athletics (Sellars, 1992; Kalman-Lamb et al., 2021).

The National Collegiate Athletic Association

Established in 1906, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) stands as a venerable and influential organization, wielding substantial authority in the governance of collegiate sports across the United States and Canada. Its comprehensive structure comprises three distinct divisions, each playing a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of collegiate athletics: Division I (D-I), Division II (D-II), and Division III (D-III). These divisions collectively embrace 350 colleges and over 6,000 athletic teams, fostering opportunities for more than 170,000 students annually (Hosick & Sproull, 2012; National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2024; Oriard, 2012; Peach, 2007; Senne, 2016). As of September 2023, the preeminent educational institutions align themselves within Division I, collectively known as the “Power Five”. This prestigious group encompasses renowned conferences such as the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference,

Pac-12 Conference, and Southeastern Conference (SEC). Characterized by rich traditions, expansive student populations, and substantial budgets (Senne, 2016), these institutions serve as the standard-bearers of excellence in collegiate athletics. Their collective influence extends far beyond the playing fields, permeating the cultural and economic fabric of the collegiate sports landscape (Hosick & Sproull, 2012; National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2024; Oriard, 2012; Peach, 2007; Senne, 2016).

The NCAA's Relationship with Black Student-Athletes

Data indicates that Black people make up approximately 10 percent of the student body in higher education, excluding historically Black colleges and universities (Njororai Simiyu, 2012). However, this percentage significantly increases when considering Black students involved in college athletics, representing 21 percent of college athletes (Njororai Simiyu, 2012). Specifically, 46 percent of football players, 60 percent of male basketball players, and 47 percent of female basketball players receive scholarships. Moreover, 70 percent of Black men participate in football and basketball (Njororai Simiyu, 2012). These statistics highlight the disproportionate representation of Black athletes in NCAA Division I top-earning sports programs, namely football and basketball (Harper, 2018).

Black athletes exhibit the lowest graduation rates among minority groups (Njororai Simiyu, 2012). This gap is frequently associated with the belief that numerous Black male athletes prioritize sports over academics throughout their college years (Harris, 2015). Frequently, their primary objective revolves around excelling in their respective sports and harboring ambitions of attaining professional status—a goal that does not always come to fruition (Njororai Simiyu, 2012; Harris, 2015). Despite the inherent challenges, collegiate athletics have afforded numerous opportunities for Black male athletes. Many exceptional individuals have capitalized on athletic scholarships, eventually transitioning to the professional realm, supporting their families, and positively

influencing their communities (Perry, 2014). While graduation may not always be their immediate priority, these athletes have found avenues to succeed, leaving a lasting and positive impact on themselves and others later in their lives. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the success and financial gains of NCAA Division I sports programs often come at the expense of the Black male student-athletes who drive them. While these athletes contribute significantly to revenue generation through their athletic talents, they often face exploitative practices. The NCAA operates as a business that profits from the labor of student-athletes, regardless of their race (Johnson & Acquaviva, 2012; Senne, 2016).

As highlighted in Taylor Branch's *The Shame of College Sports*, the NCAA has transformed into a lucrative enterprise, capitalizing on the sweat, tears, and bodies of student-athletes. However, Black men have been the predominant contributors to the NCAA's monumental television deals, high ticket sales, and the millions of fans invested in the success of their favorite athletic programs (Branch, 2023; Branch, 2023). Black male student-athletes often face exploitation due to the intense demand for participation in revenue-generating sports like football and basketball. They dedicate long hours to training and competing, frequently at the expense of their academic pursuits. These athletes encounter significant physical risks and endure immense pressure to perform well for their institutions, coaches, the NCAA, and the fans who expect success from these programs. Despite their crucial role in generating substantial revenue, they often lack adequate compensation or support for their basic needs (Beamon, 2008). The exploitation pervasive in college athletics raises serious ethical concerns that demand further examination and action (Beamon, 2008).

Black Men in NCAA Revenue Generating vs. Non-Revenue Generating Sports

According to Rhee, Barnes, Kim, and Carroll (2018) and Paule and Gilson (2010), college athletics exhibits a noticeable division between revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. Revenue-generating sports such as football and basketball receive significant attention and

financial resources, while non-revenue-generating sports often lack similar support and recognition. In terms of recruitment, Black male and female student-athletes are recruited at higher rates than athletes of other ethnicities, regardless of sport classification (Sellars, 1992). This disparity in recruitment patterns suggests that underlying factors contribute to the overrepresentation of Black student-athletes in college sports.

Several factors may drive this overrepresentation. Historically, Black athletes have often been seen as possessing exceptional physical talent, particularly in sports like football and basketball, which has led to targeted recruitment efforts. Additionally, systemic issues such as limited access to resources in their communities and schools can make athletic scholarships a compelling pathway to higher education for many Black students. The numbers are particularly striking at predominantly white institutions (PWIs). Despite comprising only about 10 percent of the overall student body in higher education, Black students represent 21 percent of college athletes (Njororai Simiyu, 2012). This discrepancy underscores the significant presence of Black student-athletes at PWIs and raises important questions about the factors influencing their recruitment and participation in college sports.

The division between revenue and non-revenue-generating sports, along with the overrepresentation of Black student-athletes in collegiate athletics, underscores the complex dynamics within college sports, particularly at PWIs.

Revenue Generating Sports

Black male student-athletes are often drawn to revenue-generating sports. These athletes frequently originate from underserved communities, grappling with systemic barriers that obstruct their access to resources and opportunities. Notably, football and basketball serve as avenues through which they can showcase their talents, attain visibility, and secure scholarships or professional contracts (Cooper, 2016; Harris, 1997). Engaging in these sports represents a potential

means for some athletes to surmount socioeconomic challenges, offering financial support for themselves and their families. The allure of athletic accomplishment, coupled with the prospect of translating their passion into a lucrative career, stands as a powerful incentive for Black male student-athletes to prioritize revenue-generating sports over alternative pursuits (Cooper, 2016; Harris, 1997; Paule & Gilson, 2010; Rhee et al., 2018). Their desire to participate in these sports can be likened to the concept of “Navigational capital” (Yosso, 2005), wherein they harness acquired skills to navigate situations or institutions originally not designed to cater to communities of color.

Furthermore, the choices made by Black male student-athletes can be significantly influenced by the cultural significance and prominence of revenue-generating sports (Cooper, 2016; Harris, 1997). Football and basketball, deeply embedded in Black communities and popular culture, have become symbolic pillars (Cooper, 2016; Harris, 1997). Many aspiring athletes grow up admiring professionals in these sports, witnessing their profound societal impact. The representation of successful Black athletes, both on and off the field, is a source of inspiration and validation for young Black men (May, 2009). Engaging in revenue-generating sports allows Black male student-athletes to aspire to emulate their role models and contribute to the enduring legacy of Black excellence in athletics. The profound cultural significance of these sports significantly shapes their decision to pursue these specific athletic paths.

Non-Revenue Generating Sports

Conversely, non-revenue-generating sports like swimming, track and field, and tennis often need help to generate significant financial support (Harper, 2018; Rhee et al., 2018). Despite their limited financial contribution, these non-revenue sports play a vital role in the collegiate sports landscape by providing diverse opportunities for student-athletes, promoting campus engagement, and embodying the spirit of amateur athletics. Black male student-athletes also make notable

contributions to these non-revenue-generating sports, showcasing their talent and determination across various disciplines.

In sports like track and field, Black male athletes have excelled, breaking records, and earning accolades at both the collegiate and professional levels. Their speed, agility, and strength have propelled them to great success, significantly contributing to the sport. Similarly, Black male athletes have defied stereotypes and overcome historical barriers to make their mark in swimming. Swimmers such as Cullen Jones and Anthony Ervin have achieved Olympic gold medals, challenging the notion that swimming is a predominantly white sport (Baldwin, 2021). Their achievements have inspired a new generation of Black swimmers and highlighted the importance of diversity in the sport (Hodge, Burden, Robinson & Bennett, 2008).

Additionally, Black male athletes have excelled in non-revenue-generating sports like tennis, challenging long-standing stereotypes and making significant strides in a historically exclusive sport. Players like Arthur Ashe, James Blake, and Francis Tiafoe have achieved success on the court and used their platforms to advocate for social justice and equality (Paule & Gilson, 2010; Rhee et al., 2018). Understanding the disparities between revenue and non-revenue-generating sports is crucial for comprehending the complexities and challenges faced by student-athletes and institutions in college athletics (Paule & Gilson, 2010; Rhee et al., 2018). Recognizing the achievements of Black male athletes in non-revenue-generating sports adds to the narrative of their contributions to the overall landscape of college athletics, showcasing their abilities and the significance of diversity in sports (Hodge et al., 2008; Paule & Gilson, 2010; Rhee et al., 2018)).

The Black Male Student-Athletes Experience at PWIs

College athletes, especially Black male students that attend predominantly white institutions (PWIs), face unique challenges on and off to field/court successes (Melendez, 2008; Parham, 1996). As previously mentioned, while Black male student-athletes comprise up to 60% of football and

basketball rosters, Black male student-athletes comprise only 3% of the student population (Perry, 2014). Despite being celebrated and respected as valued campus community members, Black male student-athletes often encounter prejudice both within and outside their athletic endeavors.

Additionally, white students, faculty, and non-athletic minority students may hold biases against Black athletes (Melendez, 2008).

These stereotypes often stem from the misconception that Black athletes are only in college to develop athletically and not academically. (Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1991; Melendez, 2008). Such misconceptions leave Black student-athletes feeling isolated, misunderstood, and unsupported, leading them to seek solace and support within the athletics program. Unfortunately, this further reinforces negative biases from others and pushes them to rely more on their athletic identity (Melendez, 2008). Faculty and staff members sometimes stereotype student-athletes based on the type of sport they participate in, distinguishing between revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. As a result, research has shown that college educators may be less engaged with revenue-generating student-athletes, assuming that these students are less invested in their education (Burke, 1993; Engstrom et al., 1997). Consequently, based on the actions of college educators, Black student-athletes may feel unsupported in the academic environment, potentially leading to lower academic achievement (Burke, 1993; Engstrom et al., 1997).

A study conducted by Melendez (2008), exploring the psychosocial experiences of African American football players at PWIs, found that crucial interpersonal interactions with white coaches, white faculty, white teammates, and non-athlete Black classmates had a negative impact on the emotional responses of Black players within the collegiate atmosphere (Melendez, 2008). The study further revealed that Black players at PWIs often felt isolated, misunderstood, and powerless when interacting with white coaches, white faculty, white teammates, and non-athlete Black classmates (Melendez, 2008).

Fisher and Padmawidjaj's (1999) research revealed that a significant portion of their study participants did not share the same socioeconomic backgrounds as their white counterparts. Consequently, when these students transitioned to post-secondary education, they frequently encountered challenges, including culture shock (Fisher and Padmawidjaja, 1999). In high-revenue generating sports and athletic programs, Black student-athletes often hold a prominent position (Sellars, 1992). Coaches at predominantly white institutions frequently recruit Black athletes, emphasizing the academic and athletic benefits their schools offer. However, these coaches frequently overlook the emotional toll that this transition can take on Black athletes overall personal and academic success (Sellars, 1992). Additionally, the absence of connection and support in the college environment can significantly impact a Black student-athlete's sense of belonging (Melendez, 2008; Harris, 1997).

Black Students Pursuit of PWIs

The pursuit of education, particularly higher education, by Black/African Americans has been marked by both challenges and achievements (Freeman, 1999). As mentioned earlier, Black/African Americans faced obstacles in their quest for education, stemming from the era of slavery when learning was prohibited by fearful enslavers and from the period of segregation when Black/African Americans were denied equal educational opportunities compared to their white counterparts (Benton, 2001; Freeman, 1999). Nevertheless, despite these circumstances, Black/African Americans consistently found ways to overcome adversity and pursue knowledge. A notable example is the establishment of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), which served as the primary educational institutions for African Americans until the 1970s, when more African Americans began attending predominantly white Institutions (PWIs) than HBCUs (Freeman, 1999; Wilson, 1994). While HBCUs will continue to play a unique role in educating the Black community, PWIs are increasingly being sought out by Black/African Americans nationwide.

According to Clayton, McClay, Davis, and Tevis (2023), several factors contribute to the desire of individuals, particularly Black men, to attend predominantly white institutions. One significant factor is the access to resources that PWIs offer, including specialized majors, state-of-the-art facilities, and comprehensive academic support services. Additionally, the opportunity for diversity plays a crucial role, as Black students can learn alongside individuals with different perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds, which fosters a rich learning environment (Clayton et al., 2023). Moreover, attending a PWI can provide networking and career opportunities through connections with a diverse alum network and established industry relationships (Clayton et al., 2023; Guiffrida & Douthit, 2010; Simmons, 2020). Lastly, the academic reputation of PWIs is often recognized more by majority culture, and Black students may be drawn to the rigorous academic programs and the potential for enhanced credentials. Acknowledging that these factors are not exhaustive and may vary among individuals, reflecting Black student" diverse motivations and aspirations in pursuing higher education is essential (Clayton et al., 2023; Guiffrida & Douthit, 2010; Simmons, 2020).

Black Male Student-Athletes Pursuit of PWI's

College athletes may experience success on the field or in the arena but face unique challenges, particularly Black male students at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) (Parham, 1996; Melendez, 2008). As previously mentioned, Black male student-athletes make up 60% of football and basketball rosters but constitute only 3% of the student population at Division I FCS and FBS institutions⁹ (Perry, 2014). Despite being celebrated and respected as valued campus

⁹ The Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) and Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) are two levels of college football in the NCAA. FCS institutions operate with smaller budgets and compete for national championships through a playoff system, allowing equitable competition among programs. In contrast, FBS represents the highest level of college football, featuring larger budgets, bigger stadiums, and extensive recruiting efforts, with teams competing for national

community members, Black male student-athletes often encounter prejudice both on and off the field. Furthermore, white students, faculty, and nonathletic minority students may harbor biases against Black athletes.

These stereotypes often stem from the misconception that Black athletes are solely motivated to play sports rather than pursue an education (Melendez, 2008; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1991). Such misconceptions frequently lead Black student-athletes to feel isolated, misunderstood, and unsupported, pushing them to seek solace and support within the athletic program. Unfortunately, this further reinforces negative biases from others and compels them to lean even more into their athletic identity (Melendez, 2008). Faculty and staff commonly stereotype student-athletes based on the type of sport they participate in, differentiating between revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. Consequently, research has shown that college educators are less engaged with revenue-generating student-athletes, assuming these students are less invested in their education (Burke, 1993; Engstrom et al., 1997). Additionally, based on the actions of college educators, Black student-athletes feel unsupported in the collegiate academic environment, which is likely associated with lower academic achievement (Burke, 1993; Engstrom et al., 1997).

According to a study conducted by Melendez (2008) on the psychosocial experiences of African American football players attending PWIs, essential interpersonal experiences for Black players, such as interactions with white coaches, white faculty, white teammates, and non-athlete Black classmates, negatively impact their emotional well-being in the collegiate atmosphere (Melendez, 2008). The study also revealed that Black players at PWIs often feel isolated, misunderstood, and powerless when interacting with white coaches, white faculty, white teammates, and non-athlete Black classmates (Melendez, 2008). As a result, their transition to post-secondary

titles primarily through bowl games and the College Football Playoff. This division underscores the varying levels of competition and resources in college football (Criswell, 2023).

education has proven to be challenging and a culture shock. Black student-athletes dominate some of the country's highest revenue-generating sports and athletic programs (Sellars, 1992). Coaches at predominantly white institutions recruit Black athletes every year, emphasizing their institution's academic and athletic benefits. However, these coaches often overlook the emotional toll that this transition can have on Black athlete's overall personal and academic success (Sellars, 1992).

Black male student-athletes often find themselves in situations where they feel isolated or unwelcome at PWI's, significantly beyond their roles as athletes (Melendez, 2008; Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1991). This feeling of isolation highlights a potential lack of social and navigational capital, as Yosso (2005) discussed. This capital could have equipped them with the necessary networks and knowledge to navigate their college journey beyond the realm of sports and provide them with the mental tools needed to thrive in this environment. As previously mentioned, this study aims to explore how community influences Black males' academic motivation and athletic identity. A noteworthy factor contributing to students prioritizing their athletic identity over academics may be the underrepresentation of Black individuals in higher education. Herndon and Hirt (2004) emphasized the significance of family and a robust support system in facilitating educational attainment and academic potential. When students lack such support, or in this case, the knowledge and skills required to succeed academically in college, having the capital mentioned in Yosso's CCW framework becomes pivotal in their development and matriculation.

Before College: Preconditions Faced by Black Male Student-Athletes

According to Cooper (2016), the Pre-K-20 educational system in the United States has significantly influenced Black youth's experiences and outcomes. One of the significant challenges facing higher education institutions is addressing the academic performance gap between Black male student-athletes and their counterparts (NCAA, 2011a; 2011b). More specifically, research has revealed that Black male student-athletes contend with distinct influences compared to their peers.

These influences, combined with the elevated expectations associated with their athletic prowess, can significantly shape how Black male student-athletes navigate their college experiences. This impact extends to their decision-making, behavior, attitude, and overall engagement with their educational journey (Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999; Cross, 1991; Harrison et al., 2002; Kelly & Dixon, 2014; Sellars, 1992).

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes, we must examine the lens of Yosso's (2005) "Community Cultural Wealth" (CCW). This analysis necessitates discussing the economic, family, and community factors that can influence their overall college experience.

Economic Factors

According to Throsby (1999), there are three primary forms of capital: physical capital, which refers to the stock of real goods; human capital, which embodies skills and experience in individuals; and natural capital, which encompasses the supply of renewable and nonrenewable resources provided by nature (Throsby, 1999). Researchers suggest that the Black community encourages Black youth to participate in sports because of the potential to increase their economic and human capital (Kelly & Dixon, 2014; Throsby, 1999). The 2010 U.S. Census Bureau data revealed that Black Americans still lag other minority groups in economic, social, health, and academic aspects (Kelly & Dixon, 2014). Society often portrays a negative image, implying that all Black Americans experience poverty and adverse conditions. Statistics indicate that Black children under 18 are nearly three times more likely to live in single-parent households than white children, with almost two-thirds of all African Americans residing in single-parent homes (Kelly & Dixon, 2014). Moreover, many Black children grow up with parents who are not securely employed, and only 15 percent have parents with at least a bachelor's degree (Kelly & Dixon, 2014). Consequently, 30 percent of Black youth under 18 live in poverty. These statistics highlight the disadvantages many

Black males face, compelling Black athletes to strive for a better life for themselves and their families (Kelly & Dixon, 2014).

As Woodson stated, “predispositions that students develop from past experiences affect their future experience” (Bassey, 2013; Carver & Enfield, 2006). The information above demonstrates that being raised in such economic circumstances has a guiding and long-lasting impact on their lives. The impact of an increase in human capital is two-fold: it affects the lives of Black male student-athletes after college. It significantly influences their engagement during their time in education (Bassey, 2013; Carver & Enfield, 2006). At that stage, these student-athletes are aware that their athletic abilities can propel them to the next phase of their lives, and they invest their time and hard work accordingly.

Family and Community Impact

The needs of their families and community represent one of the most influential preconditions that shape the lives of Black male student-athletes in college (Schaeperkoetter et al., 2015). Family members play a crucial role as the primary group that interacts with children and Black youth daily. Children build their learning foundation within the family unit as routines are established and interactions and relationships develop (Schaeperkoetter et al., 2015). This foundation serves as the basis for their intellectual and emotional growth, and it continues to expand as the child progresses through different stages of life (Schaeperkoetter et al., 2015). The support, expectations, and aspirations expressed by their families and community profoundly impact the trajectory of Black male student-athletes, shaping their goals and aspirations both on and off the field. Recognizing and addressing these familial and community influences is crucial in understanding and supporting the experiences of Black male student-athletes in college.

The community plays a crucial role in shaping children's perspectives on the world, offering unique life experiences. This influence is particularly significant when examining the participation of

Black male athletes in sports (Schaeperkoetter et al., 2015). Family members and the community actively introduce Black children to sports, significantly influencing their academic and collegiate athletic decisions (Schaeperkoetter et al., 2015). Researchers assert that the prevalence of Black athletes can be attributed to the active encouragement from the Black community to pursue careers in sports, diverting them from more conventional professions like doctors, lawyers, and teachers (Njororai Simiyu, 2012). Black communities direct their youth towards appropriate sports like basketball, football, and track and field. Consequently, this guidance steers Black children away from careers and sports that may be labeled as inappropriate within their community (Njororai Simiyu, 2012). The inclination towards sports careers is rooted in Black families and communities observing a disproportionately high representation in sports, leading them to perceive success differently than society's conventional "normal" jobs, including lawyers, doctors, engineers, and other professional careers (Njororai Simiyu, 2012).

Commercialization of College Sports

Over the years, college athletic departments have contended that they function and operate similarly to other departments on college campuses (Wolverton, 2009). They argue that their yearly operations heavily rely on generous donations from alumni, stakeholders, federal funding, and other sources to a certain extent. However, evidence indicates they generate significantly more revenue from commercial sources and partnerships. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (1993), *commercialism* is defined as "1: commercial spirit, institutions, or methods; 2: excessive emphasis on profit" College athletics have experienced substantial commercialization since the early 1800s, with recent years witnessing even greater commercialization due to the success of collegiate sports. The NCAA and athletic departments have predominantly generated revenue through cooperative agreements and sponsorships with various companies (Zhu et al., 2005).

One notable example of commercialization in college sports is the agreement between the NCAA and CBS. CBS paid the NCAA \$6 billion from 2003 to 2013 to broadcast its men's basketball tournament and other NCAA sporting events (Mitten et al., 2009). Sports sponsorships have experienced rapid growth since the 1990s as sponsors leverage the popularity of collegiate sports to promote and sell their products to consumers (Zhu et al., 2005). In an article titled "Athletics in American College" Howard Savage, a staff member of the Carnegie Foundation, questioned the primary responsibilities and roles of higher education institutions in athletics. Savage pondered whether colleges and universities could effectively serve as cultivators of intellectual life and representatives promoting business, industry, journalism, and organized athletics on a large-scale commercial basis (Johnson & Acquaviva, 2012). Savage believed that "big-time" college sports were not educational but operated purely on commercial and financial grounds (Johnson & Acquaviva, 2012).

The Impact of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL)

Johnson and Acquaviva (2012) underscored the transformative shift in college athletics, noting Howard Savage's observation that "Big-time sports were not educational but operated purely on commercial and financial grounds." This highlights the transition from traditional educational values to commercial interests in collegiate sports. From lucrative television and apparel deals to steadfast loyalty from alums, fans, faculty, staff, and students, college sports have increasingly become driven by financial motives (Johnson & Acquaviva, 2012). Recent months have witnessed even more significant changes in the college sports landscape with the introduction of policies surrounding the sponsorship (payment) of college athletes for their name, image, and likeness (NIL). This new interim policy, instituted by the NCAA in response to a previous U.S. Supreme Court decision in *NCAA v. Alston*, has facilitated partnerships between college athletes and businesses, allowing them to engage in endorsements and other business ventures (Matias, 2022).

According to the NCAA, student-athletes can now engage in NIL activities and earn money, provided they adhere to specific guidelines. Principally, "student-athletes may engage with professional services to help them find, contract with, and seek third parties interested in paying them for the use of their NIL's (Sellars, 2022, p. 4). Notably, the introduction of NIL has created opportunities for athletes, exceptionally high-performing individuals, to cultivate their brands and generate income. This opportunity can be beneficial not only for the athletes themselves but also for their families and local communities (Sellars, 2022). However, despite the financial opportunities provided by NIL, there is a need for a deeper understanding of its potential impact on student-athletes' academic success. Sellars (2022) raises concerns about the NIL landscape, especially regarding the implications for student-athletes receiving compensation for the use of their NILs while maintaining their performance on the field, staying on a team, and upholding the core values of college athletics, including promoting academic success.

In the Fall 2023 season, Black men have demonstrated some of the highest NIL valuations in the country. For example, (1) Bronny James (\$6.1M), (2) Shedeur Sanders (\$4.1M), (5) Caleb Williams (\$2.6M), (6) Travis Hunter (\$1.8M), and (7) Evan Stewart (\$1.7M). These substantial valuations underscore the potential financial opportunities available to student-athletes and highlight the evolving landscape of collegiate athletics. Moreover, such high valuations may impact students' educational journeys and decisions on where they want to attend school. As athletes weigh their options, the potential for NIL earnings may become a significant factor in their choice of institution, influencing their academic pursuits and long-term career aspirations (Cottongim, 2023).

Conclusion

In conclusion, Black male student-athletes athletic identity and academic motivation are complex and interconnected aspects of their college experiences. While participating in athletics can provide a sense of belonging, personal fulfillment, and opportunities for skill development, it can

also present challenges to their academic pursuits. The athletic identity of Black male student-athletes often plays a significant role in shaping their overall college experience. It provides a source of pride, identity, and social support within the athletic community. However, the strong identification with their athletic role can sometimes overshadow their academic goals and lead to a devaluation of the importance of education. Academic motivation can be influenced by various factors, including the expectations of coaches, peers, and family members and the availability of academic support systems. The pressure to excel athletically, coupled with demanding schedules and commitments, may create barriers to their academic engagement and success.

To address these challenges, promoting a balanced and holistic approach to the development of Black male student-athletes is crucial. This involves fostering an environment that values both athletic achievement and academic excellence. Athletic departments and educational institutions should provide comprehensive support services, including academic advising, tutoring, and mentoring, to help these student-athletes thrive academically. Moreover, it is essential to challenge stereotypes and promote a positive narrative surrounding the academic capabilities of Black male student-athletes. By recognizing and celebrating their intellectual achievements, institutions can help counteract the adverse effects of stereotypes and foster a culture that values athletic and academic accomplishments.

To truly nurture the holistic development of Black male student-athletes, it is imperative to foster a spirit of collaboration among various stakeholders, including coaches, academic advisors, faculty members, and administrators. We can harness the insights offered by Yosso's (2005) CCW framework to better understand the driving forces behind academic motivation and athletic identity among these students. By combining efforts and working cohesively, we can establish a nurturing and inclusive environment that empowers these student-athletes to thrive both on the field and in

the classroom. This collective commitment will enable them to realize their full potential and achieve success in all facets of their college experiences.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

“Did you know that the human voice is the only pure instrument? That it has notes no other instrument has? It’s like being between the keys of a piano. The notes are there, you can sing them, but they can’t be found on any instrument. That’s like me. I live in between this. I live in both worlds, the black and white world (Jiji, 2021).” – **Nina Simone**

Introduction

Chapter 3 of this research study will provide a comprehensive overview of the methodology. The chapter will begin by revisiting the purpose of the study and restating the research questions that serve as the foundation for this research—a detailed account of the sample selection process, highlighting the specific characteristics desired in the sample population. Additionally, this research will describe the analysis techniques employed, detailing the steps taken to extract meaningful insights from the gathered data. It is important to note that potential limitations and delimitations of the study will also be addressed in this chapter, providing a transparent view of the research’s boundaries and possible constraints.

Research Paradigm: Transformative

In pursuing research, a comprehensive grasp of methodologies is crucial, yet a deep understanding of the research paradigm is equally important—a framework that captures fundamental beliefs and ideas. This paradigm guides researchers in formulating questions, selecting methodologies, and interpreting findings (Martens et al., 2010; Mertens, 2007). In the context of this study, employing a mixed methods approach to explore differences in the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes, the choice of a research paradigm holds particular significance. It not only aids in addressing the complexity of the topic but also provides a necessary perspective for delving into the lived experiences of people of color, specifically Black male athletes.

Consequently, I chose to use the transformative paradigm as the underpinning framework for this study (Mertens, 2007).

The use of the transformative paradigm stemmed from the dissatisfaction voiced by both researchers and members of marginalized communities. They expressed frustration with the predominant paradigms and practices that, while attempting to address issues impacting historically marginalized communities, initially failed to involve individuals from these communities in their creation (Hurtado, 2015; Hurtado, 2022). The transformative paradigm encompasses four fundamental beliefs: Ontology: Acknowledge diverse socially constructed realities, considering explicit values; Epistemology: Understand realities through an interactive link between researchers and participants within a complex cultural setting; Methodology: Choose quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods with an interactive link to participants, addressing cultural complexity, power dynamics, and discrimination; Axiology: Critically examine foundational ethics—respect, beneficence, and justice—aligning with human rights and increased social justice, and connecting research processes/outcomes to a social justice agenda (Hurtado, 2015; Hurtado, 2022).

The selection of a transformative paradigm for this study was optimal, primarily due to its emphasis on actively involving research participants and fostering the creation of innovative approaches to engage the marginalized community. This aligns seamlessly with social justice practices. As articulated by Hurtado (2015), a key aspiration of transformative investigation is the mutual gaining of insight into their lives by both the researcher and participants, with the potential to catalyze meaningful social change (Hurtado, 2015, Hurtado, 2022). This paradigm perfectly resonates with my perspectives and the methodologies I have selected to ensure the success of this study. By implementing a mixed methods approach, I was able to quantify information about the athletic identity and academic motivation of Black male athletes and engaged in individual discussions with the study's participants. This personalized interaction assisted me in gaining

valuable insights into their lived experiences as marginalized community members, fostering a deeper understanding of their unique perspectives.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the differences in academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue and non-revenue-generating sports at a PWI's. Additionally, by narrowing down the population to Black male student-athletes, the study was able to investigate the specific challenges and experiences faced by this group within the context of their academic and athletics pursuits. By applying Yosso's (2005) CCW framework, the study gained a deeper understanding of the lived experiences influencing their decision-making, behavior, navigation at their institutions, or overall college experience. Therefore, gaining an understanding of the motivators for their current state of mind and the factors that contributed to their academic motivation and athletic identity.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to address the purpose of this research topic and guide the study. More importantly, these questions helped frame the investigation and analysis:

- **Research Question 1:** What are the differences in the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- **Research Question 2:** What are the differences in the athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- **Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between academic motivation and athletic identity?
- **Research Questions 4:** How do Black male student-athletes describe the impact of community on their academic and athletic pursuits?

Introducing the Methodology

When designing this research study, I wanted to make sure I provided a nuanced understanding of the differences in academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes at Power Five Division I revenue and non-revenue-generating sports at PWIs. By utilizing a mixed methods approach, quantitative and qualitative methods, I gathered in-depth insight and numerical data that addressed the research questions and provided a better understanding of how to support this student population. A Mixed methods inquiry is a research approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative methods within a single study or research project (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). It involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting both numerical data (quantitative) and non-numerical data (qualitative) to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic or question (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007).

In a mixed methods inquiry, the researcher aims to complement and enrich the findings from one method by incorporating the insights and context provided by the other method. Utilizing this approach will allow for a more nuanced exploration of complex phenomena, capturing both breadth and depth in the research findings (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). In addition, utilizing a mixed methods approach provided a more holistic perspective while exploring the differences in academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue and non-revenue-generating sports at PWIs. By employing a mixed methods approach I was able to utilize the strengths of each method to address different aspects of the research questions. For example, quantitative methods provided statistical analysis and numerical data, allowing for the generalization and identification of patterns or correlations. On the other hand, qualitative methods offered an in-depth exploration of individual experiences, perceptions, and contextual factors, providing rich descriptive data (Creswell &

Guetterman, 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson et al., 2007). Integrating quantitative and qualitative data can occur through various approaches, such as data merging, data transformation, or sequential data analysis. Triangulation, or the convergence of findings from different methods, is often sought to increase the validity and reliability of the research results (Johnson et al., 2007). Employing a mixed methods approach in this research study enhanced its validity and comprehensiveness. It underscores the significance of utilizing diverse methods to effectively engage Black male student-athletes in the college experience, fostering their holistic development, academic success, and overall well-being. This approach promotes inclusivity, cultural relevance, and tailored support, thereby contributing to higher retention, graduation rates, and long-term success for these students (Adler & Adler, 1991; Lapchick, 1987).

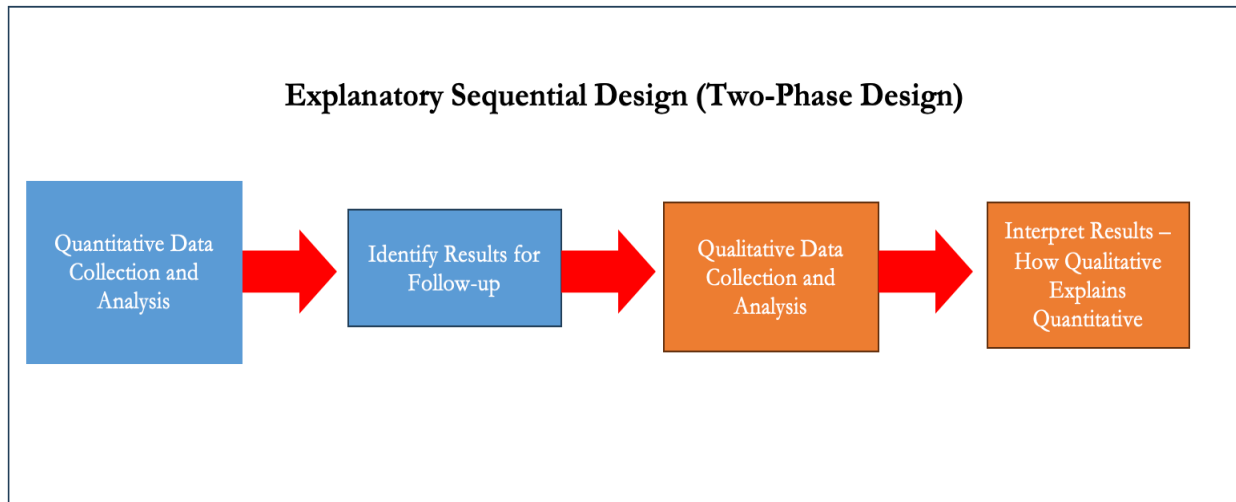
According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), researchers have the flexibility to employ different mixed methods designs based on their research objectives and the characteristics of the study they are conducting. For this study I employed the explanatory sequential mixed-methods research design. The utilization of this approach aimed to offer a thorough comprehension of the lived experiences within this student population. See figure 3.

Explanatory Sequential Research Design

According to Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2003), the explanatory sequential design involves two distinct and sequential phases: a quantitative phase and a qualitative one. The primary objective of this design is to achieve a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of a research problem or question by integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods (Creswell et al., 2003). Its purpose is to explain, validate, or expand upon the qualitative findings through quantitative data analysis. The research process begins with collecting and analyzing quantitative (numeric) data. This phase typically involves gathering numerical information from surveys, experiments, or existing datasets (Creswell et al., 2003).

Figure 3:

The diagram is based on Creswell and Creswell's (2018) Explanatory Sequential Design, a two-phase approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods.



The quantitative phase provides a general understanding of the research problem by examining statistical patterns, relationships, or trends (Creswell et al., 2003). Subsequently, the research moves on to collecting and analyzing qualitative (text) data. This phase aims to further explain or elaborate on the quantitative results obtained. Qualitative data is typically gathered through interviews, focus groups, or observations. The qualitative analysis helps refine and explain the statistical results by delving deeper into participant's views, experiences, and perspectives.

The rationale behind this sequential process is that the quantitative data and its analysis provide an initial understanding of the research problem. It establishes a foundation by identifying patterns or relationships at a broader level. The qualitative data and analysis then refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participant's views more deeply, providing context, and uncovering underlying reasons or meanings. By integrating qualitative and quantitative data and analyses, the explanatory sequential design enables researchers to triangulate their findings, strengthening the overall validity and reliability of the study. This approach facilitates a more

comprehensive interpretation of the research problem, incorporating statistical evidence and nuanced insights from participant' experiences and perspectives (Creswell et al., 2003).

The utilization of the explanatory sequential design was crucial when discussing Black male student-athletes as it facilitated a thorough exploration of their experiences. This design ensured that the voices of Black male student-athletes are heard and allowed me to gain a comprehensive understanding of the distinct challenges, perspectives, and accomplishments they encounter. By employing the explanatory sequential design, researchers can delve deeply into the lived experiences of black male student-athletes, amplifying their narratives and providing valuable insights into their journeys.

Quantitative Analysis

As previously mentioned, the explanatory sequential design involves two phases, with an initial phase of quantitative analysis. As Creswell and Guetterman (2019) described, quantitative analysis is a systematic process of examining and interpreting numerical data to identify patterns, trends, relationships, or statistical significance. It entails using mathematical and statistical techniques to analyze data in a structured and objective manner. Researchers can collect numerical data through various methods, such as surveys, experiments, or observational studies, including measurements, counts, ratings, or responses to specific questions. The collected data is then organized, summarized, and analyzed using statistical methods to draw meaningful conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Using quantitative analysis, I was able to identify patterns, relationships, and associations between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). This allowed me to quantify the magnitude and direction of these relationships and generalize about a larger population based on the analyzed sample data. The data provided me with numerical evidence to support or refute hypotheses, enabling me to draw objective conclusions from the data. The primary goal of

quantitative analysis was to describe, compare, and make inferences about a population or a specific phenomenon based on the collected data conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). In addition, it helped me identify differences in the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports.

In the context of this study, quantitative analysis was used to understand the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes at predominantly White institutions. By employing quantitative methods, researchers can analyze numerical data related to academic motivation and athletic identity, allowing for a comprehensive examination and comparison of these factors among the target population. The specific questions I seek to answer in the quantitative section are:

- **Research Question 1:** What are the differences in the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- **Research Question 2:** What are the differences in the athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- **Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between academic motivation and athletic identity?

Sample Selection. To be included in the study, participants had to fulfill the following criteria:

- Identify as a Black/African American male Student-Athlete.
- Identify as an undergraduate (1st and 4th) or graduate and 5th year student.
- Attend the Jesse Owens University (JOU) (pseudonym)

- Students who graduated in Spring 2023, Summer 2023, and Fall 2023 are eligible to participate in the study, provided there is no more than one full year separating them from their last enrollment date.
- Participates or participated in an NCAA-sanctioned Division I sport (e.g., Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country/Track and Field, Football, Golf, Lacrosse, Soccer, Squash, Swimming & Diving, tennis, and wrestling).

I chose to conduct this study at the Jesse Owens University for two reasons: its exceptional academic reputation and highly competitive student-athlete population. Jesse Owens University is a highly ranked public research university that exemplifies academic excellence, and historical significance. As an institution, Jesse Owens University is committed to fostering educational excellence, promoting innovation, nurturing a spirit of public service, and embracing the pursuit of knowledge. The combination of Jesse Owens University reputation and the diverse experiences of its student-athlete population provided rich insights and valuable contributions to my research.

Jesse Owens University is home to approximately 25,000 undergraduate and graduate students. As of Fall 2023, there are about 7,432 students who identify as a minority (African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, Multi-Racial American, Native American), 3,075 who identify as other (Non-resident alien), and 13,290 identify as White American. This research study solely focused within JOU Department of Athletics, specifically the Academic and Student-Athlete Development unit. JOU Athletic department strives to emulate high academic achievement, compete nationally with successful teams, and integrate student-athletes within the university and the local community. JOU athletics is home to approximately 800 student-athletes across 25 sports. Out of the 800 student-athletes, approximately 120 (13.75%) identify as a Black male.

To make this study successful I employed a top-down approach to recruit participants for my study. First, I received the endorsement of the department's Athletic Director (AD). They were

pleased and supported conducting this research using their student population under their purview. Given the AD's pivotal role as the head of the department, their endorsement held considerable weight in shaping others' perceptions of the study. Having the support of the AD, I was able to meet with coaches and sports administrators to discuss the significance of the research and inform them of the lasting impact this research could potentially have on current and future athletes at JOU. In addition, the coaches and administrators were able to promote participation among the targeted student-athlete population. To facilitate this process, participants received a participant consent form (refer to Appendix B).

Survey Instrumentation. To assess the variance in academic motivation and athletic identity among Black male student-athletes in revenue and non-revenue-generating sports within PWIs, I employed the following survey instruments: the College Version of the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-C 28), the Athletic Identity Scale and Cultural Community Wealth Scale (CCWS) (see Appendix D, E and F). The Academic Motivation Scale College Version was used to measure participant' academic motivation levels. This survey instrument was designed to assess various dimensions of academic motivation, providing valuable insights into intrinsic, extrinsic, and motivational factors. Also, the Athletic Identity Scale was used to gauge the participants' identification with their athletic role. This scale allowed for a comprehensive examination of how strongly individuals perceive themselves as athletes and the significance they attribute to their athletic involvement in shaping their self-identity. In addition, the Community Cultural Wealth Scale assisted in identifying the assets of historically marginalized communities, specifically Black male student-athletes lived experiences, to help them progress in society. More importantly, the scale assisted in addressing the communities' impact on their academic motivation and athletic identity. When implementing these three survey instruments, I gathered comprehensive data regarding Black male student-athletes academic motivation and athletic identity in both revenue and non-revenue-

generating sports. This comparative analysis assisted me in shedding light on potential differences and provided a deeper understanding of these student-athletes' unique experiences and challenges within PWIs.

The Academic Motivation Scale. The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), originally titled "Echelle de Motivation en Education (EME), was developed in Canada by Vallerand et al. (1992); it is a tool designed to gauge students' levels of desire to study and engage in academic-related activities (Zeng & Yao, 2023). The principles of self-determination (SDT) served as the foundation of the EMS. According to Zeng and Yao (2023), in SDT, one has a feeling of choice in the beginning and managing one's activities or behaviors, making it a crucial idea in the academic setting. The instrument has a total of 28 questions using the 7-point Likert scale; the minimum score for each question is 1 point, and the maximum score is 7 points (1 = Does not correspond at all to 7 = Corresponds exactly) (Vallerand et al., 1992; Zeng & Yao, 2023). Table 1, below provides the component scoring for AMS:

Table 1:

The components of the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) are outlined according to Ramos and Habig (2019).

Component	Item Number
Intrinsic motivation to know (IMTK)	2, 9, 16, and 23
Intrinsic motivation to accomplish things (IMTA)	6, 13, 20, and 27
Intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (IMTE)	4, 11, 18, and 25
Extrinsic motivation – external (EMER)	3, 10, 17, and 24
Extrinsic motivation – introjected (EMIN)	7, 14, 21, and 28
Extrinsic motivation – identified regulation (EMID)	1, 8, 15, and 22
Amotivation	5, 12, 19, and 26

The AMS instrument's overall score is an individual Self Determination Index (SDI) by using the following formula (Zeng & Yao, 2023):

- $2 \times (\text{know} + \text{acc} + \text{stim}) / 3 + \text{iden} - ((\text{intro} + \text{reg}) / 2 + 2\text{amo})$
- Interpretations of the formula:
- know = intrinsic motivation to know
- acc = intrinsic motivation to accomplishments
- stim = intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation
- iden = identification
- intro = introjected regulation
- amo = amotivation

The range on the SDI is from -18 to +18. The higher the score, the more intrinsic the participants considered to be (Zeng & Zao, 2023).

According to Vallerand et al. (1992), the Academic Motivation Scale demonstrates good internal consistency, with coefficients in the 0.80s range, and exhibits a test-retest correlation value of 0.79. Spittle et al. (2009) reported internal consistency coefficients ranging from 0.72 to 0.86 in a similar study. Arioğul (2009) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.770 and 0.801 for the scale. Table 2, below provides what each component is gauging on the scale:

Table 2:

The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), crafted by Vallerand et al. (1992), serves as a valuable instrument for gauging the motivation levels of college students.

Intrinsic Motivation	To Know	The Joy of learning and engaging in an activity for its own sake.
	Toward Accomplishment	The drive to engage in an activity for the satisfaction of creating or achieving something new.
	Experience Stimulation	The drive to engage in an activity for the intellectual or physical stimulation it provides
Extrinsic Motivation	Identified	A person that has internalized the importance of a behavior and embraced its regulation as their own.
	Introjected	A person's act to boost or uphold their self-esteem and sense of worth.
	External Regulation	A person's behavior is carried out to meet an external demand or obtain a reward imposed from outside.
Amotivation	A state characterized by the absence of intention to act; stemming from either not valuing an activity, lacking confidence in one ability to perform it, or doubting its ability to yield desired results.	

Athletic Identity Measurement Scale. The Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) is a tool utilized to assess an individual's perception of their identity in relation to sports. Initially, the scale was developed as a 10-item self-report scale by Brewer et al. (1993). However, more widely used versions include the 9-item (Hoiness et al., 2008) and 7-item (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001) versions. Both the 7-item (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001; Brewer et al., 2010; Houle et al., 2010) and 9-item versions (Hoiness et al., 2008) have been found to measure a unidimensional concept. Participants provide responses to the scale using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The total scores on the AIMS range from 7 to 49, with higher scores indicating higher levels of athletic identity. The AIMS is composed of three subscales: social identity, exclusivity, and negative affectivity (Mitchell et al., 2021).

The social identity subscale assesses the extent to which an individual perceives themselves as occupying the role of an athlete (including questions 1-3). The exclusivity subscale measures the degree to which an individual's self-worth is tied to their participation in the athletic role (including questions 4-5). The negative affectivity subscale evaluates the extent to which an individual experiences negative emotion from undesired outcomes in sports (including questions 6-7). Table 3 below provides the assessment used to determine an individual's athletic identity.

Table 3:

The Athletic Identity Scale (AIMS) assesses an individual's perception of their identity in relation to sports. This study will employ the version developed by Brewer and Cornelius (2001).

Athletic Identity Scale (AIMS)	
1	I consider myself an athlete.
2	I have many goals related to sport.
3	Most of my friends are athletes.
4	Sport is the most important part of my life.
5	I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else.
6	I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport.
7	I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport.

Community Cultural Wealth Scale. The Community Cultural Wealth Scale (CCWS) derived from the work of Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth framework, which highlights students from historical marginalized communities' ability to use their lived experiences as assets to progress in society. According to Hiramori et al., (2024) they developed this survey to be able to "apply a critical lens to quantitative methodologies by exploring the CCW framework and critically examining conventional techniques for a scale construction and validation" (Hiramori et al., 2024, p. 2). More importantly, it provides an opportunity to support CCW and the growth and development of the theories overall impact. Specifically, this theory lends credibility to exploring students' lived experiences from marginalized groups, typically utilizing a qualitative methodology (Hiramori et al., 2024).

The previous CCWS framework utilized a nine-item scale to examine the role of Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) in persistence in engineering. Additionally, other scales have been developed to address the conflict between critical race theory and quantitative approaches (Sablan, 2019).

However, Sablan's (theory) scale only addressed four of the six forms of the CCW framework. Hiramori et al. (2024) further developed their scale after Sablan (2019) to include all six dimensions outlined in the CCW framework in hopes that institutions of higher education can use this tool to re-evaluate the ways in which they are putting value on students assess and move beyond traditional views of what is considered valuable cultural Capital, which is the framework I utilized (Hiramori et al., 2024; Salban, 2019).

Survey Pilot Testing. Before administering the survey, I conducted a survey pilot test, which was a crucial step in the research process (Fraser, Fahlman, Arscott, & Guillot, 2018; Schroder, Medves, Paterson, Byrnes, Chapman, Riordan, & Kelly, 2011). The survey pilot test allowed me to assess the study design and procedure's feasibility, validity, and reliability. Following the recommendations of Fraser et al. (2018) and Schroder et al. (2011), I created a small-scale version of the study involving a representative sample or a subset of participants. Creating this small pilot test allowed me to identify potential issues or challenges before proceeding to the main data collection phase (Fraser et al., 2018; Schroder et al., 2011).

During the survey pilot test, I evaluated the clarity of the study materials and ensured participants understood them easily. I also assessed the functionality of data collection instruments and protocols, identifying areas for improvement. Feedback from participants in the sample test was incorporated to enhance the study design (Fraser et al., 2018; Schroder et al., 2011). This process allowed me to refine the methodology and improve data collection quality. Ultimately, this thorough approach contributed to the validity and reliability of my research findings (Fraser et al., 2018; Schroder et al., 2011).

Data Collection Method

In this mixed methods study, I utilized a comprehensive data collection approach that integrated quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain a nuanced comprehension of the phenomenon under investigation. The data collection phase spanned from February to May 2024. Throughout this period, I first disseminated the surveys and then conducted one-on-one interviews with Black male student-athletes enrolled at Jesse Owens University, a Power Five Division I institution.

Quantitative Sample Selection. The student-athlete population consisted of approximately 800 individuals, with the research study focusing on a sample population of around 120 Black male student-athletes. Given the relatively small sample size, it was crucial to maximize participation. During the survey period, 94 participants from the sample population responded and completed the survey.

Surveys. Following IRB approval, I began the initial phase of data collection: Survey dissemination and gathering. This phase spanned from February 2024 to April 2024. To begin this process, I engaged with the AD to obtain a complete roster of self-identified Black/African American male students across various varsity sports. Afterwards, upon receiving the list, it was divided into four distinct categories, delineated by specific criteria (e.g., Spring 2023 graduate, Summer 2023 graduate, Fall 2023 graduate, and current student-athletes). Having worked with the research population for several years, I understand the most effective outreach methods to engage participants and garner their support. To ensure maximum survey participation, I leveraged my established relationship with the student population and collaborated with the head and assistant coaches of specific sports. This allowed me to explain the study to the student-athletes in person, rather than relying solely on email. My experience has shown that they respond better to a personal, in-person approach.

Before distributing the survey, I met with the department's head coaches, all of whom identified having Black males in their respective sports. This meeting allowed me to clarify the study's purpose and highlight its potential benefits. The information gathered wouldn't just aid current student-athletes at JOU but could also significantly enhance future recruitment efforts for their respective teams. Following the discussion, each coach supported the research endeavor and pledged to encourage their athletes to participate in the survey. This endorsement, particularly from high-profile teams like football and men's basketball, proved crucial in motivating athletes' involvement.

For non-revenue-generating sports, I used a personal approach by contacting students via email and text, sending each a personalized message and recruitment flyer to ensure they felt individually acknowledged and understood the importance of their involvement. For revenue-generating sports such as football and basketball, the head coaches and team administrators facilitated meetings with specific teams to discuss the study's significance and potential impact. Athletes in high-profile sports also received a personalized thank-you message, acknowledging their consideration and requesting their support. Throughout the process, I emphasized that participation in the survey was voluntary and assured athletes that their decision would not affect their athletic or academic standing.

The survey was open to research participants, who met the study criteria from February to April 2024. It remained accessible until we gathered enough responses to ensure confidence in the data collected for the research study. After the survey was closed, I reviewed all responses to make sure that the participants completed it correctly and fully. Once that check was completed and the uncompleted surveys were removed, the data was exported from Qualtrics and uploaded to IBM SPSS statistics software to begin data analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

In the data analysis, I thoroughly explored the dataset and extracted insights aligning with the research objectives. To achieve this, I relied on the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, which offered a comprehensive array of features facilitating data analysis, manipulation, report generation, and visualization (Pallant, 2010; Okagbue et al., 2021). Before delving into the analysis, it was crucial to ensure the integrity of the data. Thus, I initiated the process with thorough screening and cleaning to address any data quality issues, such as missing values or inconsistencies. Additionally, particular attention was devoted to the formatting and preparation of the data, focusing on variables related to academic motivation and athletic identity.

Discrepancies emerged during the initial dataset review, with several variables missing across different datasets. To maintain the integrity of data collection and subsequent analysis, I employed a method outlined by Pallant (2016) to calculate missing data. This involved determining the mean of each dataset, multiplying it by the number of elements within the dataset, and then subtracting the sum of known variables. This meticulous approach ensured that our analysis relied solely on available information, thereby upholding the integrity of the results (Christensen et al., 1992). Moreover, it guaranteed accurate mean totals for both groups—namely, revenue and non-revenue-generating Black male student-athletes (Christensen et al., 1992).

T-Tests Method. To answer research questions 1 and 2, I employed the T-Tests method, specifically the independent samples T-Test. T-Tests allowed me to compare the means of two groups, namely revenue and non-revenue-generating sports, and assess whether there is a statistically significant difference between them (Pallant, 2010). By examining the mean differences between these two independent variables, valuable insights were gained regarding their respective impact or influence on the research outcomes (Pallant, 2010).

Correlation. Correlation analysis, using the correlation coefficient's "r" I addressed research question 3 by examining the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables (Pallant, 2010). A positive correlation coefficient signifies a direct relationship, while a negative coefficient indicates an inverse relationship. A correlation coefficient close to zero suggests a weak or negligible linear relationship. However, it is important to note that correlation does not imply causation (Pallant, 2010). Nonetheless, correlation analysis is valuable for understanding interrelationships between variables, identifying patterns, and making informed decisions based on observed associations.

Conclusion

By employing these quantitative analysis techniques, this study provided valuable insights into the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in different sports contexts. The statistical analyses chosen facilitated a comprehensive examination of the differences between revenue and non-revenue-generating sports and the relationship between academic motivation and athletic identity among these student-athletes.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis is the second phase of the explanatory sequential design. Following the insights of Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Nassaji (2015), this approach embraces a holistic perspective, involving collecting in-depth data from individual participants to gain a deeper understanding of individuals and groups. This qualitative analysis delves into opinions, perspectives, attitudes, and other subjective experiences. Its primary objective is to reveal meaningful insights and interpretations beyond quantitative measurements (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Nassaji, 2015). Notably, this qualitative phase holds particular significance as it allows the inclusion of the voices of Black male student-athletes, which is a pivotal aspect of this research study.

Ronkainen, Kavoura, and Ryba (2016) highlight the successful implementation of a phenomenological approach in researching collegiate athletics. Utilizing a phenomenological perspective will aid in developing a deeper understanding of athletic identity within the field of sports psychology. Furthermore, qualitative methodologies have been effectively employed to explore the perceptions of Black collegiate athletes regarding athletic career transitions, such as transitioning from collegiate athletics to a professional career (Harrison & Lawrence, 2003). Creswell (2013) suggests several recommended types of qualitative inquiry designs, including narrative, phenomenology, ethnography, case study, and grounded theory. These five approaches are widely utilized in qualitative inquiry across the social and health sciences due to their popularity (Creswell & Poth, 2018). They offer valuable frameworks for conducting in-depth qualitative research and generating meaningful insights. The specific questions I seek to answer in the quantitative section are:

- **Research Question 4:** How do Black male student-athletes describe the impact of community on their academic and athletic pursuits?

Phenomenological Research Design

Phenomenological research design, as described by Patton (2022), assumes that individuals share similar experiences. This type of research aims to delve into the fundamental essence of participants' everyday lived experiences as they unfold (Worthington, 2013). Unlike quantitative inquiry, which heavily relies on data, phenomenological research aims to deeply understand a problem. Therefore, to comprehend phenomenological analysis, readers must have a firm grasp of individual" firsthand encounters with the specific phenomenon under study (Worthington, 2013; Patton, 2022).

Researchers assert that interviews are the most effective means of capturing the lived experiences of individuals in research studies. Interviews allow participants to respond to questions

and offer researchers additional contextual information necessary for problem-solving (Bevan, 2014). For example, Marshall and Rossman (2011) suggest that phenomenological inquiry allows researchers to explore both their personal experiences of the phenomenon and the experiences of the interviewees concurrently.

Qualitative Sample Collection. The qualitative portion of the study involved selecting a sample from the quantitative results. After participants completed the Academic Motivation Scale, Athletic Identity Measurement Scale, and Community Cultural Wealth surveys, they could volunteer for one-on-one interviews to provide additional insights on the research topic. These interviews included equal participants from both revenue and non-revenue sports, aiming to gather valuable perspectives and foster a deeper understanding of the subject. As previously mentioned, the study focused on Black men participating in Division I revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. The sample population consisted of approximately 120 Black men. Of these, 94 completed the surveys, and 68 (73%) participated in one-on-one interviews. Ultimately, only 12 were interviewed within the allotted timeframe.

Totter II (2012) emphasizes that qualitative research approaches prioritize collecting diverse data over a specific number of participants to establish credibility. This is achieved through maximum variation sampling, where the researcher strives to gather data from a wide range of perspectives on a specific topic (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015; Suri, 2011). The focus of this study is Black male student-athletes as a specific student population. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that everyone within this group brings unique experiences shaped by factors such as age, socioeconomic status, income, and region (Fitzgerald, Parr & Williams, 2022).

By incorporating these variations into my research, I gained a comprehensive understanding of the topic at hand and was able to analyze the collected information from multiple angles (Palinkas

et al., 2015; Suri, 2011). The utilization of maximum variation sampling not only provide me with valuable insights into the experiences of my sample population but also ensured that my study was all-inclusive and representative of the diverse perspectives within the population.

Instrument. For data collection, I used in-depth interviews to engage with individual participants who chose to participate in the qualitative aspect of the research study (Interview protocol See Appendix C). These interviews provided an opportunity to delve into their perspectives, experiences, and insights regarding the research topic (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Instead of relying on traditional questions, I structured the interview protocol phenomenologically. This means that I asked participants to describe situations related to their experiences as Black male student-athletes in revenue or non-revenue-generating sports, specifically focusing on academic motivation and athletic identity (Giorgi, 2009; Englander, 2012). This approach, recommended by Giorgi (2009), encouraged participants to respond openly and without feeling restricted by rigid guidelines.

I wanted to do one-on-one interviews as the data collection method because it was important to allow participants to “tell their stories” and discuss how their experiences have influenced their academic motivation and athletic identity. While I, as a Black male who was once a student-athlete in a non-revenue-generating sport, may assume that my experiences align with those of the study participants, it is essential to recognize that the experiences of Black male student-athletes are diverse (Cooper & Hall, 2016). I was able to explore in detail the social, cultural, and contextual factors that shape participant’ experiences by conducting these interviews. The rich narratives, contextual details, and examples shared by participants really provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Cooper, 2016; Cooper & Hall, 2016).

More importantly, in-depth interviews empower participants by allowing them to contribute their knowledge and experiences to the research process. We can potentially validate and empower

them by giving them a platform to voice their opinions and concerns. This approach is particularly significant when working with students of color, as research has shown that involving them in the learning process and building trust leads to their increased investment (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Interview Pilot Testing. In Majid, Othman, Mohamad, Lim, and Yuso's study (2017), pilot testing in research studies was primarily associated with quantitative research. However, researchers have increasingly utilized pilot testing to prepare for data collection in recent years. In my research, I did a pilot test (interview) before conducting my first interview. This pilot interview held significant importance in my research process as it allowed me to assess the study design and procedure's credibility and trustworthiness. Fraser et al. (2018), Schroder et al. (2011), and Majid et al. (2017) support the significance of pilot testing. During my pilot interview I specifically focused on several aspects, including clarity and comprehensibility of the questions, relevance, and adequacy of the question content, appropriateness of response options, timing and length of the questionnaire, and identification of any technical issues that may arise (Fraser et al., 2018; Majid et al., 2017;) Schroder et al., 2011).

By conducting pilot interviews and incorporating the feedback received, I made necessary revisions to enhance the quality and reliability of the questionnaire and ensure the interviews flowed effectively. I believe these corrections increased the validity of the data collected in the main study and helped maintain participant engagement throughout the interview.

Data Collection Method

As this research study employed a mixed methods methodology, the data collection process consisted of quantitative and qualitative phases. It is important to note that quantitative data collection complements qualitative results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For data collection, primarily in-depth interviews were conducted (Simon & Goes, 2011). The interview questions followed a phenomenological structure rather than traditional questions. Participants were asked to describe

situations related to their experiences with academic motivation and athletic identity as Black male student-athletes in revenue or non-revenue-generating sports (Giorgi, 2009; Englander, 2012). This approach, as Giorgi (2009) suggested, encourages participants to provide open and unrestricted responses without feeling constrained by strict guidelines. The interview questions were developed with the assistance of Yosso's (2005) community wealth model, which helped focus on the impact of their communities on their academic motivation and athletic identity.

As previously mentioned, after completing the quantitative portion of the study (survey), students were allowed to opt into the qualitative portion of the survey, which was a one-on-one interview. Many of the participants wanted to participate in the interview, which was amazing. Due to time constraints and limited resources, only 12 students were selected for interviews: 6 from revenue-generating sports and 6 from non-revenue-generating sports, representing a range of disciplines. When scheduling their interviews, students chose between in-person meetings if they were local or zoom if they could not meet in person.

Data Analysis Plan

During each interview, I reviewed my interview protocol, the participants were aware of their "rights" during the interview and understood the steps they would have to take if they no longer wanted to be a part of the study. During the interviews we used private meeting rooms on campus to limit too much activity or distractions during the interview. I used a recorder (iPhone) to record the sessions, which helped during the transcribing process and ensured that I accurately captured what they wanted to say. Also, I took notes during the interview to remember essential aspects of the session (e.g., demeanor, attitude, feelings, etc.).

After conducting each interview, I transcribed and did initial coding (Sgier, 2012). This process was crucial for uncovering themes and patterns among the participants' responses. Following transcription, I promptly shared the transcripts with each participant to verify the

accuracy and completeness of their statements, Following Mero-Jaffe's (2011) advice of allowing participants to review their transcripts and provide clarity or explanation if needed. Additionally, I requested each participant select a pseudonym that held personal significance, either reflecting their journey as a Black man or honoring a historical Black figure who had profoundly influenced them and their journey. I implemented this to protect their anonymity and ensure they can share their experiences freely, without fear of retaliation or exposure.

Categorization and Coding

According to Creswell (2018), once the data has been organized and prepared for analysis, it is recommended to begin the coding process. This involves segmenting the data into meaningful chunks and assigning descriptive labels or categories to represent them (Creswell, 2018). To facilitate this process, I wrote down appropriate keywords that captured the essence of each category. In my data analysis approach, I employed interpretative phenomenological analysis, as suggested by Smith and Shinebourne (2012). This methodology allowed me to explore how participants comprehend and interpret their experiences. Moreover, it shed light on my interpretations and understanding as I analyzed and explored their narratives.

The generation of codes is a combination of deductive and inductive approaches, as Elo and Kyngäs (2008) recommended. Simultaneously, I developed new codes and categories that emerge from the unique aspects of the data collected in this study. This comprehensive coding process ensured a thorough analysis and exploration of the data (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008)

Trustworthiness, Credibility and Dependability

The credibility, dependability, and overall trustworthiness of qualitative research encompass the confidence placed in the data, interpretation, and methods employed to ensure the study's quality (Pilot & Beck, 2014; Connelly, 2016). In this research study, I adhered to Lincoln and Gub's (1985) criteria for enhancing trustworthiness, specifically focusing on credibility and dependability.

Credibility was established by accurately and precisely describing all study participants involved (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen, & Kyngäs, 2014). Furthermore, maintaining congruence between the data collection methods and the study's objectives will contribute positively to the research study's credibility (Elo et al., 2014). Reviewing the proposed techniques and research direction, I can confidently affirm that they align with the research study's goals.

To enhance the study's dependability, I explicitly stated the principles and criteria employed for participant selection, enabling the assessment of data transferability across different contexts (Elo et al., 2014). Audit trials, as suggested by Anney (2014), offer practical means to increase dependability in qualitative research. These trials involve scrutinizing the inquiry process to validate data, account for all research decisions, and demonstrate how data was collected, recorded, and analyzed (Anney, 2014). Additionally, it is essential to note that triangulation was achieved by utilizing multiple methods and sources of information. The research incorporated scholarly sources that collectively support the study's purpose, providing substantial backing for discussions on Black male student-athlete" academic motivation and athletic identity.

Researcher Positionality

Engaging in researcher positionality was crucial for me throughout this study. I acknowledge and recognize my unique social, cultural, and personal identities, as they could have influenced both the research process and its outcomes. By understanding the perspectives, biases, and assumptions that may shape the study, I approached the research questions, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of findings in a more informed manner (Milner IV, 2007). Given the history of misrepresentation, silencing, and exploitation of people of color in education research (Dillard, 2000; Milner IV, 2007), it was vital for me to critically reflect on my own cultural and societal experiences and biases. Recognizing the potential impact of my positionality on the research process and outcomes was important (Dillard, 2000; Milner IV, 2007).

Previously, I served as an athletic administrator and advisor for affinity groups within JOU Athletics. In these roles, my responsibilities ranged from providing academic and personal development services helping students with their holistic development. Additionally, I supported students from marginalized backgrounds in acclimating to the institution. My experience working with Black student-athletes, particularly Black men, has provided me with valuable insights into their needs and challenges, especially their perceived lack of interest or relevance in academic support opportunities. While I have experience with this student population, I made sure that study did not solely rely on my experiences or assumed beliefs of the results of the study.

Knowing the power dynamics inherent in research, I approached the study with sensitivity, empathy, and a commitment to ethical practices. Reflecting on my background, beliefs, and biases helped minimize their influence on the research process. This self-reflection helped me to understand better how my positionality shapes the research questions, study design, data collection methods, data interpretation, and dissemination of findings. Importantly, I emphasize the need to ensure the voices and experiences of the population in the study were heard and respected rather than myself. This required engaging in meaningful dialogue, building trust, and involving participants in the research process to co-create knowledge. Actively listening to their perspectives and valuing their lived experiences will contribute to a more accurate and comprehensive representation of their realities.

Reflecting on my position as a Black man will significantly impact this research study. As someone who shares similar backgrounds and experiences with the study participants, I made sure that the focus remained on their experiences rather than mine. Throughout this study, I was mindful of my biases and cultural and social experiences, aiming to contribute positively to the study rather than hinder it. I also acknowledged a potential bias related to my experience as a student-athlete during my undergraduate career. I ran cross country and track and field (a non-revenue-generating

sport) at a Division I institution, specifically an HBCU. As a former track and field athlete, I had to carefully set aside my perspective during the data collection, especially during one-on-one interviews. Additionally, having been employed by the JOU athletic department, explicitly working with student-athletes of color, I had to maintain neutrality and refrain from influencing them regarding what to include during the data collection process.

Although this research study is deeply important to me and shaped by my personal experiences with the participants, the research site, and the population, I had to remind myself that the study is not about me but them. I recognized that the primary goal is to benefit and support current and future Black male student-athletes rather than addressing or healing any past trauma from my own experiences. I consciously focused on the study's objectives and the purpose behind conducting this research to ensure its success.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”

– Alice Walker (1982)

Overview of Research Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the academic motivation and athletic identity among Black male student-athletes in revenue and non-revenue generating sports at PWT’s. By focusing on this group, it allowed for the exploration into the challenges and lived experience of this unique student population. Guided by Yosso’s (2005) Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) Framework and Woodson's (1933) "The Mis-Education of the Negro," I specifically sought to understand the factors that influence Black males student-athletes academic motivation and athletic identity, as well as, under the supports that contribute to their overall college experience at these higher education institutions. The following research questions were used to address the purpose of this research topic and guide the study. More importantly, these questions helped frame the investigation and analysis:

- **Research Question 1:** What are the differences in the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- **Research Question 1:** What are the differences in the athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports?
- **Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between academic motivation and athletic identity?
- **Research Questions 4:** How do Black male student-athletes describe the impact of community on their academic and athletic pursuits?

To carry out the study, I employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding to the research problem. This methodology facilitates a nuanced exploration of the subject matter, enabling validation and expansion of qualitative insights through quantitative analysis.

A Deeper Look into the Research Site: Jesse Owens University (JOU)

This research study was conducted at a large, highly selective public four-year research institution in southeastern United States. The research institution was given the pseudonym Jesse Owens University (JOU), which preserves the school and the research participants' identities. JOU gets its name from Jesse Owens, an African American sprinter who famously represented the USA at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany, during Adolf Hitler's regime. Owens made history as the first American athlete to secure four track and field gold medals in a single Olympic Games, triumphing in the 100m, 200m, Long Jump, and 4x100m relay events.

The institution was ranked among the top national universities at the time of the study according to a well-known college ranking system. JOU has over 25,000 students, both undergraduate and graduate, several colleges/departments nationally ranked, and diverse major offerings for students to explore. As it pertains to the institution's demographic, the institution is a historically white institution with approximately 50% white women and 40% men. The other racial demographics that make up the institutions are Asian and Pacific Islander (under 15%), Black American/African American (under 10%), and LatinX (under 10%). The institution operates with a substantial budget and manages a multi-billion-dollar endowment.

JOU is an NCAA Division I institution, as of this research study, a member of the Power Five Conference. The department supports approximately 25 varsity sports, 12 men's sports, and 13 women's sports. In 2021-2022, the institution placed in the top 15 in the LEARFIELD Directors

Cup competition¹⁰. In addition, the institution annual stands among the top 25 in the Directors Cup. Note: The information above are approximations to preserve the anonymity of the institution used in this study.

Quantitative Analysis

In the quantitative analysis portion of this research study, I examined the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes participating in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. To guide the analysis, I will address three key research questions using the survey data collected during the study.

Research Question 1: Differences in Academic Motivation

I Utilized the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), developed by Vallerand et al. (1992), to determine the differences in academic motivation among Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. More importantly, I wanted to assess individuals' self-determination (SDT) in academic-related activities. The Academic Motivation Scale has Cronbach's alpha coefficient for its subscales ranged from .83 and .86 (Fairchild et al., 2005). In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .92. The scale comprises three main parts: intrinsic motivation (IM), extrinsic motivation (EM), and amotivation. IM includes subscales such as 'to know,' 'toward accomplishment,' and 'to experience stimulation' (Hester, 2017; Köseoglu, 2013). EM encompasses identified extrinsic and external motivations. An independent t-test was conducted to compare the academic motivation scores for Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. The test revealed no significant differences in the academic

¹⁰ The LEARFIELD Directors' Cup was developed as a joint effort between the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) and *USA Today*. Points are awarded based on each institution's finish in NCAA Championships (National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics, 2024).

motivation of Black male student-athletes between revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. Drawing on Deci and Ryan (1985) and Nicholls (1984), motivation is defined as the absence of intention to act, often stemming from a lack of value attributed to an activity or a perceived deficiency in one's ability to perform it. The findings indicated that Black male student-athletes across both types of sports demonstrated confidence and motivation in their academic pursuits. Further examination of the assessment questions suggests that their academic confidence is rooted in their belief in their own abilities and preparedness. Table 3 below is the of Revenue and Non-Revenue Generating results of each item in the Academic Motivation Scale.

Table 3:

Mean of Revenue and Non-Revenue Generating results of each item in the Academic Motivation Scale. (AMS).

Scale	Statements	Revenue Mean	Non-Revenue Mean
Intrinsic motivation to know	2. Because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.	5.98	6.00
	9. For the pleasure I experience when I discover new things never seen before	5.14	5.17
	16. For the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.	5.18	5.38
	23. Because my studies allow me to continue to learn about many things that interest me.	5.20	5.07
Intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment	7. For the pleasure I experience while surpassing myself in my studies. 8.	4.11	4.41
	13. For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my personal accomplishments.	5.18	5.34
	20. For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult academic activities.	4.51	4.21
	27. Because college allows me to experience a personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence in my studies.	4.50	4.52
Intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation	4. For the intense feelings I experience when I am communicating my own ideas to others.	4.71	4.07
	11. For the pleasure that I experience when I read interesting authors.	3.23	3.03
	18. For the pleasure that I experience when I feel completely absorbed by what certain authors have written.	3.29	3.07

	25. For the "high" feeling that I experience while reading about various interesting subjects.	3.44	3.34
Extrinsic motivation: External regulation	1. Because with only a high-school degree I would not find a high-paying job later on.	4.71	4.62
	8. In order to obtain a more prestigious job later on.	5.91	6.00
	15. Because I want to have "the good life" later on.	5.95	5.34
	22. In order to have a better salary later on.	5.95	5.69
External motivation: Identified regulation	3. Because I think that a college education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.	5.98	6.00
	10. Because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.	5.58	6.00
	17. Because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation.	5.38	5.52
	24. Because I believe that a few additional years of education will improve my competence as a worker.	4.94	5.00
Amotivation	5. Honestly, I don't know; I really feel that I am wasting my time in school.	2.18	1.69
	12. I once had good reasons for going to college; however, now I wonder whether I should continue.	2.08	1.52
	19. I can't see why I go to college and frankly, I couldn't care less.	1.72	1.28
	26. I don't know; I can't understand what I am doing in school.	2.11	1.43

Research Question 2: Differences in Athletic Identity

Utilizing the Athletic Academic Scale (AIMS), which assesses an individual's perception of their own identity in relation to sport. An independent t-test was conducted that compare the athletic identity for Black males in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports. The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the items for AIMS was acceptable at $\alpha = .76$ (Brews & Cornelius, 2001). In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was $.71$. The test shown that a significant difference in the score's revenue generating ($M = 5.6945$, $SD = .73100$) and non-revenue generating ($M = 5.2956$, $SD = .89127$; $t(92) = 2.281$, $p = .02$, two-tailed, with the magnitude differences in the means (mean difference = $.40$).

The increase in athletic identity signifies a stronger connection to sports, driven by multiple factors. Black male student-athletes skill excellence enhances their sense of belonging in sports as they experience continuous success and recognition for their abilities. This increased confidence, which develops from mastering their skills in their specific sport, further solidifies their identity as athletes, playing sports an essential part of their lives and identity. Social interaction plays a critical role, as many athletes often build close-knit relationships with members of their team, coaches, and the overall athletic community, reinforcing their commitment to the sport. In addition, gaining a scholarship, accolades, and the attention of professional sports create a sense of purpose and motivate them to remain engaged and focused on sports. These elements foster a deep connection to sport for Black men and become central to their identity.

Table 4:

Mean and standard deviation results of each item in the Athletic Identity Scale (AIMS).

Athletic Identity			
Revenue or non-revenue	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Revenue	65	5.700	.100 (.090)
Non-Revenue	29	5.300	.200 (.165)

Research Question 3: Relationship Between Academic Motivation Athletic Identity

To investigate the relationship between academic motivation (as measured by the AMS) and athletic identity (as measured by the AIMS), I utilized a simple bivariate correlation, to find the relationship between the two variables (Pallant, 2016).

Revenue Generating Sports. I used Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to investigate the relationship between athletic identity (measured by the Athletic Identity Scale) and academic motivation (measured by the Academic Motivation Scale) of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating sports. The results showed that the higher the athletic identity, the higher their AM-stimulation, $r = .31$, $n = 65$, $p < .01$. This means that Black males in revenue-generating sports with higher athletic identity have the desire to engage in activities that could stimulate them intellectually or physically (Pallant, 2016).

Non-Revenue Generating Sports. I used Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to investigate the relationship between athletic identity (measured by the Athletic Identity Scale) and academic motivation (measured by the Academic Motivation Scale) of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating sports. The results showed that there was no significant correlation as it pertains to Black male student-athletes in non-revenue generating sports.

Interplay of Academic Motivation, Athletic Identity and Community Support

As mentioned, I used the athletic identity measurement scale and the academic motivation scale to answer the earlier research questions. These tools provided valuable insights into how Black males involved in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports perceive themselves in these areas. For the final research question, I utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods:

RQ4: Impact of the community on their academic and athletic pursuits?

To predict the impact of community on the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in both revenue and non-revenue-generating sports, I adopted a sophisticated approach that considered multiple variables, including income, athletic identity, sports classification, and year in school. Additionally, I conducted 1-on-1 interviews with the student-athletes to provide further support and depth to the analysis. By examining these factors and incorporating personal narratives from the interviews, I aimed to understand how they collectively contribute to the cultural community wealth of Black male student-athletes. This holistic analysis provided a deeper understanding of the various influences on their academic and athletic journeys and how Black males leverage their experiences to progress in society.

Standard Multiple Regression. First, I answered this question using direct logistic regression to examine several factors' impact on academic motivation. The model included five independent variables: revenue/non-revenue sports, income, athletic identity, year in school, and cultural community wealth scale. The results showed that out these five predictors, only two were statistically significant: Community cultural wealth and revenue/non-revenue generating sports classification, $\chi^2(5, N = 94) = .200, p < .001$. As shown in Table 1, the model explained that community cultural wealth and revenue/non-revenue sports classification accounted for 20% of the variance in an individual's academic motivation, indicating that these factors significantly impact

academic motivation. Table 5 shows the regression prediction for communities impact on academic motivation.

Table 5:

Logistic Regression Predicting Communities Impact on Academic Motivation

Model	B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	Sig.
(Constant)	-16.673	5.375		.003
Athletic Identity	.467	.492	.097	.345
<i>Community Cultural Wealth</i>	<i>2.481</i>	<i>.718</i>	<i>.346</i>	<i><.001</i>
Income	.548	.330	.166	.101
<i>Revenue or non-revenue</i>	<i>2.113</i>	<i>.857</i>	<i>.251</i>	<i>.016</i>
What is your academic classification?	.196	.228	.087	.392

Note: $r^2 = 0.20$ (N= 94, $p=.002$).

Counter Storytelling: Connecting Community Cultural Wealth and Academic Motivation

At the beginning of this research study, I initially believed using an only qualitative approach would be the best path to success. However, after deeper reflection on my objectives, I realized that a mixed methods approach would be more effective. This approach captures the rich narratives provided by one-on-one interviews while allowing me to quantify the data, illustrating the connection between community cultural wealth (CCW) and the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes at PWIs. Throughout this research study, I have emphasized the importance of using the voices of my research participants to not only answer the research questions and ensure their voices are front and center. I have achieved this by using composite stories, a form of storytelling.

According to Hun, Guy, and Mangliitz (2006), composite stories or narratives are an accumulation, gathering, and synthesis of numerous individual stories to conclude the relationship between various themes or phenomena. In the context of this study, an aggregate understanding of Black male student-athletes was achieved by performing a standard multiple regression. This analysis demonstrated that community cultural wealth significantly impacts the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes. The community cultural wealth framework significantly influences the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes because these athletes bring their complete selves—their trials, tribulations, and lived experiences—to higher education institutions. CCW encompasses several different factors, showing us that marginalized students, in this case, Black male student-athletes, are significantly impacted by their communities. However, because quantitative data is reported aggregate, it is important to further enhance our understanding of these data through the words of participants. Lived experiences are important because they reveal how individuals present themselves in academic spaces and navigate their educational journeys at higher education institutions.

Most importantly, institutions of higher education must recognize and value these diverse forms of capital. Counter-storytelling, a key component of Critical Race Theory (CRT), supports this by providing a platform for marginalized voices to be heard and validated. Counter-storytelling challenges the dominant narratives that often overlook or misrepresent the experiences of Black male student-athletes. By incorporating these counter-narratives into the research, we not only highlight the resilience, strengths, and cultural assets these students bring to their academic endeavors, but also inspire the audience with their determination and perseverance. This approach enriches the understanding of their academic motivation and underscores the importance of acknowledging and leveraging community cultural wealth in fostering participants academic success.

Exploring the Art of Storytelling through One-on-One Interviews

Undertaking this research study was a transformative journey, not only to discover information for comprehensive support to Black male student-athletes, but to empower them through their own narratives. The study was designed to create a scholarly work that not only offered a platform for these Black men to share their stories in their own way and at their own pace, but also to inspire and engage our academic community. The choice to conduct one-on-one interviews was motivated by to address the underrepresentation of Black voices in discussions that impact us, Black men, and our progress. The aspiration to provide a platform for Black male student-athletes to share their lived experiences is a form of storytelling that holds immense significance in Black (African/African American) culture.

The art of storytelling in the Black community has existed since enslaved Africans (now Black/African Americans) traveled through the door of no return during slavery to the place we now call the United States (Moore, 2011). From slavery through Jim Crow to the Civil Rights Movement and the present day, storytelling has been used to provide comfort, educate people about their origins, and record the good and bad of history (Moore, 2011). More importantly, storytelling has documented the history of an entire race passed down through the generations (Moore, 2011). According to Moore (2011), storytelling is essential to qualitative research because it allows the researcher to gather important information and data to answer a research question. However, many believe researchers are restricted to gathering the stories rather than telling the individuals' stories. As Moore stated, "When I say Black storied lives are ignored in research, I mean the unique storytelling traditions of Black people, those synthesizing Black values and cultural practices, are often disregarded" (Moore, 2011, p. 16). Audre Lorde's powerful quote, "Your silence will not protect you" (Lorde, 2017), has driven my commitment to ensuring that Black voices are central to this research study and, more importantly, given the opportunity to speak up and speak out. As

scholars like Woodson and Ladson-Billings highlight, the American education system and many theoretical frameworks were not designed with Black individuals in mind. This systemic oversight necessitates research approaches that prioritize marginalized voices.

Through one-on-one interviews, I illuminate the lived experiences of Black male student-athletes, offering a platform for their stories to be heard and respected. As co-authors of these narratives, we bear a profound responsibility to those we study, ourselves, and our communities. We must meticulously record the intricate relationship between experience and ideology, a task Franklin (1995) underscores as vital in our current societal context. By embracing this responsibility, we pay homage to the legacy of our community's storytellers and contribute to a more inclusive and representative body of research.

Participant One-on-One Interview

These interviews delved into the experiences of 12 Division I Black male student-athletes (Table 6) aged 19 to 26 who volunteered to share their perspectives on participating in Division I sports at a Power Five institution. The participants included active athletes and recent graduates, with six involved in revenue-generating sports and six in non-revenue-generating ones. Among them, three were preferred walk-ons¹¹, while nine received athletic scholarships¹². Regarding

¹¹ Preferred walk-ons secure a roster spot and opportunities for playing time without athletic aid. Scholarships may be earned later, but not guaranteed. They can still be cut if they don't meet coach expectations (NCSA College Recruiting, 2024).

¹² Full and Partial athletics scholarships are available to student-athletes participating in NCAA Division I and II sports. Coaches have a pool of scholarship money to divide amongst their teams. Full scholarships, “full rides,” cover significant college costs like tuition, room and board, books, and course fees. In contrast, a partial scholarship, though not a “full ride,” a partial scholarship can still cover a significant portion of college costs or very little (NCSA College Recruiting, 2024).

academic standing, two were second years, one was a third-year student, four were fourth-years, four were fifth-years or graduate students, and one had already graduated. When selecting students for a one-on-one interview, getting students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., academic classification, sports, and lived experiences.) was essential.

These interviews were remarkable, and I felt privileged to engage with these student-athletes. As mentioned, I worked with many athletes as a collegiate athletics administrator and have known many of them since they entered Jesse Owens University. Listening to their experiences and how they answered each question with such passion and energy was amazing. It reinforced my passion for wanting to ensure that this student population is supported and given the tools to succeed. It was an honor for me to speak to them, and this experience gave me invaluable insights into their journey and highlighted the significance of their perspectives.

Table 6:

Demographic information on research participants.

Name	Age	Classification	Major	Sport Classification	Athletic Aid
Makai	19	2 nd Year	Undecided	Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Medgar	20	2 nd Year	English (BA)	Non-Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Mandela	20	3 rd Year	Biology (BA)	Non-Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Garvey	21	4 th year	History (BA)	Revenue	Walk-on
Dubois	22	3 rd Year	Sociology (BA)	Non-Revenue	Preferred Walk-on
Ellington	22	5 th Year/ Graduate Student	Youth and Social Innovation (B.S.Ed.); Quantitative Analytics (M.Ed.)	Non-Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Qain	23	4 th year	African American Studies and American Studies (BA)	Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Poitier	23	5 th year/ Graduate Student	Media Studies and African American Studies (BA); Educational Psychology (M.Ed.)	Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Baldwin	23	4 th year	Studio Art (BA)	Non-Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Thurgood	23	Graduate d	Media Studies (BA)	Non-Revenue	Preferred Walk-On
Robeson	24	5 th year/ Graduate Student	Politics (BA); Educational Psychology (M.Ed.)	Revenue	Athletic Scholarship
Cornell	26	5 th Year/ Graduate Student	English and African American Studies (BA); Educational Psychology (M.Ed.)	Revenue	Athletic Scholarship

Makai. Makai is a second-year football student-athlete from New York City. He began his athletic journey playing T-ball when he was five years old. His desire for something more prompted his parents to introduce him to football, where he flourished and found much success. Initially, he only considered attending Jesse Owens University (JOU) after receiving an offer. However, during his senior year in high school, he got injured, and while other institutions rescinded his offer, JOU still wanted him. The institution showing this loyalty impacted him and his decision to attend.

The transition to JOU from a significant city was challenging for Makai because everything was not as convenient and accessible; there was a lot of nature, and he needed a car to get around when needed. However, he was able to make the adjustment and find ways to make the best of where he was. During his interview, Makai strongly opposed the media's portrayal of Black male athletes. He felt that the media has a very negative perception of them and never takes the time to highlight their intelligence, lived experiences, and diverse backgrounds. However, they feed the stereotype of them being "dumb jocks." Though he had a hard time adjusting to his new routine, Makai did talk about a positive interaction with a non-athlete, which helped him get out of his shell and encouraged him to engage more with people who did not look like him or share the same interests as him, primarily football. He hasn't encountered many negative experiences at JOU and feels that people have been very kind to him as both a student and athlete. Makai appreciates that JOU has created an inclusive environment that welcomes everyone and promotes Black athletes and organizations. However, he still thinks that societal acceptance will take time.

Makai balances his multiple identities thanks to the values his family, mainly his father, instilled in him. His father has always stressed the importance of a good education, but more importantly, Makai is motivated by all his father's sacrifices to make his dreams come true. Overall, Makai is driven by competition with peers and the desire to succeed academically and athletically.

His journey at JOU highlights the challenges and rewards of navigating a new environment while redefining the narrative around black athletes in society.

Medgar. Medgar is a second-year swimming student-athlete from Georgia. He began his athletic journey at the age of summer league swimming, where he vividly recalls winning his first race. This early success fueled his passion and commitment to the sports event, though only a few people looked like him. Medgar wanted to attend JOU due to its strong academic reputation. He saw an opportunity to contribute to the men's swimming team, which was not among the top nationally, and aimed to make a meaningful academic and athletic impact. His transition to JOU in the summer of 2022 was relatively smooth for Medgar. He stayed in the "athlete dorm," which was predominantly occupied by athletes, particularly football players. This environment made it easier for him to adapt and feel at home, minimizing any sense of being out of place.

Medgar's perspective on the media portrayal of Black male athletes is fascinating because he believes it depends on the sport you participate in. He feels that a thriving black swimmer is seen as an anomaly in swimming, a sport dominated by white athletes. In contrast, in sports like football and basketball, where black athletes are the majority, the media does not emphasize race as much. Medgar views these perceptions as observations rather than something that affects him personally. Medgar stated that he has positive interactions with non-athletes at JOU, describing his peers as "cool," "dope," respectful, and down-to-earth. Medgar made it known early in our interactions that he prioritizes academics over swimming. Medgar is majoring in English with the hopes of attending law school. He values the long-term benefits of education over the short-lived nature of athletic success, so he consciously avoids wearing team gear to be perceived as a regular student by his professors, aiming to prevent any potential biases against him as an athlete.

Medgar talked about his father, a former competitive swimmer at another elite athletic and academic institution. His father significantly influenced Medgar's approach to sports and academics.

His father's achievements and subsequent academic success (an MBA) taught Medgar to give his all in sports but not to make it his entire identity. His Division I basketball player brother also serves as an academic and athletic role model.

As one of the only Black swimmers on his team, Medgar did disclose he has faced instances of racism, including overhearing teammates say racial slurs and make offensive jokes. These experiences, while hurtful, have not deterred him from his goal. They just showed him that people are in very different stages in their lives. Medgar believes that because of the lack of diversity in his sport these incidents stem from ignorance rather than malice. Medgar believes engaging in conversations and getting to know individuals is essential before forming judgments. He emphasizes the importance of understanding people beyond superficial assumptions, especially if they are athletes. He shared that he is often mistaken for a basketball player based on his height and being a Black man. Medgar's story highlights the complexities of navigating life as a Black male student-athlete in a predominantly white sport while advocating for greater awareness and respect.

Mandela. Mandela is a second-year soccer student-athlete originally from Alabama. Though he spent most of his life in Alabama, his soccer journey began at the age of four in Houston, Texas, where he played in a neighborhood league, often alongside the children of professional soccer players. His earliest memory of sport involves a championship game he was playing, and he wanted his father to attend. His father chose to watch Nigeria play an international friendly (game) instead of attending his game. Academics were always a priority for Mandela, as he was influenced by his parents, both doctors, who emphasized the importance of being balanced in his identities and ensuring he focused on school (academics) and athletics. His desire to be excellent in both areas guided the type of institution he wanted to attend and his college recruitment, leading him to his current institution over other prestigious schools.

His transition to college life was relatively seamless, which was helped by his diverse experiences (location, interactions, etc.). Mandela reflected on Black male athletes' challenges in public and perception, where minor missteps can lead to significant backlash, unlike their peers. Despite frustrations, he learned to navigate these dynamics with resilience. Mandela stated that his upbringing in the deep south prepared him well for the racial dynamics in college, and his transition was made easier by his past experiences in diverse settings. He recounts an incident in the dorms where his status as an athlete did not deliver the usual deference, highlighting the occasional tension between student life and athletic commitments. Throughout his college journey, Mandela has maintained a focus on academics, driven by his father's advice to secure a solid educational foundation as a fallback if a sports career does not pan out. This mindset led him to reject early professional soccer opportunities to complete his education and get his degree.

Garvey. Garvey is a fourth-year football student-athlete originally from Virginia. His journey into athletics began at a very young age, but he started hating football and did not want anything to do with the sport. However, after some success, he eventually grew to love the game of football. Garvey was born and raised in a predominantly white community; he made sure to let me know during his interview that his graduation class only had four other Black people. So, when he arrived at his current institution, it was a culture shock because the football team had more Black people than his graduating class. Garvey wanted to play Division I football but couldn't afford to attend a university like JOU. However, with significant financial support from JOU, he was able to enroll and choose JOU.

Garvey is a first-generation student, and he is motivated to break familial stigmas and set a precedent for academic success for his future children. Despite external pressures and stereotypes, Garvey values education above all, recognizing its long-term importance beyond athletics. He acknowledges the prevalent stereotypes surrounding Black male athletes in the media, emphasizing

that they are multidimensional individuals with aspirations beyond sports and that he wishes society knew more about that side of professional athletes. During his time at JOU, he has experienced positive and negative interactions with his peers and faculty, finding support from those who see him beyond his athletic identity. Academically, Garvey is motivated by the prospect of earning his degree and being a trailblazer in his family. Despite facing challenges such as transitioning to virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, he remains steadfast in pursuing academic success. Garvey's message to society emphasizes the complexity and depth of Black male student-athletes. Garvey hopes that one day, people will look beyond superficial perceptions and recognize their individuality, talents, and aspirations beyond the field or court.

DuBois. DuBois is a third-year track and field student-athlete from Virginia. His athletic journey into athletics began with him being very successful as a junior in the 80-meter hurdles and nationally ranked. His early success left him wanting to get on the big stage and compete for a prestigious Power Five school, leading him to choose JOU. Transitioning to JOU as a Black male student-athlete wasn't too different for DuBois because he attended a predominantly white high school. Still, he made it a goal to connect more with the Black community at JOU because that was a piece he was missing growing up. DuBois stated that the perception of Black male athletes in the media as dehumanized figures solely for entertainment; DuBois emphasizes the need for recognition of their humanity and individuality. DuBois stated that at times here at JOU, he faces discrimination in academic settings and feels marginalized based on stereotypes, especially as an athlete. However, he focuses on positive interactions and support systems within his community.

DuBois identifies as a student-athlete, prioritizing his education over his athletic pursuits, as instilled by his father. However, he sometimes feels pressure to suppress his athletic identity in academic settings because he fears being treated differently than others, which he finds exhausting. DuBois values (teachings) his family instilled in him, such as sportsmanship and composure, and an

emphasis on humility and perseverance. All these values have driven him to play college athletics and represent Black and queer athletes. Representation, especially as a Black man part of the LGBTQ community, motivates DuBois. He wanted to make sure that little boys see someone who looks like him, paving the way for future generations. In his final message to society, DuBois emphasizes that Black male athletes have more to offer than their athletic ability. He urges society to recognize their multifaceted identities that can contribute beyond the sports arena.

Ellington. Ellington, a graduate wrestling student-athlete from Michigan, reflected on his journey into athletics during the interview, recalling early experiences in flag football and wrestling, which were heavily influenced by his family involvement, particularly his brother's successful athletic career. The institution's academic reputation ultimately motivated Ellington to attend JOU despite initial financial constraints that nearly led him to consider a cheaper option like a trade school. Navigating his transition to JOU as a Black male student-athlete, Ellington recognized the benefits and challenges associated with his position, especially when faced with an early academic dishonesty case that nearly resulted in his removal from the institution.

During the interview, Ellington passionately shared his views on the media's portrayal of Black athletes. He found it intriguing how the media's perspective seemed to shift based on the sport in question. He highlighted wrestling's emphasis on technique and individuality, contrasting it with mainstream narratives that prioritize athleticism over skill development. His frustration with the superficial perceptions that overlook the rigorous training undergone by athletes was palpable, yet his determination to challenge these stereotypes was equally evident.

Despite his challenges at JOU, Ellington found positivity in his interactions with non-athletes, particularly in graduate school, where mutual respect and recognition of academic achievements prevailed. However, he also recalled instances of marginalization, such as being underestimated in group projects. These experiences have shaped his identity as a student-athlete,

where academic pursuits increasingly compete with athletic commitments, compelling him to prioritize academic excellence. Ellington acknowledges the necessity of compartmentalizing his identity, striving to be recognized beyond his athletic achievements. He credits his family, particularly his uncle, and parents, for offering guidance and advocacy during academic challenges, reinforcing his determination to succeed despite systemic barriers and societal stereotypes.

Qain. Qain is a fourth-year football student-athlete from Louisiana. Qain stated that he only got involved in sports because his mother wanted her children to have opportunities that she did not have, and she thought sports would not only keep them out of trouble but also provide them with that opportunity. During his time in Texas and Louisiana, he was involved in flag football, which laid the foundation for his athletic career alongside his sister. The decision to attend JOU stemmed from his aspiration to escape the violence in his hometown and make a better life for himself and his family. However, transitioning to JOU as a Black male student-athlete was challenging due to the cultural shift from his predominantly minority neighborhood.

Qain initially felt alienated but sought to bridge the gap by fostering connections with his peers and challenging stereotypes that were placed on him. Qain expressed frustration with the one-dimensional portrayal of Black athletes in the media and advocated for a broader recognition of their multifaceted identities and contributions beyond sports. He believes that athletes' endeavors should be acknowledged beyond their athletic ability. Despite instances of prejudice he faced during his time at JOU, Qain finds solace in his positive interactions with non-athletes forward, which showcase the potential for meaningful connections across diverse backgrounds. During his long journey at JOU, Qain recognized the importance of prioritizing education and challenging stereotypes. He acknowledged the pressure to excel academically to defy negative perceptions associated with student-athletes, particularly Black athletes. Despite the challenges, he found

motivation in his academic interests, particularly in African American Studies and Cybersecurity, where he aims to pursue a career.

Reflecting on his journey, Qain emphasized the importance of self-discovery and balance, encouraging fellow athletes to explore their identities beyond sports and embrace the opportunities available as university students. His message to society highlights the significance of empathy and understanding in breaking down stereotypes, urging individuals to engage with athletes personally before passing judgment. Qain's story embodies resilience, determination, and a commitment to challenging societal norms to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for everyone.

Poitier. Poitier is a fifth-year football graduate originally from New York City. He prides himself on being raised in an environment that exposed him to many cultures, beliefs, and people. However, he feels his multifaceted identity is shaped by his upbringing, academic pursuits, and athletic endeavors. Poitier's early experiences with football were back in his hometown, playing for a club football team, which laid the foundation for his passion for sports and desire to push himself to achieve athletically. Poitier stands out because he believes that his journey extends beyond the field, and his commitment drives that to academic success, which was instilled by his parents, both of whom were college scholar-athletes.

Poitier chose JOU because of its academic reputation. He believed that coming to this institution could unlock opportunities in sports but, more importantly, in academics. Though he has been successful academically, his transition from a predominantly black neighborhood to a predominantly white boarding school to another predominately white institution presented challenges. Still, Poitier adapted, drawing on his resilience and determination. Though he knows that many stereotypes face Black male athletes, including himself, he is determined to establish his individuality and is committed to personal growth. Poitier takes pride in engaging with his

community through volunteering. Most importantly, he feels that his mission in life is to make a positive impact beyond himself.

Poitier's story is one of perseverance, growth, and self-discovery. He wants to challenge societal perceptions and emphasize the importance of embracing an individual's multiple identities and contributions to society.

Baldwin. Baldwin is a fourth-year track and field athlete from Virginia. He played multiple sports, but his earliest memories in sports were playing baseball and football; he remembers that he was always the only Black kid in those respective sports based on the area where he grew up. However, he could remember that no matter what sport he played, Baldwin excelled because he was always the fastest kid on the field, which led him to running track. Initially, Baldwin was very apprehensive about attending JOU, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic and financial considerations, he decided to participate. Also, JOU offered him a significant scholarship, and as an instate student and having financial aid, it just made the most sense for him and his family. Most importantly, Baldwin valued the institution's academic reputation, and by utilizing his athletic gift, he was determined to secure a stable future, recognizing that a professional sports career was unlikely.

The transition from his high school to JOU was relatively easy because the environment was very similar. Many students had wealth and privilege, which he was familiar with. However, his first two years at the institution were in isolation because of the COVID-19 lockdown, which significantly impacted him. Nevertheless, Baldwin found community within the track team, where he connected with fellow Black athletes who had similar stories of using this opportunity to further their development.

Baldwin wants to work in the media. He observes that the media often highlights the narrative of Black student-athletes overcoming financial struggles from single-parent households, which, while valid for many, does not encompass all experiences. In his work in film, he advocates

for a broader representation of Black athletes' backgrounds, emphasizing their intelligence and diverse experiences. Wanting to be a change-maker in film and leaving a mark on society developed a strong interest in filmmaking. Baldwin says that his time thus far at UVA has been fulfilling because he has been supported by family, friends, professors, and valuable industry connections, including mentorship from an acclaimed director facilitated by a faculty member.

During the interview, Baldwin talked a lot about his upbringing and the lessons his parents taught him, especially about presenting himself beyond the stereotype of the "dumb jock." His father discouraged him from wearing his football jersey to school, emphasizing the importance of being seen as a scholar. Although Baldwin initially resisted this at the time, he eventually understood the significance of his father's advice, especially now that he is older and has been through many things in life. Now that he is approaching graduating from JOU and he acknowledges the role track has played in helping him get an education and minimizing the financial burden on his parents. Baldwin journey showcases a blend of athletic ability, dedication to academics, and a strong sense of responsibility toward his family.

Thurgood. Thurgood graduated from JOU and was a soccer student-athlete who now plays professional soccer. Originally from Ohio, Thurgood began playing soccer when he was two years old; he played for his older sister's co-ed team. He was inspired by his cousin and father, who played and coached soccer at high levels. What attracted Thurgood to JOU was the institution's top-tier soccer program, strong academics, and the opportunity to be surrounded by highly motivated and talented individuals, academically and athletically. He appreciated the cultural diversity on the soccer team, which contrasted with his predominantly white suburban upbringing.

As a Black male athlete, Thurgood often experienced stereotypes and was underestimated in academic settings. He consciously challenged these perceptions by taking leadership roles and excelling in class, emphasizing that negative traits usually attributed to Black athletes are not race-

specific. Despite these challenges, Thurgood built meaningful friendships with everyone he encouraged and wanted people to get to know him as a person and not be the sport he played. Thurgood stated that soccer was everything, especially during his first year, because he and his team had great success winning a championship and having a good run in the NCAA tournament. However, he tried to maintain a respectable academic performance and focus on his grades.

Thurgood stated that during his time at JOU, he had mastered the art of "code-switching"¹³ to fit into academic environments, viewing it as a positive ability to navigate different social circles and make people more comfortable. Though he did this, he felt he did not lose a sense of who he was or wanted to be. Thurgood always wants to better himself and achieve his goals; he has shifted his focus from soccer and wants to go back to business school because soccer is no longer his end. He was happy that his family supported his desire to leave football and played a crucial role in his success.

Thurgood stated that his experience at JOU has been positive; he has encountered trials and tribulations, formed a lasting relationship, and gained valuable life lessons. Thurgood wants to encourage Black student-athletes not to be afraid to explore diverse experiences and opportunities, remain authentic, and not be confined by stereotypes.

Robeson. Robeson is a graduate football student-athlete from Virginia. His mother introduced him to football, and he remembers her always taking him to practices because his father worked multiple jobs. Robeson came to JOU as a preferred walk-on and liked the institution

¹³ Code-switching is a strategy that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals use to navigate interracial interactions by adjusting their behavior to fit into an environment. It can involve changing one's appearance, speech, or behavior to put others at ease and fit in. For example, a Black motorist might use a more deferential tone during a traffic stop, or a new employee might straighten their hair.

because of its academics and proximity to home. One of Robeson's biggest struggles was balancing his identity as a black male athlete in a predominantly white environment. Robeson's mother greatly impacted his desire to do well in school. She was a principal, so he always did well in classes, but it was challenging due to the assumption that he could not do well due to stereotypes. This duality of being seen primarily as an athlete rather than a student or an individual with diverse interests was a recurring theme while growing up and even today.

Robeson's reflections on the portrayal of black male athletes reveal his concerns about being viewed merely as sources of entertainment rather than as individuals. He worries that this narrow perception can limit Black athletes, making them feel that their worth is confined to their athletic ability, potentially hindering their pursuit of diverse career paths. This overrepresentation in sports contrasts sharply with the underrepresentation of Black individuals in other fields like politics and consulting, a disparity Robeson finds dehumanizing and terrible. Robeson is enrolled in graduate school, and though he believed that it would be different from undergraduate studies, he states that he has experienced subtle and overt biases regarding his academic ability. While he appreciated the positive experiences and cultural exchanges with classmates from different backgrounds, he also faced microaggressions and misunderstandings about his journey and ambitions.

Robeson's motivation is deeply tied to his desire to support and uplift his family. His academic drive stems from a belief that education can close societal gaps and offer better opportunities. This motivation is strongest when his actions impact his loved ones, driving him to excel for their sake. However, he admits to needing help with self-motivation in areas where he sees no immediate higher purpose or accountability, such as his current graduate program, which Robeson primarily undertook for financial reasons (e.g., receiving his scholarship money and not knowing what he wanted to do post-undergraduate degree).

Throughout his journey, Robeson has been influenced by his family's emphasis on education and making meaningful connections. During his interview, he acknowledges the extra effort required to succeed as a Black athlete and the importance of venturing outside one's immediate social circle. Nevertheless, he persists in positively impacting the world and himself.

Cornell. Cornell is a graduate football student-athlete from Virginia. His earliest memories of being involved in sports come from when he used to play basketball with his older brother at the community park. Cornell has a deep passion for academics and sports. He chose to attend JOU as a preferred walk-on over Yale University, where he was offered a full scholarship to attend and play football. His father heavily influenced his decision to attend JOU. His dad wanted him to attend a highly academic school with a great football program.

Overall, Cornell's transition to the institution was smooth due to his previous experiences at a predominantly white boarding school. However, he did encounter situations where people's perceptions of Black athletes surfaced, especially regarding their academic preparedness. Though he experienced several of these moments during his academic tenure, he was determined to prove his academic capabilities and on the football field. His family's love and support inspired him to create a positive legacy through solid academics and sports. Despite these challenges, he did make genuine connections with fellow students, staff, and faculty at the institution.

Cornell made it a point to mention that his motivation is driven by the desire to provide and support his family. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a strong academic identity, recognizing that intellectual achievements will outlast athletic ones. During his interview Cornell talked about him suffering an almost life and career ending injury during a football game. Though he has made strides in recovery, that moment showed him that football is not forever, and you must have a backup plan, which for him is his academic power.

Themes Revealed from Interviews

The questions asked during the interviews were open-ended, which, according to Pallant (2016), can be tricky because participants' responses can vary depending on how passionate or engaged, they are with the questions. It was essential to not only do some initial coding after each interview but also take detailed notes during the interviews to assist me during that initial coding process to begin seeing patterns and similarities in the interviewees' experiences. After listening to the interviews and rereading transcripts/notes, I identified six themes through the lens of the community cultural wealth framework (Table 7).

Table 7:

Forms of Cultural Capital connected to Research Themes

Forms of Cultural Capital	Meaning	Theme
Social Capital	Networks of support from the community, including connections to mentors, peers, and professionals who provide valuable resources and information.	Community Support and Resources
Linguistic Capital	The cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities that student athletes inherit from their community, which influence their identity and approach to their pursuits.	Identity and Cultural Influences
Resistant Capital	The knowledge and skills developed through community and individual resistance to systemic barriers and discrimination, fostering resilience and perseverance.	Challenges and Resilience
Familial Capital	The sense of community and kinship among peers and family that provides support and a sense of belonging in society.	Social Networks and Family Dynamics
Aspirational Capital	The hopes and dreams that student athletes have for their future, inspired and supported by their community's belief in their potential.	Representation and Pride
Navigational Capital	The skills and abilities to navigate systems not originally designed for a person, such as oppressive or marginalizing institutions.	Intersectionality and Balance

By taking this approach and connecting these aspects of the community cultural wealth framework to the themes in this research, I will highlight how different forms of cultural wealth within the Black community contribute to the academic and athletic success of Black male student-athletes in revenue—and non-revenue-generating sports at PWIs. Also, it can highlight the community sports athletes draw upon to have successful academic and athletic experiences.

Theme 1: Social Capital: Community Support and Resources. The experiences of the Black male student-athletes in this study highlighted the significant impact of their preparedness, or lack thereof, before attending an institution like JOU. These men attributed their diverse experiences and successes at the university to the networks and relationships they built. The participants demonstrated that these networks provided crucial social support and opportunities, contributing to their overall development and embodying the concept of social capital. In this context, social capital refers to Black male student-athletes ability to establish supportive networks within the community, including connections with mentors, peers, and professionals who offer essential resources and information, even in environments not historically designed for them.

During his interview, Poitier shared his feelings about the negative portrayal of Black male athletes in the media. He highlighted the harmful stereotypes and connotations associated with being a Black male in America, particularly regarding the opportunities to play college sports. Poitier is acutely aware of the societal perceptions tied to his identity but has not allowed these to define him. Instead, he has used his platform and experiences to maximize opportunities and reshape the narrative. As he expressed in his own words:

Being a football player doesn't define who I am. Yes, it is a large part of my identity, but because of football and the support of mentors I was encouraged to be part of different clubs, very involved with community work, and engaged in various other activities... I feel like I've really maximized a lot of opportunities that I've had at the university outside of football, being

involved with a Black student-athlete organization, participating in [conference level events], the Black Student-Athletes Summit, and [city] community engagement events. These activities have allowed me to network with people and build relationships outside of football that will benefit me later in life.

Poitier's experience resonates deeply with many Black male student-athletes in this study. Despite facing significant challenges, such as society's negative portrayal based on identity or sports affiliation, they build relationships and leverage each situation to create social capital. These connections and bonds can be instrumental for future growth and development. Poitier exemplifies this resilience. He changed his own narrative and used his experiences as motivation to help reshape the broader narrative for others. His journey demonstrates how overcoming adversity can fuel positive change and empowerment.

Baldwin has dreams of becoming a filmmaker, sharing how a profound relationship with a former professor has significantly aided his career aspirations and personal growth. This mentorship has provided him with valuable experience in his chosen field and has been instrumental in shaping his future goals.

I remember one experience I had I had with one of my former [subject] teachers. They taught my entrepreneurship class and I just got accepted into this program at USC that I went to, you know, with summer for last year. But it was about, I think it was like \$15K or \$20K to be able to go out there. And I just remember, you know, I was just like, you know, he teaches entrepreneurship. I don't know what he knows, but like, let me just, let me just see what's up with him. So, you know, obviously it's my white teacher, you know, (Professor's name). I don't know if we can say names, so I'm sorry, but, um, but yeah, I just went up to him. I was like, yo, I just got accepted into this thing. I don't know who you know or what you can do to help me, but I'm really trying to figure out a way to pay for this. And he put me in contact

with John Lee Hancock, who's this really known, notable award, Oscar-nominated director, who's directed things like *The Blind Side*, *Save Mr. Mesa Cook*, *The Founder*, all these movies that have done well in theaters. I got in touch with him and he's kind of been a mentor for me, helping me out, trying to figure out things financially, even offering to pay for some things financially for me. Because of that relationship I built I was able to follow my dreams.

Baldwin's quote highlights the importance of building relationships within his academic community. This support was crucial in overcoming financial challenges that might have prevented him from attending the program. By communicating his passion for filmmaking and presenting himself authentically, Baldwin gained the support of a professor outside his immediate cultural community. This professor not only guided him but also connected him with someone who shared a similar passion. As a result, Baldwin expanded his community of support and gained a mentor in his chosen field, providing ongoing assistance that could further help him in his pursuits.

Robeson developed a relationship with a classmate from Afghanistan in his graduate program. Despite their different cultural backgrounds, the classmate had some familiarity with football, but not that much. Robeson mentioned that he initiated the conversation because there are very few non-white individuals in his graduate course.

I was just talking to him about, like, he was like, well, what are you gonna do after this? And I was like, you know, hopefully interview. Yeah, I was like, you know, it's tough. Like, hopefully I can interview and, you know, kind of find my way. I was like, what about you? And I realized he had it tough. He was like, Afghanistan kid. He was like, you know, I'm gonna probably go work at DC for two, like for two years and then I have to go back home to help out with his family. And I was like, damn, man, like, you know, this kid's smart, like smarter than me. Like, you know, he probably could stay in DC, make a long career, but you know, he has to go back home in Afghanistan. It's

just, you know, their way their cultural things are. So it was a positive experience, just like getting a look into their like culture, like kind of someone else's struggles, but just kind of connecting with someone, you know, I'm out of football now.

The interaction that Robeson established as a graduate student highlights the importance of building relationships across cultural boundaries. By getting to know his Afghan classmate, he found common ground through their shared interest in providing for their families and leveraging the program to build relationships for a better future. He also had the opportunity to learn from someone with a different cultural perspective. This interaction underscores the value of cross-cultural relationships in enriching one's understanding and providing valuable insights that can contribute to personal and professional growth.

Mandela shared that building a relationship with a fellow biology student has been integral to his success and his academic quest to become a doctor. He mentioned meeting this student during his first year in an introductory biology course. This relationship has provided mutual support, helping them advance further in their academic and personal lives.

I remember this girl I'm really good friends with now, [girl's name], she came up to me because she was actually friends with another one of my teammates or at least they went to the same high school and she was like, oh, like, are you coming? Like, I heard about you. You're a really nice guy. I was like, yeah, like, you know, what's up? Like, let's sit together. Let's study together. So we've kept that relationship going now for I guess like three years or two and a half years and we're always like studying with each other because we we stuck it out with the bio and I remember at times she was like yeah like I'm gonna have to drop this find something else and I was like no no stick with it like we're doing well and then same thing for me I think mine was like four or five times she's like no like stick with it um but yeah she's the homie. That's probably one of my earliest experiences with a non-athlete, at

least in the classroom, obviously in the dorms, I saw them first day, but in the classroom where it's not just like, oh, like, you're an athlete, like, you're cool, let me just talk to you. It's more like, okay, like, I see you as a bio student that's going through the same struggles as me, like, let's work together and let's figure this out.

Mandela's story illustrates the importance of building supportive relationships across different areas of student life, particularly with like-minded individuals who can work together to achieve a common goal. By connecting with peers who share similar academic goals, student-athletes can find encouragement and camaraderie that help them navigate their educational journeys and achieve their aspirations. He built a relationship with a fellow student based on a common love for academics and shared interests rather than his athletic identity.

The narratives of Baldwin, Robeson, and Mandela underscore the critical role of social capital in their success and personal growth. They emphasize how relationships and networks were essential in overcoming challenges and reshaping their identities. Moreover, their stories highlight how the support needed for this student population differs from that required by other groups. Poitier's journey exemplifies resilience and the ability to redefine one's story through social support and diverse experiences, showing how student-athletes can transcend stereotypes and maximize opportunities. Baldwin's story illustrates the transformative power of mentorship, as his proactive approach led to valuable industry connections, overcoming financial barriers, and clarifying his career path. Robeson's interaction with his Afghan classmate highlights the enriching impact of cross-cultural relationships, which provided new perspectives and strengthened his sense of purpose. Mandela's partnership with a fellow biology student showcases the importance of academic support networks, where mutual encouragement and shared goals facilitated their educational success.

These stories collectively emphasize that social capital, defined as community support networks including connections to mentors, peers, and professionals, is a critical factor in the

development and success of Black male student-athletes. By fostering these connections, they enhance their personal and professional growth and contribute to a broader narrative of resilience and empowerment. The relationships they built outside their familial comfort zone provided support and necessary resources, helping them navigate challenges and achieve their goals.

Theme 2: Linguistic Capital: Identity and Cultural Influences. Communication within the Black community is unique because it can mean different things depending on the individual communicating the message or the situation in which the communication is taking place. Many Black men in this study discussed the critical role that communication, listening, and learning from their community played in their development. These elements helped them understand the importance of being prepared for the experiences they might encounter during their collegiate athletic and academic journeys, which may differ significantly from the predominantly Black spaces they grew up in. Linguistic capital is a testament to the value of language skills and diverse communication styles that one develops over time. For Black male student-athletes, the importance of listening and gaining cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities from their community is paramount. This linguistic capital influences their identity and shapes their approach to their pursuits, providing them with a solid foundation to navigate different cultural contexts and institutional environments. By drawing from their community's rich linguistic heritage and communication practices, Black male student-athletes can develop a versatile and adaptive approach to their academic and athletic endeavors. This adaptability is essential in environments where the communication norms may differ from those they are accustomed to.

Garvey reflected on his conversation with his father before college. In this conversation, his father shared advice that he felt was essential to Garvey's success as a Black man at an institution like JOU, a predominately white institution.

I live with my dad during like high school and everything, but he's like a big sports guy and he always follows whatever's going on. And he always told me, when you're going to college, people are going to look at you different. You're going to be surrounded by a majority of white people. And it's like, you'll stand out. You're bigger than everybody. You're black. You don't want to bring any more attention to yourself than you need to, because it'll just bring unnecessary drama. And in a sense he was right.

The conversation between Garvey and his father underscores a pivotal aspect of identity development for Black men, particularly in environments like institutions. Embracing multiple identities—such as being a Black male, a student-athlete, and a Black student—is crucial. Each identity brings unique challenges and opportunities that shape one's experience and interactions within society and educational settings. The emphasis on navigating institutions and the world differently than peers highlights the reality of systemic challenges and biases that Black individuals often face. It speaks to the need for awareness, resilience, and strategic navigation to succeed in environments that may not always be inclusive or equitable. The father is giving him the tools needed to navigate the subsequent phases of his life successfully.

During our conversation Mandela, he discussed how the media and society always hold Black males, more specifically Black male athletes, to a different standard than their white counterparts.

Yeah, I mean, it's a bit frustrating knowing that, you know, some of my other teammates of other races and other backgrounds can kind of, you know, almost say anything and then it'd be okay for them. Rather than me, if I say those things or even something kind of like those things, then I'm going to be the big, you know, bad guy. So it's definitely a bit frustrating. But again, it's something I've been kind of trained by my parents and by my communities back home to just learn how to deal with. So I think now it's just pretty normal to me.

Mandela expressed frustration regarding the differential treatment of Black male athletes by the media and society compared to their white counterparts. At this stage in his collegiate career, Mandela recognizes that this phenomenon stems from deep-seated historical and cultural biases that shape societal perceptions and expectations. He finds it challenging to openly express his feelings, thoughts, or opinions, fearing potential repercussions that could irreparably damage his character. However, Mandela credits his upbringing and his family's guidance for equipping him with the resilience necessary to navigate these biases. He describes this upbringing as providing him with the tools, or as he puts it, the "armor," to confront these challenges in various aspects of life.

Ellington spoke about an incident during his first year at JOU, he was accused of not citing correctly on a paper, which the professor said was plagiarism. Coming from a low socioeconomic background, he admitted not having a solid academic foundation. He described a conversation with his uncle, a college administrator, about an incident where the institution accused him of plagiarism.

I went through a honor code thing... I ended up talking to my uncle. My uncle is the assistant provost at [school]. My uncle knows I am a bad writer. I asked him if he could be me advocate and get more information on why this was happening. Ultimately, he did not get far because how the school is set up. He was very confused that the school, instead of trying to get me in trouble, did not want to help me and just try and aim to get me kicked out of school. He was asking me a bunch of questions like "why didn't you ask them first?" "Why don't you go over it with them first?" But like he was really mad cuz they knew my background and my struggles and didn't want to help. After the trial we walked out, you know this was not fair, how I need to be more careful because second cases are not given to people often, especially Black male and I am an athlete!

The Ellington incident highlights the challenges students from low socioeconomic and academic backgrounds face. Despite his struggles with academic writing, he felt unsupported by the institution

when accused of plagiarism. His uncle, a college administrator, tried to advocate for him but was surprised by the institution's lack of support and willingness to help. This situation underscores systemic issues within academic institutions, particularly for students of color and athletes, emphasizing the need for better support mechanisms for students from diverse backgrounds. After the incident, Ellington continued conversing with his uncle, who educated him about the limited chances afforded to men of color. This experience was a life lesson that would stick with Ellington throughout his academic journey and beyond.

Another participant, Makai, emphasized that his mother communicated the importance of academic success to him. He stated that from the beginning, he remembers his mother ensuring that he and his siblings had their academics in order before they could enjoy sports or other activities they liked because, in her eyes, academics were everything.

So for instance when I was younger my mom used to tell me I can't play football games unless I had B's and A's so that installation of education and being mandatory kind of like gave me instruction to what I do today. You know I have to do what I have to do in school and act right to do the activities I wanted to do so that's kind of what instilled my education structure as a young kid and today because we just have to always be better.

Makai's mother demonstrates parents' crucial role in prioritizing academic excellence over sports. She instilled in him that participation in sports, specifically football, was not a right but a privilege, and that privilege was contingent upon maintaining good grades in his classes. These early teachings shaped his identity from a young age and followed him into his time as a college athlete at JOU, driving his success both on the field and in the classroom. Her influence highlights the lasting impact of parental support in balancing athletics and academics, paving the way for well-rounded, successful individuals. More importantly, it is changing the narrative that Black male athletes value athletic success over academics.

The experiences expressed by these Black male athletes demonstrate how cultures use language to encourage, support, and guide students, ensuring that the messages conveyed are retained and applied effectively. Specifically, these athletes highlighted the need to consider their appearance and race when making decisions and navigating different spaces. This aligns with the concept of linguistic capital, which emphasizes the importance of using language to govern one's actions. Their experiences echo the shared tradition of Black parents having "The Talk" with their children, preparing them to navigate a society where race and appearance significantly impact their experiences and decisions.

"The Talk" is a crucial conversation many Black parents have with their children at a young age, often following traumatic events that gain national attention and deeply impact the Black community. Incidents like the killings of Trayvon Martin (17 years old), Tamir Rice (12 years old), Laquan McDonald (17 years old), and Emmett Till (14 years old) typically prompt these discussions. "The Talk" educates Black youth about racial issues in the United States, explicitly guiding them on safely interacting with police officers and other authority figures (Anderson, O'Brien, & Owen, 2022). This conversation is vital as it prepares Black youth for the systemic racism they are likely to face, especially Black men. For Black male student-athletes, this knowledge underscores the importance of adapting their actions and communication to navigate and thrive in environments that may not always be inclusive or just. These lessons instill self-awareness and strategic behavior, enabling them to pursue their academic and athletic goals. This approach reflects a broader cultural identity and the influence of one's culture in preparing an individual to emphasize resilience and success amidst adversity. More importantly, it equips Black youth with the necessary tools to survive in a world that may not value them or recognize their humanity.

Talking to my mom about "The Talk" revealed its difficulty for parents. It forces them to strip away their children's innocence and confront the harsh realities they will inevitably face. Additionally, it compels parents to answer challenging questions, often before they are ready.

Theme 3: Resistant Capital: Challenges and Resilience. During the interviews, many interviewees shared experiences of being resilient and always persevering in the face of adversity or encountering comments or actions against the community, specifically the Black community or Black male student-athletes. Many expressed not letting these situations define them, instead turning them into sources of pride or strength or wanting to turn them into tools to make them stronger, embodying the tenants of resistant capital. This study highlights how Black male student-athletes gained valuable insights through community and individual stories. These stories helped them develop resistance to systemic barriers and discrimination, thereby fostering resilience and perseverance. In addition, they leveraged these experiences to create a supportive network, demonstrating leadership and mentorship within their communities. Their stories underscore the importance of resistant capital in empowering individuals to overcome challenges and inspire and uplift others facing similar struggles. These student-athletes exemplify the power of turning adversity into a catalyst for personal growth and community strength through their actions.

Many research participants felt they were negatively perceived in society as Black male student-athletes due to stereotypes. Makia shared his thoughts on how Black male student-athletes are portrayed and his feelings about this portrayal.

Um, I feel like athletes typically, you know, are kind of looked upon as, you know, uneducated or try to look at us, like, less than. But I feel like nowadays, you know, us athletes are trying to change the narrative, you know, kind of make it like, you know, us black athletes are smart, educated, we're more than athletes, and now we have a different background to us, if you just, you know, open up and have a conversation with us, and just treat us like a normal person.

When asked about how he feels about that perception that has been placed on Black male athletes he said:

Um, it makes me upset that we are looked at in that way, but it kind of fuels the fire, negative and positive, you know, us black athletes, you know, many of us been down our whole life and have been through a lot of bad times, so it's nothing new. I just feel like it kind of gives us more perseverance, you know. That's what sports teach, also being black, you know, you know the disadvantage you're gonna have already. So, it's just like, it kind of adds fuel to the fire and makes us stronger.

Makai expresses his frustration with society's negative portrayal of Black male athletes. Instead of allowing this to be his narrative, he uses it as motivation to exceed his goals in all aspects of life.

Makai strives to break stereotypes and change the narrative, demonstrating resilience and commitment to redefining Black male athletes' perceptions. This desire to overcome stereotypes and change the narrative is a common theme among most participants in this study, as well as many Black male student-athletes.

Another research participant shared stories of wanting to create better lives for themselves and their loved ones. They believed the only way to achieve this was by changing their environment and escaping their undesirable living conditions. One participant, Qain, discussed his motivation for attending JOU University. He sought upward mobility and saw this opportunity as a way to attend an institution with a rich academic history and receive a full scholarship to play football.

Ummmm, I am from a city with a lot of violence, so I thought that if I escaped the violence, it would help me grow as a person, as an athlete, and as a man in the future. I mean, in a career that I want to pursue someday. Just getting to know people from different walks of life, I wanted something that was really far, so I don't have to go home as often and be surrounded by god knows what. So I used football to get here, even though I knew that I would face

racism and people who don't understand who I am or where I am from. And it's been everything that I wanted it to be since I got here, if not more. I just used all the negatives that I have encountered to push me to my goals.

Despite his efforts to escape his challenging environment and seek a better future, Qain still faced discrimination at JOU University. He shared an experience of prejudice on campus:

When I first got to JOU, I was on the elevator, and a white woman kind of clenched her purse a little tighter... They clenched their purse tight, and I was really upset about that because I don't think they should... I'm not sure why they thought I would be someone that would take something from them. I don't know if they got it from a movie or something like that, but I just wanted to get to my dorm room and go to sleep to get ready for practice and class the next day, just as they wanted to get to where they were going. I didn't clench my bookbag tight because they were a white woman... Listen I am just not here for that.

Qain's story illustrates how, even after using his talents to secure a promising opportunity, he continued to encounter the very discrimination he hoped to escape. This experience highlights the resilience and determination required to navigate and overcome these ongoing challenges. Many Black male student-athletes participate in collegiate sports to achieve more (e.g., turning professional, financial stability, upward mobility, etc.) (Moore, 2011). Qain's desire to move far away from home to escape violence, even though he knew he would encounter racism, underscores a common struggle among Black male student-athletes. They often face a difficult choice between two extreme circumstances: staying in environments plagued by violence or moving to places where they might face racism.

Many of the research participants discussed situations where assumptions were made about their academic abilities. They were often questioned about their potential to succeed at JOU, not only because of their athletic identity but also due to their race. Robeson shared an experience

during his first year at the institution, where he was placed in a first-year transition program designed to support students, primarily students of color, to adjust academically to the institution.

But I think that a big thing that was a big transition for me was like, so my mom's a principal, and she's like hammered in on like academics. And I've always had good grades. Like I think I had a, I can't remember what my GPA was in high school, but it was above a 3.5. And like, so I had good enough, I had good grades. I could get by pretty easy in here, like at UVA, but I remember, like, the assumptions that some people would make when all the freshmen came in. I remember specifically a story, they grouped me with, oh man, what's that group called? Oh, [named the transition program he enrolled in]...Some people have to come along, but like, they just group me. Like, they never, like, I don't think they really looked at my, like, transcripts. I don't think they ever, like, talked to me. But I remember my freshman year, summer 2018, I was like, so confused. I was like, I like, in the middle, you know, I'm saying like, in the middle of the test, I think we had a test. I was like, what am I doing? So I just got up and like, walked out and was like, I have no reason to be taking this. And then that's like the first memory I had of like, realizing I'm a black, I'm a black man going here. Like just making up, they're just making assumptions of like, my like competency level, even though they never asked me about it, so yeah that was trash. After that situation I made sure I would never be put in a situation like that during my time here.

During further conversations with Robeson, he expressed how this situation embarrassed him.

Thanks to his mother's instruction, he felt academically sound, as she was academically accomplished in her own right. He believed that no matter what he presented to the institution, assumptions were made about him based on his multiple identities. This experience ultimately made him feel less than others. However, instead of allowing that moment to tear him down, he promised

to never be in that situation again. He vowed to perform academically better than others and never to lose his voice when advocating for himself.

Cornell, who would be considered a solid and reliable student academically, also communicated another incident in which a participant was judged primarily on his identity. He expressed a time when he wanted to engage in class but was talked down on by another student because of his answer.

There was this young lady, I don't remember her name, but she, I came to class and I raised my hand and answered my question and she looked at me and like underneath her breath she was just like that's such an athlete thing to say oh my god like I can't stand you athletes you're all the same and I just was kind of like what I didn't do I didn't do anything to you you know I didn't say anything to you or anything like that um so just you know smart remarks like that or once again they just kind of discredit you know our intellectual ability just because we play a sport...

When asked how that incident made him feel he stated the following:

Kind of indifferent, if you will. I mean, like I said, I came from a PWI, so I was already kind of used to just being viewed as the athlete, so I kind of don't put a lot of a lot of credit on what other people say about it from that perspective. I just I know what I'm trying to do and I do it to the best of my ability. So really, really there was kind of an indifference to it. It was kind of like if you viewed me in that light I'd try my best to make you see it differently, but if you don't then ultimately, I'm okay that you just don't understand.

Like other research participants, Cornell's ability to "block out the noise" and focus on his primary goals is admirable. As mentioned earlier, he remains steadfast in pursuing his life goals and the direction he aims to take. This determination is a common theme today, where many individuals use adversity to motivate themselves further. What stands out in Cornell's journey is his ability to

disregard negativity and keep his eyes on the prize—graduating and establishing himself to provide for his family. His unwavering commitment is a testament to his resilience and unyielding drive to succeed, even in the face of daunting obstacles.

Many of the research participants shared situations of resistant capital, where they faced adversity and discrimination based on stereotypes about their academic abilities and athletic identities. Despite these challenges, they demonstrated resilience by using these experiences as sources of strength and motivation. Makai reflects on how society perceives Black male student-athletes, choosing not to let these stereotypes define him. Instead, he actively uses his platform to reshape this narrative and promote a more positive image. Similarly, Cornell has experienced unfair judgment and stereotypes but remains steadfast in pursuing his goals. His ability to "block out the noise" and maintain focus on his academic and career aspirations has driven his personal growth. Qain's story underscores the persistent challenges Black male student-athletes face as they strive for better opportunities and face obstacles in both societal perceptions and institutional settings. These narratives collectively highlight their resilience, determination, and efforts to overcome adversity while striving for personal and community advancement.

This duality of escaping one extreme only to face another sheds light on these individuals' broader challenges and their unwavering commitment to overcoming adversity. Their stories illustrate the complexity of their journeys, as they must navigate environments filled with violence and prejudice and adapt to new settings where they continue to encounter racism and stereotypes. Despite these persistent challenges, Black male student-athletes demonstrate remarkable resilience and tenacity. They leverage their athletic talents and educational opportunities to forge pathways to success, redefine societal perceptions, and build supportive networks. Their determination to excel and advocate for themselves and their communities underscores their significant impact as leaders and role models. This unwavering commitment empowers them individually and inspires others

facing similar struggles, highlighting the transformative power of resilience and perseverance in the face of systemic barriers.

Theme 4: Familial Capital: Social Networks and Family Dynamics. Families and communities, particularly Black youth, are pivotal in youth development (Schaeperkoetter et al., 2015). Families establish routines, nurture identity, and provide a foundation for young athletes as they grow. Communities enrich this development by offering complex interactions and learning experiences beyond the family structure (Schaeperkoetter et al., 2015). The concept that “it takes a village to raise a child” is deeply embedded in the Black community, fostering a profound sense of kinship and mutual support. This communal ethos provides a robust support system and a sense of belonging crucial for societal integration. Many Black men in this study emphasized how this communal support has been instrumental in their academic and athletic achievements, reinforcing their resilience and commitment to success. Familial capital is the sense of community and kinship among peers and family that provides support and a sense of belonging in society. Moreover, this community-based support system extends their education beyond the immediate family model, preparing them for broader societal challenges and opportunities.

Makai spoke about his father and brother's impact on his approach to academics as an athlete. More importantly, he mentioned the example they set, which he wanted to emulate during his collegiate career, both academically and athletically.

Well, my dad was a swimmer. He swam at [Division I institution], went all the way to the US national team and competed internationally for a couple years. He got really close to making the Olympics. But, you know, he did not make it and decided to go another route. And like, he went and got an MBA from a Business School. So, yeah, I mean, that's... I guess the message is like, like, give swimming your all, but don't make it your everything. Also, My brother is a

D1 basketball player. So yeah, but he's about to come out with a Masters degree. So he's chilling I guess. So sports was pushed, but academics was equally important.

Seeing his father and brother achieve their academic and athletic dreams gave Medgar a clear example of what he wanted to accomplish for himself. During his interview, Medgar discussed the environment he grew up in and the unique challenges he faced as an individual participating in a sport with limited diverse representation. Witnessing his father's success in the same sport allowed him to envision his potential achievements. This highlights that familial support doesn't always come through direct conversations or lectures about excellence; it can also be imparted indirectly through role modeling.

In Ellington's experiences, his mother took a more direct role in supporting him. His mother wanted to impress on him the ability to problem solves and use all the tools at his disposal to find a solution to his problems.

Um, my, my mom was more so just like, she says the same thing all the time. And it's always, hey, yeah, you just gotta figure it out. That's what my mom is known for. And it's not much to go off of, because every situation you're in, she'll just say that. That's all she'll say is that, look, I understand and I hear you, but you want this? If you want it bad enough, you're going to have to go after it with more than what you must be going after it right now. So figure it out. That's literally all the conversation she really ever had about it, which was so little, but meant so much.

Ellington provided an example familiar to many Black youth: a parent's "tough love" approach to prepare him to be a problem solver. Ellington's mom often took a step back, allowing him to face and resolve issues independently. When asked why she adopted this approach with him and his siblings, he explained, "Life isn't easy for Black people, and at times, we have to find solutions to our problems without the help of others!" This experience made him comfortable tackling problems

independently and instilled in him the understanding that achieving his goals often requires self-reliance and perseverance. While his mother undoubtedly offered support, she wanted him to take ownership of his challenges and work through them independently.

As mentioned previously, witnessing the success of family members in sports inspired many participants to take their athletic future seriously and explore its potential. Poitier noted that his parents' involvement in sports motivated him to pursue athletics, recognizing it as a valuable opportunity to achieve his success.

Really what inspired me was, I mean, my dad played college athletics and then my mom also was a college athlete. They were both college athletes. My mom ran track and then my dad played football. So, I mean, I have that athletic ability within my family, within my genes and really they inspired me. So like I started playing, the first sport I played was basketball, just to get into sports. I played football, and then I ran track. And when I got to high school, I was playing both, I was doing both, and I was really just running track, just because my mom ran track, so I felt like I should pay little homage to her. I did a couple of events, not the hurdles, though. The hurdles are a little different, so I didn't get to that, but I did the Open Four, which was something different. That's a different topic, but yeah, I did that really to pay homage to her. And in football, I saw it as an opportunity to, you know, network and connect with different people and build relationships that I can have for the rest of my life. And really what influenced me and motivated me to take that into college was that I saw a lot of different opportunities that other black student athletes had within football or just within their sport in general, being a black male student athlete. So I was like, I'm going to take this and I'm going to do this and take it as far as it'll take me. So I got that opportunity to come here and I was like, yeah, I'm going to maximize it to my full potential. And I feel

like there's still a little bit more I could do to maximize it. So I'm going to keep on keeping on.

Seeing his parents participate in sports and its impact on their growth and development, Poitier aspired to achieve the same for himself. Although he was curious if he would turn professional, he understood that taking football seriously could provide significant benefits, including a full scholarship for a free education. Additionally, it would allow him to connect and network with people who could help him reach his full potential. Like other participants, his parents served as role models he wanted to emulate.

Family and community can significantly impact individuals navigating tragedy and heartbreak. Baldwin shared that during a tragic event that affected not only him but also the student-athlete population and the university at large, he relied on his talents and school community to find peace and to support and uplift the JOU community.

Oh man. I think the biggest time that I really felt most locked in and motivated was right after [tragic event]. I think, you know, I was, I, after I left, you know, I didn't finish that semester, but I came back from our spring semester. That whole spring was just me, you know, recreating, you know, *[This part was removed for privacy purposes]* Because I wanted to give something back to the community that has supported me. Like, you know, with my man's, we would just, after practice, we would just be shooting before practice, you know, on weekends when we don't have meets or right after our meet or the day after our meet. Like we would be outside and every shot and everything we put into it was like, if it's not good, then we have to redo it because this is important. And it's showing what we've went through as a community. And yeah, I think that's the hardest I've ever kind of worked on something in an artistic or athletic sense, because I knew that it couldn't be some half-assed job. It had to be something that looked good, and I wanted to share it with the community. And I got the opportunity to

share it with the community, so it got great feedback. So that was the one time I was like, yeah, I'm putting my all into making this.

This moment is particularly impactful because Baldwin expressed that the JOU community, which included peers, faculty, and staff, has supported his efforts to become a filmmaker. He wants his films to reflect his experiences and uplift his audience. During the incident he discussed, Baldwin used his talents to give back to those who helped him grow. He created a film that assisted people and community. This moment is significant because he used his platform as an athlete to support and heal the community.

The profound influence of family and community, especially on Black youth, cannot be overstated. As demonstrated by the experiences shared, families play a crucial role in establishing foundational values and nurturing identity. At the same time, communities provide vital support and opportunities for growth beyond the immediate family structure. "It takes a village to raise a child" resonates deeply within the Black community, fostering a strong sense of kinship and mutual aid that bolsters resilience and encourages success in academic and athletic pursuits. Moreover, the stories of individuals like Makai, Medgar, Ellington, Poitier, and Baldwin illustrate how familial support and community ethos can shape aspirations and empower individuals to overcome challenges. Whether through direct encouragement or indirect role modeling, these influences guide youth towards self-reliance and perseverance, which are essential for navigating personal tragedies and societal barriers.

Ultimately, Baldwin's story epitomizes the transformative influence of community support and individual resilience. His commitment to filmmaking not only provided a personal escape during challenging times but also made a significant contribution to healing and unity within his university community. This underscores the pivotal role that athletes, and individuals in general, can play beyond their chosen fields, using their influence to uplift and inspire others. Essentially, the

intertwined support of family and community serves as a solid foundation of strength and inspiration for Black youth. It equips them with the necessary tools to excel academically, athletically, and personally in a world full of challenges.

Theme 5: Aspirational Capital: Representation and Pride. Being a collegiate athlete, particularly within NCAA Division I, demands extraordinary effort and a strong support system. Competing at this level means facing some of the world's best athletes while balancing rigorous academic demands. This challenge is heightened for Black male athletes who encounter additional expectations and barriers. Despite these obstacles, their unwavering determination to succeed embodies aspirational capital—the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future despite challenges. For Black male student-athletes, these aspirations are not just personal ambitions but also reflections of their community's belief in their potential. This communal support fuels their resilience and drive, empowering them to push past barriers and pursue their goals with unwavering commitment. Their journey illustrates that the dreams and aspirations of student-athletes are not solitary pursuits but are deeply intertwined with their communities' encouragement and investment in their success. This collective belief in their potential is a powerful catalyst, propelling them toward academic and athletic excellence despite the odds.

Cornell discussed an opportunity he had to attend one of the country's most prestigious Ivy League schools. While he recognized the academic advantages of attending such an institution, he also understood that an Ivy League school might offer something other than the athletic opportunities and exposure he and his father desired for his future career. Consequently, he chose a different path to better align with his athletic aspirations and goals.

So I actually didn't choose it. I was going to go to Yale on a full-ride. That's where I wanted to go. And my dad, you know, everybody's dream is to play Division I sports if they're able to. So that obviously was a dream of mine. And I also wanted to make sure the academics

was paramount as well. So my dad suggested JOU and it just so happened that they offered me a preferred walk-on spot literally the day before I was about to sign to go to Yale. And it just seemed like it was the best of both worlds. There was no slouch academically. And athletically, it gave me the chance to accomplish that dream of playing at the highest level possible and really get the chance to test my skills, if you will, to see if I could do it and prove it to myself. So yeah, that's why I chose it.

During this conversation, I asked Cornell what motivated him to pursue being a student-athlete despite the potential challenges (i.e., having to come out of pocket for school).

A dream, honestly, you know, you know, a whole bunch of black people, you know, be so successful in the sports world and then obviously being able to play a game and take care of your family financially. I mean, that really get much better than that. So and then also just proving it to myself because I've always kind of been a smaller athlete. Smaller athletes so you know I wanted to do it because people said that I wouldn't be able to. So it was kind of like proven to myself as well as proven to them.

Ivy League institutions are highly sought after for their prestige, notable alumni, and potential to set graduates on a path to success, significantly raising the social standing of Black students. However, they are not typically known for success in revenue-producing sports like football and basketball. Cornell's decision to turn down an opportunity to attend an Ivy League school on a full academic scholarship and instead attend JOU, where he could receive a quality education and compete at the highest level as a preferred walk-on, illustrates his aspirational capital. This decision also fulfilled his father's desire for him, highlighting his dedication to family values despite the potential financial burden. Cornell's passion for sports, desire to excel academically, and his father's influence were major driving forces behind his choice. His father's belief in his potential and the support from his community inspired him to seek an environment where he could thrive in both areas. Ultimately,

Cornell's choice balanced his academic and athletic goals, showcasing his ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future.

While talking with another research participant, Garvey, I wanted to find out what motivates him to be a student-athlete at JOU. He emphasized the importance of being a role model for his family and the community he came from. He believes it is crucial to pay it forward because they helped him get to where he is today.

Ummmm, Most motivated? Honestly, when people like doubt my academic ability or just ability to be, I don't know, like they question my ability just in general. But also just like the thought of, like, I'm really scared of failure. And I feel like me not graduating college would be a failure in my eyes. So that motivates me a lot too. And just kind of being the standard and like everyone in my family kind of looked, I don't want to say it looks up on me, but they really want to see me succeed. And I feel like if I were to finish my degree or do successful things in my life, I would be doing them wrong because they put a lot of investment into me. He shared that his community's support played a significant role in his journey, providing him with the encouragement and resources needed to succeed both academically and athletically. By excelling at JOU and ultimately graduating from the institution, he hopes to inspire younger generations in his family and community to pursue their dreams despite any obstacles they may face, especially as Black men. This motivation to give back and uplift others demonstrates his strong sense of responsibility and leadership, which drive him to strive for excellence continuously.

I asked Robeson a similar question about what motivates him the most, intentionally leaving it open-ended to encompass his athletic or academic identity. Robeson emphasized the importance of honoring the sacrifices and efforts of family and community members by excelling in academics and athletics.

I don't know. I think there's two parts. I think I could feel most motivated when someone else that I love is benefiting from what I am doing. So it's not just me that it's affecting. So if I have to do something but my grandma's involved, my mom's involved, or just some of my family members, I think that's when I'm most motivated, but also Actually, I think that is I think that is it because at the root of it I think that that's what motivates me the most is like Knowing someone else that I love is like could be affected by this. So like when I earned a full scholarship. I was like happy I got one because I worked my ass off but I think that's what it ties back to is I...Knew that I could help my family.

Robeson's answer highlighted that, in many cases, Black male student-athletes pursue their collegiate careers to make others proud and give back to those who have supported them. This sense of responsibility often stems from the strong community support and investment they receive, motivating them to pay it forward. They understand the power of representation and aim to serve as role models, inspiring younger generations to overcome obstacles and strive for excellence. Cultural values emphasizing collective well-being and uplift play a significant role, along with a desire to help others navigate similar struggles and leave a positive legacy. By giving back, these student-athletes honor their supporters, enrich their lives, and contribute to the long-term betterment of their communities.

I asked Mandela a similar question to others in this section to understand his academic motivations. His response brought fresh air, depicting a friendly competition between himself, his parents' high standards, and the close-knit community where he and his siblings were raised in Nigeria. Despite the potentially stressful expectations, Mandela transformed this environment into a motivating force, embracing the challenge as a form of friendly competition.

Yeah, I think just the fact that both my parents are doctors and they had high expectations for me was a big motivating factor. Seeing what they do and how many people they help and how

successful they are in their field is always inspiring to me. My big thing is really with my dad is that he had to kind of give up soccer in order to be the successful doctor that he is today. And I'm kind of trying to show him that it's possible to do both. He had to stop. He played at University of England and stopped. And now my thing is, okay, I'm going to kind of one-up him and be like, okay, get my degree here, get on my pre-med recs, have a nice soccer career, and then maybe I can go back and do something with that. So I'm like, hey, look, dad, I did what you couldn't do. Just kind of like that. So that's always been a motivating factor. And I think he's always trying to push me because it's a big thing. It's like, I want my kids to be better than I am. So that's kind of a big motivating factor in that regard, and just trying to do my best in everything I do.

Mandela's story exemplifies aspirational capital through his academic motivations. Despite the high expectations set by his parents and community, he views these challenges as opportunities for personal growth and achievement. His parents' successful careers in medicine inspire him to excel academically while pursuing his passion for soccer, aiming to surpass his father's achievements by achieving academic success and athletic prowess. This ambition reflects his aspiration to balance and excel in multiple domains, demonstrating resilience and determination in pursuing his goals despite potential obstacles. By striving to achieve what his father had to sacrifice, Mandela embodies aspirational capital by using his familial and community support as a catalyst for personal and academic success.

Cornell faced a crucial decision when he turned down a full scholarship to Yale in favor of attending JOU as a preferred walk-on, driven by his ambition to excel in Division I sports while maintaining rigorous academic standards. His choice reflected a careful balance between athletic aspirations and educational opportunities, guided by his father's counsel and the unwavering support of his community. In contrast, Garvey views his role as a student-athlete as a chance to inspire his

family and community, motivated by a fear of failure and a deep sense of responsibility to reciprocate the support he has received. Similarly, Robeson pursues his collegiate career to honor his family's sacrifices and uplift others within his community, driven by a commitment to represent them by being his best self. Meanwhile, Mandela's journey is shaped by the high expectations set by his doctor's parents, compelling him to surpass their achievements, specifically his father, both academically and athletically.

Their stories collectively underscore the concept of aspirational capital, highlighting the profound impact of community support and familial encouragement in their pursuit of academic and athletic excellence among Black male student-athletes who participate in NCAA Division I athletics. These student-athletes strive for personal success and aim to challenge stereotypes and inspire future generations through their achievements. Making strategic decisions that balance personal aspirations with familial and community expectations exemplifies resilience, leadership, and cultural empowerment, leaving a lasting legacy of determination and achievement.

Theme 6: Navigational Capital: Intersectionality and Balance. Another central theme during the interviews was balancing multiple identities (e.g., Black male, student-athlete, first-generation college student). Many research participants noted that, whether on the field or in an academic setting, they had to be constantly aware of their presence and appearance, including what they wore and said, to avoid being perceived differently by their peers and faculty/staff. This ability to navigate complex social systems and institutions is known as navigational capital. For Black male student-athletes, strategies and community support are crucial in helping them balance their academic and athletic responsibilities. Moreover, they must always be conscious of their multiple identities and strive to present themselves positively to gain favor and avoid being viewed as lesser in the eyes of society. This constant awareness and effort to navigate perceptions are vital to their experiences.

During the interviews, we had extensive discussions about the multiple identities that Black male student-athletes hold and how these identities intersect. More importantly, the participants expressed their awareness of both the negative and positive implications of their athlete identity and how they must present themselves in academic spaces to be taken seriously as students. Cornell specifically mentioned the negative perception he and his fellow athletes encounter when wearing athletic department-specified gear. Cornell also emphasized his desire to make connections with people outside of being an athlete.

Like sometimes I'll, like when I got older, like I wouldn't wear, like I'd change my backpack up... I'd wear like Nike pants, and I'd wear like a gray shirt or something instead of like all my athletic stuff. But I don't know why. Sometimes I think there's two parts to it. Like, sometimes I'd like to see if people still thought I was an athlete, even though I wasn't wearing anything. So I'd still like to see that. And then also, I wouldn't wanna be, like I want to make more connections outside of being an athlete.

Ellington shared the same sentiments; he did not want to be known solely for his athletic prowess, but as more than just an athlete.

Actually, after for a little bit, I used to have one, like a bag outside of my athletic bag and I would only wear that one around because the other one literally had my name and wrestling and like just big letters. And I was like, I'm not trying to be known as just no, you know, athlete and people start treating me like I do not do any work. Like I was like, I'm gonna just go as a regular student. So they look at me like a regular student.

Both participants knew that being a Black man with their physical attributes would garner attention from their peers. For them not to bring more attention, positive or negative, they chose to approach making connections and showing up in specific spaces in this way.

On the other hand, some participants embraced their athletic identity and did not let the setting deter them from wearing their athletic attire. They took pride in it. Makai, for example, loved wearing athletic clothing and appreciated when people asked him about that aspect of his life because it allowed him to make connections.

I feel like my athletic identity kind of stands out naturally by my height. You know, people kind of assume I play sports, usually basketball, but I always kind of like draw attention to anywhere I go anyways... It don't make me feel any way. It's just people being curious. I can't be mad at you for being curious. But I kind of like it and didn't mind speaking as an athlete.

Makai enjoyed that people perceived him as an athlete and did not see an issue with being identified as one, nor did he think it would negatively impact his interactions. He used his athletic identity to build relationships.

I asked participants the question about their feelings that they had to suppress their athletic identity in academic settings. Mandela talked about the athletic attire he received from the department, specifically the signature "athlete bookbag." He explained to his teammates that he would never wear the book bag, especially during his first year, because he did not want to receive backlash, discrimination, or be questioned about his academic ability.

Oh yeah. 100%. I remember, this is actually really funny. This was first year and obviously we have our athlete backpack and I was like, yeah, I'm not wearing that. I am not wearing that ever. And all the guys were like, why? Don't you want to flex on everybody? I'm like, no. I'd rather have no one know I'm an athlete and I can just sit in there being a normal student and not get discriminated against or not people looking like, oh, is he actually taking notes? Or what is he doing over there? Like, I feel like all this, all these eyes on me being an athlete in the classroom rather than just being a normal student. So I remember wearing just a normal,

they gave us a backpack, another backpack that was kind of more subtle. That was just like, it had the ACC logo on it, just a little gray backpack. And I was like, yeah, this is my backpack. And I mean, as I got more comfortable kind of with my identity and not really worrying about what other people were thinking, and the ACC backpack broke, I wore my student athlete backpack on now. But I remember at first, first year, I was like, yeah, I want to just wear my normal backpack. No one's going to really know. I'm just going to be a normal student. And then, of course, if I have to put in my travel letter to the professor, I can talk to the professor, so they'll know. But no one else in the class should know.

Mandela's connection to the athlete's bookbag and, subsequently, his athletic identity to experiencing discrimination in an academic setting is fascinating. He felt that to be taken seriously in an academic environment, he had to avoid wearing such an identifiable item.

Garvey, like Mandela, shared the same sentiments about wearing their athlete gear to classes because of the perceptions that would follow from their classmates or professors.

Ummmm, I guess a little bit. I don't really try to go to class wearing all my UVA football stuff just because I don't want people to be like, he's just here because he plays football or he's not that smart because I don't want people to put the stereotypes on me without actually knowing anything about me.

Both Garvey and Mandela experienced the stereotypes and biases that athletes face in educational institutions. The athlete's bookbag, a symbol of their athletic identity, became a focal point of prejudice, suggesting that people often make assumptions based on outward appearances and associations. This perception forced them to consider altering their appearance to fit in and be respected academically, underscoring the pressure to conform to certain norms to gain acceptance and credibility. They both felt that their athletic attire would lead to being judged or not taken seriously in an academic setting. This fear of being pigeonholed based on their appearance highlights

the broader issue of stereotypes and biases. Their experiences raise essential questions about identity, perception, and the impact of societal expectations on individuals' behavior and self-presentation.

During interviews, participants explored the complexities of balancing multiple identities, such as their Black identity, athletic pursuits, and the unique challenges of being a Black male student-athlete. They highlighted the ongoing vigilance required to manage their presence and appearance, aiming to counter negative perceptions from peers and faculty alike. Employing navigational capital, these individuals adeptly maneuvered within systems originally not designed to support them, often fraught with oppression and marginalization. JOU, as a predominantly white institution historically structured against the interests of marginalized groups, presented a formidable environment. Despite this, Black male athletes developed specific strategies to thrive within its complexities.

For instance, Cornell strategically diversified his attire beyond athletic gear to foster broader connections and mitigate potential stereotypes. In contrast, Ellington articulated reservations about being exclusively labeled as an athlete, emphasizing the importance of fair academic assessment. Conversely, Makai embraced his athletic identity, leveraging it to build relationships and navigate social dynamics. Mandela and Garvey echoed concerns about the perceptions associated with athletic attire in academic settings. Mandela initially refrained from using his athlete backpack to avoid discrimination and establish academic credibility, a sentiment shared by Garvey, who faced similar stereotypes about his academic capabilities when dressed in football gear. Both navigated the challenges of dual identities, striving to earn respect and credibility in academic pursuits.

Ultimately, these experiences underscore the resilience and strategic acumen of the student-athletes. They exemplify how individuals, through their determination and potential for success, can adapt and excel within challenging environments that have historically resisted their success.

Perspectives and LAST WORDS from Black Male Student-Athletes

At the end of each interview, I allowed the Black men to provide the LAST WORD, allowing them to share any final thoughts or messages. Here is what some wanted to communicate to society about being a Black male student-athlete.

Garvey: I would say that Black athletes are more than just their image. We are lot more than the media portrays us as, or whatever you see on TV. Like there's a lot more to us than the sport we play. I think people out there should really take the time to realize that we're people too.

Ellington: As a Black student-athlete we have trained ourselves to exceed any failure... Yes, that's awesome, but sometimes that can get exhausting always having to fight.

Robeson: I wish society understood how much more we have to do. Being a Black person in society, being an athlete, being a black athlete at a PWI, and on top of not having your own cultural connections, but also you're being out of place from your own cultural connections and you're also maintaining sports and being a student. So just understand how much we go through, and we do. And trust me, we know how people think about us.

Qain: I think I would tell them to get to know me. Or get to know more Black athletes before they start being judgmental.

Poitier: I would say that it's hard and It's challenging, but it's also worth the journey, just because you learn a lot about yourself, about the world, and what you can contribute to, you know, whatever organization or whatever you wanna do in life. I'd say that's really the Black male student-athlete experience.

Makai: All we just need is an opportunity and somebody to just believe in them and It could blossom into a flower so I just feel like As a black athlete we just need an opportunity. As a Black athlete we just need an opportunity to show you it.

DuBois: I have more to offer than my athletic ability and sometimes I want the opportunity to show my other talents.

Mandela: Many Black male athletes have interesting stories than the typical “I grew up with a single mom in the hood.” I'm coming from more academic background, which a lot of us actually do come from. I think that it would be great to highlight stories like that really spend some time to get to know us and to not just stick to the assumptions that, even though sometimes may be true, might not be the best indicator of the whole community.

Cornell: Sometimes having to be twice as good ALL THE TIME is exhausting. It would be nice to be able to take a break from having to do that.

Conclusion

Engaging deeply with these Black men throughout this research study has been profoundly impactful. Providing them with a platform to express their vulnerability and ensuring their voices were not only heard but valued has been a privilege. Their candid sharing of experiences has illuminated perspectives from marginalized voices that are often overlooked. This sentiment echoes the words of Nia DaCosta, Marvel's pioneering Black woman director, who aptly expressed, "I just want to tell good stories in ways that will shine a light on lives rarely seen on screen because stories can push humanity forward" (Obenson, 2019). DaCosta's insight underscores the transformative power of storytelling, emphasizing the critical importance of elevating and honoring these essential narratives.

Through their narratives, these Black male student-athletes have highlighted not just challenges but also resilience and triumphs within their collegiate journeys. Their stories compel us to recognize the profound impact of community support and to advocate for systemic changes that foster inclusivity and equity in collegiate athletics. As we reflect on their experiences, it becomes

evident that their voices are not only integral to understanding their realities but also vital in shaping a more just and empathetic society.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

“Hoping for the best, prepared for the worst, and unsurprised by anything in between”

– Maya Angelou, *I know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

Introduction – The Last Lap

The purpose of this research study was to examine the impact of community on the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in both revenue and non-revenue-generating sports, using surveys and interviews. The goal was to offer insights into better supporting Black male student-athletes competing in Division I NCAA sports, enhance the current literature on providing holistic support for these athletes, and, most importantly, give a voice to this often-overlooked student population. In this chapter, I will discuss my findings regarding athletic identity, academic motivation, and the impact of community on the educational and athletic pursuits of Black male student-athletes. Additionally, I will provide recommendations for both Jesse Owens University and future research on the topic. I will then address the limitations that affected the study, followed by a reflection on the study's impact on me as the researcher. Finally, I will offer a conclusion to bring this study to a close.

Black male student-athletes in revenue and non-revenue-generating sports, particularly at Power Five Division I institutions, navigate a complex intersection of race, athletics, and education. Utilizing Yosso's (2005) Cultural Community Wealth framework, I employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating quantitative and qualitative data, to explore this dynamic. The following sections discuss the findings related to the four research questions.

Research Question 1: Academic Motivation: Revenue vs. Non-Revenue Sports

The historical and educational disparities affecting Black individuals in the United States have persisted for centuries, deeply entrenched in the country's societal fabric (Fergus & Noguera,

2010). Black males, particularly, face heightened levels of underachievement due to various personal and societal factors. Research Question 1 (quantitative) examined differences in academic motivation among Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports, utilizing the Academic Motivation Scale by Vallerand et al. (1992). This scale was pivotal in assessing whether student-athletes in these categories exhibited varying levels of motivation and self-determination toward academic success.

The study's results, indicating no significant difference in academic motivation between the two groups of student-athletes, provide valuable insights into the academic motivation of Black male student-athletes. However, current data and existing literature underscore the critical role of motivation, especially intrinsic motivation, in engaging Black males in their academic journeys. Intrinsic motivation, from personal interests, challenges, and a sense of accomplishment, significantly enhances academic participation and success. Moreover, transforming extrinsic motivation into more self-directed forms, such as identified regulation, can deepen students' commitment and personal investment in academics (Deci et al., 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, it is not just about transforming motivation but also about aligning educational objectives with Black male student-athletes values, interests, and aspirations. This is crucial. This approach not only fosters academic engagement but also respects and integrates their cultural backgrounds, as highlighted in culturally relevant education (CRE) frameworks (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Dover, 2013; Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Asante, 1990).

Educators play a pivotal role in fostering greater academic engagement by understanding and addressing Black male student-athletes' unique motivations and cultural backgrounds. Their role is not just pivotal, but also indispensable. Tailoring educational approaches to resonate with these students' intrinsic and identified motivations, while integrating their cultural contexts, can lead to more meaningful and sustained academic involvement. Therefore, educators must actively identify

and nurture the motivational drivers supporting Black male student-athletes in achieving their full academic potential.

Despite the NCAA's commitment to student-athletes' success both on the field and in the classroom, Black males exhibit the lowest graduation rates among minority groups. Ironically, they represent 70% of the country's NCAA Division I top-earning sports programming. This statistic underscores the urgent need to address the educational disparities faced by Black male student-athletes, ensuring they receive adequate support to excel academically given their levels of academic motivation.

Research Question 2: Athletic Identity: Revenue vs. Non-Revenue Sports

Sports play a crucial role in Black communities. While some parents involve their Black children in sports to keep them out of trouble, others recognize that sports can enhance an individual's social status and upward mobility, especially in high-revenue sports such as basketball and football. Research question 2 (quantitative) examined the athletic identity of Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating and non-revenue-generating sports, using the Athletic Identity scale. The results showed that Black males in revenue-generating sports indeed have a higher athletic identity. This increased athletic identity indicates a stronger connection to sports due to their skill excellence, confidence, and social interactions during participation.

The higher athletic identity of Black males in revenue-generating sports can be attributed to several factors. These sports receive extensive media coverage, more financial support, and increased societal attention, leading to a more robust identification with the athletic role. Black males may view these sports may lead to economic success, social mobility, and community recognition. The cultural significance and historical context of sports like basketball and football in Black communities further contribute to this solid athletic identity. Additionally, the intense focus on athletic prowess in these sports leads to greater pressure and expectations from family, peers, and society, reinforcing the

athlete's identification with their sport. Conversely, non-revenue-generating sports lack the same level of attention and support and may result in a more balanced or diverse identity among their participants.

Athleticism has often been a top priority in Black communities, sometimes overshadowing academic success (Hoberman, 2000). This emphasis on athletic prowess does not imply that Black male athletes lack the capability for academic success. Rather, they often have to leverage their athletic talents to gain opportunities to prove themselves academically. Many Black male student-athletes come from less-than-ideal circumstances, and for many, securing an athletic scholarship is the only viable path to attending top higher education institutions.

This scenario presents a double-edged sword. While athletic talent can open doors and provide opportunities for scholarships and college recruitment, it can also divert attention from academic pursuits, which are crucial for long-term success (Scott et al., 2013; Kim & Hargrove, 2013). This focus on athletics can reinforce stereotypes and perpetuate the notion that Black males' value lies solely in their physical abilities rather than their intellectual potential.

Research Question 3: Relationship Between Academic Motivation and Athletic Identity

The research highlighted essential insights into the experiences of Black male student-athletes in Division I Power Five Institutions. It underscores the complexity of navigating multiple identities, such as academic, athletic, personal, and racial, within college sports. In research question 3 (quantitative), the findings regarding the correlation between academic motivation and athletic identity are particularly intriguing. The relationship between academic motivation and athletic identity suggests that for Black male student-athletes in revenue-generating sports like football and basketball, there is a significant positive relationship between their athletic identity and academic motivation. This correlation may stem from various factors, including the opportunities and societal pressures of participating in these high-profile sports.

On the other hand, the lack of significant correlation found among Black male student-athletes in non-revenue-generating sports could reflect different motivations and experiences. While these sports do not provide the same financial stability or societal recognition, they still contribute significantly to diversity within collegiate athletics and offer opportunities for personal and athletic growth. In the broader societal context, where sports like football and basketball are seen as pathways to success within Black communities, adds another layer to this discussion. It highlights how these sports are deeply embedded in cultural narratives of achievement and economic mobility, influencing the choices and aspirations of young athletes.

Overall, this research underscores the importance of understanding the nuanced experiences and motivations of Black male student-athletes across different sports contexts. It also raises questions about how universities and athletic programs can better support these student-athletes in achieving their academic and athletic goals, regardless of the sport they participate in.

Research Question 4: Community Impact on Academic and Athletic Pursuits

Research Question 4 explores how Black male student-athletes understand and internalize their community's impact on their academic and athletic pursuits within predominantly white institutions. This inquiry is crucial as it highlights the profound influence of community support on their collegiate experiences. By utilizing Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) framework, the study examined how various forms of capital contribute to their overall development. Yosso's framework allowed me to interpret these capitals—such as aspirational, linguistic, and familial—as valuable resources that these student-athletes can draw upon. This perspective reframes what Bourdieu (1977) described as deficiencies into assets and strengths, empowering these students to leverage their backgrounds for success in higher education. It challenges deficit-based narratives and underscores Black male student-athletes' resilience and unique contributions within academic environments.

As mentioned, I used a mixed methods approach, which provided a comprehensive perspective on my research study. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, I could identify critical factors impacting Black men's academic motivation/athletic identity and understand the underlying reasons and lived experiences behind these trends. To answer my research question four, I first conducted a logistic regression to examine several factors that might influence Black men's academic and athletic pursuits. The independent variables included: revenue/non-revenue sports classification, income, athletic identity, year in school, and the cultural community wealth scale. The regression analysis revealed that two variables—community cultural wealth and revenue/non-revenue sports classification—were statistically significant predictors of academic motivation. This quantitative analysis was essential as it gave me a foundational understanding of which factors were most influential among the student-athletes in my study.

However, the regression alone could not fully explain *these factors' significance*. This is where the qualitative component of my study, grounded in counter-storytelling, was critical. The interviews allowed participants to express in their voices the nuanced and complex ways these factors influenced their experiences at a predominantly white institution. For instance, the importance of community cultural wealth—highlighted by the regression—was vividly reinforced in the interviews. Participants frequently discussed the crucial role of mentors, family members, coaches, and neighborhood networks in sustaining their motivation and academic success. These interviews corroborated the statistical findings and provided rich narratives explaining how and why community resources were so central to their journeys.

Moreover, participants' stories further illuminated the differentiation between revenue and non-revenue sports—another significant factor in the regression. For example, athletes from revenue-generating sports often described feeling both privileged and burdened by their visibility and the expectations placed upon them, while those in non-revenue sports spoke to challenges

related to limited resources and recognition. These qualitative insights deepened my understanding of the specific pressures and motivations these men face.

In summary, the mixed methods approach was invaluable for capturing the full scope of Black male student-athletes' experiences. The regression provided a necessary quantitative snapshot of significant factors, while the interviews added depth and context by bringing the participants' voices to the forefront. This combination allowed me to connect the broader trends identified in the regression with the lived realities of these men, offering a more holistic understanding of their academic and athletic pursuits. The use of counter-storytelling in the interviews was particularly important, as it highlighted perspectives often marginalized or overlooked in traditional research, further underscoring the significance of the study's methodological choices.

Recommendations for Jesse Owens University (JOU)

Black male student-athletes, particularly those participating in revenue and non-revenue-generating sports at Power Five Division I institutions, face unique challenges. These challenges stem from navigating the intricate intersections of race, athletics, and education. Student-athletes are expected to excel both on the field and in the classroom, which requires a delicate balance of athletic and academic support. While acknowledging the diverse backgrounds and lived experiences these Black men bring to college, the findings of this research underscore the need for comprehensive strategies to foster the holistic development of these student-athletes, ensuring they succeed in all facets of their university experience. The Black male student-athletes enrolled at Jesse Owens University (JOU) have provided valuable data that can be used to implement recommendations to support this population better:

Enhanced Academic Support Programs

Many of the men in this research study emphasized the significant impact of services provided by the Academic and Student-Athlete Development area on their college experience. These

administrators offered academic support and helped them acclimate to what many described as a new cultural experience as Black male student-athletes at JOU. More importantly, these individuals help these students navigate the institution and learn how to access institutional resources, understand academic expectations, and gain assistance when they face challenges. All of this is a form of social capital. This aligns with Yosso's belief that social networks provide crucial resources that are not consistently recognized in traditional academic frameworks but are essential for success, especially for marginalized students. By tapping into these networks and resources, students gain academic skills and build relationships that can help them navigate the educational system more effectively.

While the services provided are valuable, there is always room for enhancements that could further promote ongoing academic support.

- **Enhancing Staff Effectiveness:** It is crucial to hire, train, and develop staff who are not only dedicated to helping student-athletes navigate their college experience but are also equipped to perform their roles effectively. Ensuring that these individuals are well-trained and capable fosters trust and respect, which is essential for building strong, supportive relationships with student-athletes. This approach is important because well-trained staff can offer tailored guidance and support, address the unique needs of each student, and create an environment that enhances the student-athletes' overall experience. Training can include, but not limited to: unconscious and implicit biases training, cultural awareness and belonging, addressing microaggressions, and diversity, equity and inclusions.
- **Targeted Tutoring Initiatives:** JOU Athletics currently offers tutoring services for student-athletes. However, developing a more robust, comprehensive tutoring program specifically tailored to Black male student-athletes could significantly

enhance support. This program would incorporate various theoretical frameworks, such as culturally relevant education and Black identity development, to ensure its effectiveness. Additionally, it could be integrated with existing campus supports to offer more options and help these students build connections outside the athletic department. The goal is to improve academic performance, personal growth, and overall well-being by addressing their unique challenges.

- **Mentorship and Guidance Programs:** Pairing Black male student-athletes with other athletes who share similar backgrounds and experiences can provide relatable guidance and encouragement. This program can be tailored to be either team-specific or community-wide. For example, pairing a first-year student-athlete with an upper-level student with similar interests and backgrounds can foster a supportive mentoring relationship. This approach is helpful because it builds a sense of community, enhances academic and athletic performance, and supports the personal development of Black male student-athletes by providing role models who understand their unique challenges and experiences.

Career Development and Post-Graduation Support

Regardless of the sport, whether revenue-generating or not, a common theme among the men in the study was the desire for a meaningful academic and athletic experience; black men in this study expressed a strong interest in being well-prepared for successful careers after their athletic pursuits. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of seeing representation of people who look like them and engaging with businesses created by Black individuals. Their desire to achieve success post-college and gain support through programming focused on career development and post-graduation opportunities aligns with navigational capital, with connections to aspirational capital as well. Navigational capital refers to the skills and strategies individuals develop to navigate different

social and professional environments. In contrast, aspirational capital involves maintaining hopes and dreams for the future, even facing challenges.

Career-related activities that equip Black men with the tools to overcome barriers provide essential guidance in navigating professional landscapes. Programs that support their career development strengthen their navigational capital and help sustain their aspirations for future success. Given the importance of representation to many of the Black men in this study, JOU could consider additional strategies to ensure they are well-prepared for careers after college.

- **Evolving Career Counseling and Networking Programs:** Enhance career counseling services by providing networking opportunities with alumni and former student-athletes professionals, focusing on identifying Black men who can serve as career mentors. This initiative is crucial for helping Black male student-athletes prepare for careers beyond sports. Seeing Black men in positions outside of sports is powerful because it provides visible role models and expands their understanding of what is possible, inspiring them to pursue diverse career paths and succeed in various fields. This representation helps break down stereotypes and reinforces the idea that they can succeed in multiple professional arenas.
- **Career-Focused Internship and Externship Programs:** Establish genuine partnerships with businesses and organizations to provide internships and externships that align with Black male student-athletes' interests and academic pursuits. Additionally, it offers study abroad programs focused on professional development. These opportunities are significant because they allow Black male student-athletes to gain practical experience, broaden their horizons, and develop professionally in diverse environments. Experiencing different settings and cultures can help them build valuable skills, expand their networks, and envision various

career possibilities beyond sports. This holistic approach supports their overall personal and professional growth.

Mental Health and Wellness Initiatives

Regardless of the sport, whether revenue-generating or not, a common theme among the men in the study was the desire for a meaningful academic and athletic experience; black men in this study expressed a strong interest in being well-prepared for successful careers after their athletic pursuits. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of seeing representation of people who look like them and engaging with businesses created by Black individuals. Their desire to achieve success post-college and gain support through programming focused on career development and post-graduation opportunities aligns with navigational capital, with connections to aspirational capital as well. Navigational capital refers to the skills and strategies individuals develop to navigate different social and professional environments. In contrast, aspirational capital involves maintaining hopes and dreams for the future, even facing challenges.

Career-related activities that equip Black men with the tools to overcome barriers provide essential guidance in navigating professional landscapes. Programs that support their career development strengthen their navigational capital and help sustain their aspirations for future success. Given the importance of representation to many of the Black men in this study, JOU could consider additional strategies to ensure they are well-prepared for careers after college.

- **Evolving Career Counseling and Networking Programs:** Enhance career counseling services by providing networking opportunities with alumni and former student-athletes professionals, focusing on identifying Black men who can serve as career mentors. This initiative is crucial for helping Black male student-athletes prepare for careers beyond sports. Seeing Black men in positions outside of sports is powerful because it provides visible role models and expands their understanding of

what is possible, inspiring them to pursue diverse career paths and succeed in various fields. This representation helps break down stereotypes and reinforces the idea that they can succeed in multiple professional arenas.

- **Career-Focused Internship and Externship Programs:** Establish genuine partnerships with businesses and organizations to provide internships and externships that align with Black male student-athletes' interests and academic pursuits. Additionally, it offers study abroad programs focused on professional development. These opportunities are significant because they allow Black male student-athletes to gain practical experience, broaden their horizons, and develop professionally in diverse environments. Experiencing different settings and cultures can help them build valuable skills, expand their networks, and envision various career possibilities beyond sports. This holistic approach supports their overall personal and professional growth.

Athletic Department Collaborations

Though many Black men share similar backgrounds, they still have varying needs and require different services, which JOU strives to support. Unfortunately, there are times when some students fall through the cracks because athletic departments cannot address these needs on their own. Many Black men in this study discussed their backgrounds and aspirations, emphasizing that meeting these diverse needs cannot be done in isolation; it requires collaboration and partnerships with others.

- **Unified Support Systems:** Supporting Black male student-athletes requires a coordinated effort beyond the scope of any single person or department. To create a comprehensive support system, it is essential to foster collaboration between the athletic department and various campus units, such as multicultural student services, counseling centers, and offices supporting specific marginalized communities. This

collaborative approach enhances students' academic success and helps them understand and access the full range of resources available within the university community. By addressing the multifaceted needs of student-athletes, this holistic network supports their dual roles as students and athletes, contributing to their overall success and well-being as they navigate both identities.

- **Adjustable Scheduling Strategies:** Understandably, the life of a college athlete is demanding, requiring careful balance between their sport and academics. However, it is crucial to advocate for flexible scheduling of practices and other athletic commitments to ensure that student-athletes have adequate time for activities that support their personal development and contribute to their overall college experience. This flexibility is essential because it allows student-athletes to engage in extracurricular activities, build relationships, and participate in campus life, necessary for their personal growth and integration into the larger college environment beyond their athletic identity. By accommodating their schedules, we support their well-being, enhance their college experience, and help them achieve a balanced and fulfilling life on and off the field.

Diversity and Inclusion Training

As mentioned, the Black men in this research study come from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences. Many expressed feelings misunderstood by people at JOU, noting that their cultural differences often lead to a lack of connection. While JOU provides information and encourages conversations about these differences, fully understanding and supporting Black male student-athletes requires additional measures, such as:

- **Core Training for Staff and Coaches:** Implementing mandatory diversity and inclusion training for all athletic staff and coaches is crucial for understanding Black

male student-athletes' cultural dynamics and challenges. This training is essential because it equips coaches and staff, who may have different lived experiences, with the knowledge and tools needed to support and mentor this student population effectively. Moreover, it enhances the recruitment process by ensuring that staff can better identify and address potential recruits' unique needs and experiences, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for all student-athletes.

- **Inclusive Policies and Practices:** Reviewing, revising, and promoting athletic policies that cultivate an inclusive environment for Black male student-athletes is essential for supporting their well-being and success. This initiative seeks to ensure that institutional policies are equitable and responsive to the unique challenges and needs of this student demographic. By updating these policies, the university can create a more supportive environment that fosters academic achievement, athletic success, and personal growth among Black male student-athletes. This proactive approach not only enhances their college experience but also contributes to a more inclusive campus culture where all students can thrive.

Strengthening Community and Alumni Connections

The community, encompassing family, mentors, alums, and the neighborhood, played a vital role in the lives of all the Black men in this study. Their community instilled values and provided them safety, guidance, and a sense of belonging. More importantly, they spoke about how their community served as a foundation that shaped their identities and ambitions, offering support often lacking in other areas of their lives. This sense of community was a source of strength and a crucial element in helping them navigate their challenges, both on and off the field. Black male student-athletes desire to build better relationships with the community, and alums can be connected to social and navigational capital. However, it can significantly impact familial capital because of the

focus on building support systems. Yosso's (2002) familial capital refers to the cultural knowledge and emotional support nurtured within families and communities. Strong community and alumni connections can enhance familial capital by creating a sense of an extended "family" in the form of alumni and community members who share everyday experiences, values, and cultural understandings. This broader community offers emotional support, guidance, and a sense of identity and pride, contributing to students' overall well-being and success.

Alums and community members often act as cultural bearers, sharing stories, advice, and traditions that can reinforce students' connection to their heritage or the collective community, contributing to students' resilience and success. The men emphasized the importance of maintaining strong connections with their communities, even at JOU, as these ties provide essential support and inspiration.

- **Alumni-Student Mentorship Programs:** Establishing programs where alumni can mentor current Black male student-athletes is a valuable initiative that offers insights and support based on shared experiences. These mentorship programs are important because they connect current student-athletes with role models who have navigated similar challenges and achieved success in both their athletic and personal lives. By leveraging the experiences and wisdom of alumni, these programs not only provide practical advice and encouragement but also foster a sense of community. This support helps current student-athletes manage their unique pressures, enhance their personal development, and build a network that contributes to their overall success and well-being.
- **Community Engagement and Outreach Programs:** Engaging with the local community to create outreach programs is essential for student-athletes' development and integration. These programs build connections between student-

athletes and the community, providing valuable resources, mentorship, and opportunities for personal growth. By establishing strong community ties, student-athletes gain a broader support network that enhances their sense of belonging and offers practical life skills. Additionally, giving back to communities like their own or to individuals with shared backgrounds is especially impactful. It allows student-athletes to inspire and support others facing similar challenges while deepening their connection to their roots. This reciprocal relationship enriches their college experience and fosters a holistic support system that contributes to their overall success and well-being.

- i. **Big Brother Program:** The establishment of a Big Brother/Little Brother program of this magnitude would enable Black male student-athletes to serve as inspirational role models and mentors. Their involvement would bridge gaps in community support, providing guidance that extends beyond athletics to include academics and personal development. This program would strengthen community ties, challenge stereotypes, and promote positive influence. By sharing their experiences and resilience, these athletes would empower younger generations, fostering a supportive environment that encourages constructive choices and personal growth.

Implementing these recommendations can create a more supportive and enriching environment for Black male student-athletes at Jesse Owens University (JOU). While these suggestions address specific identities, they can enhance services for all student-athletes, fostering athletic and academic success and personal and professional growth. This holistic approach ensures that student-athletes leave JOU as well-rounded individuals prepared for the future. A key

component of this strategy is the development of a comprehensive Student-Athlete Development Curriculum.

This curriculum should promote leadership development, career development, total wellness, community outreach, and social impact. By focusing on these areas, the curriculum ensures that student-athletes are well-prepared for life beyond their sports careers. Leadership and career development equip them with essential skills for professional success. Emphasizing total wellness addresses their physical and mental health needs, promoting long-term well-being. Community outreach and social impact initiatives foster a sense of responsibility and connection, encouraging student-athletes to give back to their communities and develop empathy and social awareness.

This holistic approach supports student-athletes' individual growth and provides a sense of belonging and acceptance. By addressing their unique needs and creating an inclusive environment, JOU can help student-athletes feel valued and supported. This sense of belonging is crucial for their overall development, helping them become balanced, responsible, and impactful members of society.

Recommendations for Future Research

Research on Black male student-athletes has grown over the years, and this study aims to address continuing gaps in the existing literature. Several recommendations for future research can be considered to expand our understanding in this area. There could be a focus on incoming first-year high school student-athletes, allowing us to explore their academic motivation and athletic identity before transitioning to college life. This early stage understanding provides valuable insights into how these young athletes balance their dual roles and what factors influence their academic and athletic aspirations.

Academic Motivation and Athletic Identity of Black women

Expanding this research to include Black female student-athletes is equally important. Although Black women student-athletes graduate at higher rates than their male counterparts, they share similar experiences and face community influences that merit exploration. For instance, examining the social, cultural, and economic factors affecting their academic and athletic journeys could uncover unique challenges and strengths. Gaining a deeper understanding of how to support Black female student-athletes would inform more effective educational policies and support programs.

The Value Placed on the Degree from Highly Selective Institutions

Future studies could also examine current student-athletes and the value they place on a degree from Jesse Owens University throughout their enrollment, from the first year to the fourth year. This longitudinal approach would help identify changes in academic motivation and athletic identity over time. For instance, tracking their experiences could reveal critical periods when support interventions are most needed, such as during transitions between academic years or when facing significant athletic commitments. Additionally, investigating the effectiveness of JOU's programs and services for Black male student-athletes could reveal how well these supports meet their needs and suggest areas for improvement. For example, analyzing the impact of academic advising and mental health services on their educational and athletic performance would provide actionable insights. Understanding these elements would help universities design better support systems that enhance academic success and athletic achievement.

Black men at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Another area of exploration is examining the academic motivation and athletic identity of Black male student-athletes who attend Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). HBCUs have been the leading institutions educating Black people for decades, playing a critical role

in the development and success of Black professionals across various fields. Several of these institutions are affiliated with Division I sports. Although there have been athletes who turned professional in multiple sports, many athletes who desire to pursue a professional athletic career typically attend institutions in Power Five conferences. Research has shown that athletes who attend HBCUs graduate at high rates, indicating a strong commitment to academic achievement alongside their athletic pursuits. This suggests that HBCUs may provide a supportive environment that fosters educational and athletic success. Investigating the factors contributing to this dual success at HBCUs could provide valuable insights into how these institutions nurture their student-athletes academic and professional aspirations.

Furthermore, understanding the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Black male student-athletes at HBCUs can inform policies and practices that support their holistic development. This exploration is vital for recognizing the full spectrum of contributions made by HBCUs to the academic and athletic landscapes.

Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. Recognizing these limitations helps contextualize the findings and highlights areas for future research and improvement. This study focused solely on Black male student-athletes at a Power Five Division I predominantly white institution, reflecting the researchers' interests and providing a broad scope for the research. However, the study had a limited number of participants, particularly among those in non-revenue-generating sports. While there were many students from revenue-generating sports like football and basketball, the small population size of non-revenue athletes could have impacted the overall results.

Additionally, this research was confined to a single predominantly white institution within a specific athletic conference and highly selective institution. This narrow focus means that the

findings may not be generalizable to Black male student-athletes at other institutions or conferences, limiting the broader applicability of the results.

Reflection on Study

Reflecting on this research study, I am filled with immense gratitude for the 94 Black men who took time out of their day to complete my survey and the 12 Black men who spent early mornings and late nights sharing their stories about growing up, their families, and the highs and lows of life as college student-athletes. During my tenure as an athletics administrator, I had the privilege of working with many of these men across various sports. Their stories amazed me, revealing both familiar and new facets of their lives. I am profoundly thankful for the opportunity to know each of you on a deeper level and honored by your trust in me to share your experiences.

The goal of this research study is to support the holistic development of Black male student-athletes, particularly acknowledging the unique struggles faced by those attending predominantly white institutions. I aimed to center the voices of these Black men, allowing them to share their stories and provide insights on how we can best support them based on their own experiences. While higher education administrators and researchers often equate success and service with numerical data—important as it is—I wanted to focus on the individuals behind the numbers. It was crucial to ensure that these Black men could tell their stories and finally be heard.

Intentionality was the guiding principle during this doctoral journey and the research process. Of course, I wanted to create a research study I could be proud of, but more importantly, I wanted to ensure that this work was deeply rooted in Black culture. I highlighted influential Black leaders, activists, and novelists through meaningful quotes. I celebrated impactful Black male leaders from history through pseudonyms chosen by the interviewees. I incorporated phrases and sayings steeped in Black culture and history. It was vital to me that this study represented my people.

For decades, black male student-athletes have been the backbone of collegiate sports, providing stability, financial gain, and entertainment. However, this often comes at the cost of their physical and mental well-being. Society has pigeonholed Black men into narrow roles from a young age, implying that their success is solely dependent on their athletic prowess. It is high time to challenge this narrative and show young Black boys that they can aspire to be more than just athletes. They can be the ones defending their research at a top-tier university, striving to make a lasting impact on their community.

Conclusion

There is no denying that Black male student-athletes enter college with different lived experiences than their white counterparts, and these experiences can significantly impact their academic motivation and athletic identity. Due to societal and media-imposed limitations, many believe that to be successful, Black men must excel in sports, whether by dribbling a ball or running on the football field. Dr. Woodson emphasized that the learning process involves three key components: the learner, the values and aims of society, and the foundational knowledge of the subject matter or environment (Bassey, 2013). Incorporating a student's background, interests, and lived experiences into their learning process has positively affected educational outcomes.

To truly impact the holistic development of Black male student-athletes, it is vital to integrate their beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and lived experiences into their educational journey. This approach demonstrates that they can be successful and motivates and encourages them to see themselves as active contributors to their learning and development.

APPENDIX A: Participant Consent Form

“If there is a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, you must be the one to write it (Lyons, 2019).” - **Toni Morrison**

Date of Preparation: August 4, 2023

I hereby authorize **Dashan J. Axson-Lawrence** to include me (my child/ward) in the following research study **YOU HAVE TO BE TWICE AS GOOD: EXPLORING THE ACADEMIC MOTIVATION AND ATHLETIC IDENTITIES OF BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETES AT PWPS**

1. I have been asked to participate in a research project that is designed to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of Black male student-athletes who participate in Division I sports.
2. It has been explained to me that the reason for my inclusion in this project is that I identify as Black, male student-athlete.
3. I understand that if I am a subject in this study, I will be asked to participate in researchers two parts, which include taking a survey and opting in to participate in a one-on-one interview.
4. I understand that if I plan on participating in the one-on-one interview the session will be audio recorded and used for the purpose of this study.
5. I understand that all information collected will be confidential.
6. The investigator(s) will explain the purpose of my participation before beginning the study, share interview transcripts, debrief me at the conclusion of the study period and share the narrative that results from my contribution to this study.

These Procedures have been explained to me by **Dashan J. Axson-Lawrence**.

1. I understand that I will be audiotaped in the process of these research study. It has been explained to me that these recordings will be used for teaching and/or research purposes only and that my identity will not be disclosed. I have been assured that the tapes will be destroyed after their use in this research project is completed. I understand that I have the right to review the recordings made as part of the study to determine whether they should be edited or erased in whole or in part.
2. I understand that the study described above may involve the following risks and/or discomforts: some of the questions that I may be asked to answer might cause a variety of emotions to surface, including anger, sadness or confusion, but at any point I have the right to stop an interview, take a break from an interview, or decline to answer any question that I choose. I may also become fatigued or overwhelmed during the study, but again at any point I have the right to stop an interview, take a break from an interview or can ask the researcher to contact me later.
3. I also understand that the possible benefits of the study are that I may learn more about myself, help athletic departments and university staff understand the experiences of Black male student-athletes and possibly inform NCAA practices and policy.
4. I understand that Dashan J. Axson-Lawrence who can be reached at _____ will answer any questions I may have at any time concerning details of the procedures performed as part of this study.
5. If the study design or the use of the information is to be changed, I will be so informed, and my consent reobtained.
6. I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from this research at any time without prejudice to (e.g., my participation in future research studies at UVA).

7. I understand that circumstances may arise that might cause the investigator to terminate my participation before the completion of the study.
8. I understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent except as specifically required by law.
9. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question that I may not wish to answer.
10. I understand that in the event of research related injury, compensation and medical treatment are not provided by the University of Virginia or the researcher.
11. I understand that if I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact:

Christian Steinmetz, Assistant Professor

Ridley Hall, 286

PO Box 400265

Charlottesville, VA 22903

Email: cls5p@virginia.edu

In signing this consent form, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the guidelines by this research study.

Subject Name (Print): _____

Subjects Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

APPENDIX B: Interview Protocol

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." – **Dr. Maya Angelou (2009)**

When I embarked on my journey as a doctoral student, I had a clear vision of conducting a research study centered on Blackness and included Black male student-athletes. This choice stemmed from my personal experience as a former student-athlete and my interactions with this group of students. I intended to develop a research study that not only drew upon scholarly work but also gave voice to the experiences of this student-athlete population, who often find their stories told on their behalf rather than by their own voices.

Interview Script:

"Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. This interview aims to gather detailed information about your experiences as a Black male student-athlete in relation to your academic motivation and athletic identity at predominantly White institutions. By sharing your insights, I hope to better understand better the unique challenges, perspectives, and successes you have encountered in this context. Please note that this interview is designed to be conversational and exploratory rather than a formal question-and-answer session I am interested in hearing your personal stories, reflections, and thoughts related to your experiences. I will ask open-ended questions during the interview to encourage you to share your thoughts freely. Instead of providing a predefined set of questions, I will invite you to describe specific situations or experiences related to your academic motivation and athletic identity as a Black male student-athlete in revenue or non-revenue-generating sports. It is important to emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers. Your unique experiences and perspectives are highly valuable to this study, and I encourage you to express yourself openly and honestly.

The interview will be audio-recorded with your permission, allowing me to capture all the details accurately. Please be assured that all data collected will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. When presenting the findings, your confidentiality will be strictly maintained by using pseudonyms or identifiers instead of your real name. Participation in this interview is entirely voluntary, and you can skip any question or withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

Before we begin, do you have any questions or concerns about the interview process? If not, we can proceed with the interview. Your participation is greatly appreciated, and your contribution will contribute to a better understanding of the experiences of Black male student-athletes in this context."

Reminders Before starting the interview:

- To protect your privacy and confidentiality, you will be able to pick a pseudonyms or aliases that will be used to when transcripts are coded. This means your real name will not be used in published or shared materials.
- This conversation is expected to last approximately 45-60 minutes. We appreciate your time and willingness to engage in this in-depth discussion.
- Please be aware that this conversation will be recorded for accurate data collection and analysis purposes. The recording will only be accessed by the research team and kept strictly confidential.

Interview Questions:

Building Rapport:

- Can you share your earliest memories or experiences with athletics?
- What factors influenced your decision to choose the University of Virginia?
- Can you describe your transition as a Black male student-athlete to UVA?

Outside Perceptions:

- In your opinion, how are Black male athletes typically portrayed in the media?
 - Follow-up: How do you feel about those (negative or positive) perceptions?
- Tell me about a positive experience you have had with a non-athlete.
- Tell me about a negative experience you have had with a non-athlete.
 - Follow-up: How does this make you feel about your overall experience as a Black male athlete at UVA?

Athletic Identity:

- Do you consider yourself a student-athlete or an athlete-student? Why?
- Do you feel that you suppress your athletic identity in an academic setting? Why?
 - Follow-up: How does that make you feel?
- What was the message that your family had about Black male athletes in sports?
 - How did this impact your decision to play sports?

Motivation:

- What initially inspired you to pursue college athletics?
 - Follow-up: When do you feel most motivated?
 - Follow-up: When do you feel least motivated?
- How does your community, particularly your family, support your academic endeavors?
Please provide an example.
- What motivates you academically?
 - Follow-up: Tell me of a time when you felt most motivated.
 - Follow-up: Tell me of a time when you felt least motivated.

Wrap Question:

- Is there anything else you want to share about your experiences that we need to discuss?

THE LAST WORD...

- If you could communicate one message to society about your identity as a Black male student-athlete, what would it be?

APPENDIX C: Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)

“I am deliberate and afraid of nothing.” - Audre Lorde (1984)

Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)

Version Attached: Abbreviated 7-Item, 3-Factor Version of the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale

Citation: Brewer, B.W. & Cornelius, A.E. (2001). Norms and factorial invariance of the athletic identity measurement scale. *Academic Athletic Journal*, 15, 103-113.

Instrument Type: Inventory/Questionnaire

Test Format: 7 items; responses are based on a 7-point scale.

Items: Participants responded to using the following response options: strongly disagree-1, disagree-2, slightly disagree-3, neither agree nor disagree-4, slightly agree-5, agree-6, strongly agree-7)

1. I consider myself an athlete.
2. I have many goals related to sport.
3. Most of my friends are athletes.
4. Sport is the most important part of my life.
5. I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else.
6. I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport.
7. I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport.

APPENDIX D: Athletic Identity Scale (AIMS)

“The most dangerous creation of any society is the man who has nothing to lose (Birnie, 2021).”

- James Baldwin

Version Attached: Abbreviated (AMS-C 28) College Version

Citation: Robert J. Vallerand, Luc G. Pelletier, Marc R. Blais, Nathalie M. Brière, Caroline B.

Senécal, Évelyne F. Vallières, 1992-1993 Educational and Psychological Measurement, vols. 52 and 53.

Instrument Type: Inventory/Questionnaire

Test Format: 28 items; responses are based on a 7-scale.

Items: See Breakdown Below

Does not correspond at all	Corresponds a little	Corresponds moderately	Corresponds a lot	Corresponds exactly
1	2	3	4	5
6	7			

Overarching Question: Why do you go to college?

1. Because with only a high-school degree I would not find a high-paying job later on.
2. Because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.
3. Because I think that a college education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.
4. For the intense feelings I experience when I am communicating my own ideas to others.
5. Honestly, I don't know; I really feel that I am wasting my time in school.
6. For the pleasure I experience while surpassing myself in my studies.
7. To prove to myself that I am capable of completing my college degree.
8. In order to obtain a more prestigious job later on.

9. For the pleasure I experience when I discover new things never seen before.
10. Because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.
11. For the pleasure that I experience when I read interesting authors.
12. I once had good reasons for going to college; however, now I wonder whether I should continue.
13. For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my personal accomplishments.
14. Because of the fact that when I succeed in college I feel important.
15. Because I want to have "the good life" later on.
16. For the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.
17. Because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation.
18. For the pleasure that I experience when I feel completely absorbed by what certain authors have written.
19. I can't see why I go to college and frankly, I couldn't care less.
20. For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult academic activities.
21. To show myself that I am an intelligent person.
22. In order to have a better salary later on.
23. Because my studies allow me to continue to learn about many things that interest me.
24. Because I believe that a few additional years of education will improve my competence as a worker.
25. For the "high" feeling that I experience while reading about various interesting subjects.
26. I don't know; I can't understand what I am doing in school.

27. Because college allows me to experience a personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence in my studies.

28. Because I want to show myself that I can succeed in my studies.

Component	Item Number
Intrinsic motivation to know (IMTK)	2, 9, 16, and 23
Intrinsic motivation to accomplish things (IMTA)	6, 13, 20, and 27
Intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (IMTE)	4, 11, 18, and 25
Extrinsic motivation – external (EMER)	3, 10, 17, and 24
Extrinsic motivation – introjected (EMIN)	7, 14, 21, and 28
Extrinsic motivation – identified regulation (EMID)	1, 8, 15, and 22
Amotivation	5, 12, 19, and 26

After the scores have been calculated, the AMS instrument's overall score is determined as an individual Self Determination Index (SDI) using the following formula (Zeng & Yao, 2023):

- $2 \times (\text{know} + \text{acc} + \text{stim}) / 3 + \text{iden} - ((\text{intro} + \text{reg}) / 2 + 2\text{amo})$
 - Interpretations of the formula:
 - know = intrinsic motivation to know
 - acc = intrinsic motivation to accomplishments
 - stim = intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation
 - iden = identification
 - intro = introjected regulation
 - amo = amotivation

APPENDIX E: Community Cultural Wealth Survey (CCWS)

“I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free” (Kernodle, 2008). – **Nina Simone**

Version Attached: Community Cultural Wealth Survey (CCWS)

Citation: Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 69–91.

Items: See Breakdown Below

Forms of Capital	Meaning
Aspirational Capital	Aspirational capital is the ability to sustain hopes and dreams for the future amidst both real and perceived barriers.
Familial Capital	Familial capital is the cultural knowledge and nuance obtained from family and community experiences, for example how the communal orientation of many Latin cultures may predispose networking skills.
Social Capital	Social capital is leveraging existing community resources and connections in building a network in support of your goals.
Linguistic Capital	Linguistic capital is the sum intellectual, social and communication skills attained through a particular language, history and experiences.
Resistant Capital	Resistant capital is the inherited foundation and historical legacy of communities of colors and marginalized groups in resisting inequality and pursuing equal rights. This includes embracing a resistance to stereotypes that are not authentic to your sense of self.
Navigational Capital	the ability to maneuver through systems and institutions that historically were not designed for you. This capital empowers individuals to move within environments that can feel both unsupportive or hostile.

“Everybody wanted to know what I would do if I didn’t win... I guess we’ll never know.”

- Kanye West (2005)

REFERENCES

"For while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard. There isn't any other tale to tell, it's the only light we've got in all this darkness (Baldwin, 1957)." – **James Baldwin, Sonny's Blues**

10 inspiring quotes from Black Changemakers. Bentley CareerEdge. (2022, February 17).

<https://careeredge.bentley.edu/blog/2022/02/18/10-inspiring-quotes-from-black-changemakers/>

Adichie, C. N. (2009). The danger of a single story.

Adler, P., & Adler, P.A. (1991). *Backboards and blackboards: College athletes and role engulfment*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Adler, P., & Adler, P. A. (1987). Role conflict and identity salience: College athletics and the academic role. *The Social science journal*, 24(4), 443-455.

Anderson, K. S. (1990). The effect of athletic participation on the academic aspirations and achievement of African American males in a New York City high school. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 59(3), 507-516.

Anderson, L. A., O'Brien Caughy, M., & Owen, M. T. (2022). "The Talk" and parenting while Black in America: Centering race, resistance, and refuge. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 48(3-4), 475-506.

Angelou, M. (2009). *I know why the caged birds sing*. Ballantine Books.

Angelou, M. (2015). *The complete poetry*. Random House.

Ariogul S (2009). Academic Motivations of Pre-Service English Language Teachers. Hacettepe University J. Educ. (36):12-19.

- Armstrong, K. L., & Jennings, M. A. (2018). Race, sport, and sociocognitive “place” in higher education: Black male student-athletes as critical theorists. *Journal of Black Studies*, 49(4), 349-369.
- Aronson, B., & Laughter, J. (2016). The theory and practice of culturally relevant education: A synthesis of research across content areas. *Review of educational research*, 86(1), 163-206.
- Asante, M., & Kemet, K. (1990). *Afrocentricity and knowledge*. Trenton.
- Baldwin, J. (1957). *Sonny's Blue's*. Oxford University Press, pp. 483-513.
- Baldwin, A. (2021, July 15). *Swimming-black swimmers still under-represented in the pool*. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/sports/swimming-black-swimmers-still-under-represented-pool-2021-07-15/>
- Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of self-regulation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 248-287.
- Barnes, M. (1989). *Talk that talk: An anthology of African-American storytelling*. Simon and Schuster.
- Bassey, M. O. (2013). A Review of “The Mis-Education of the Negro” Carter G. Woodson, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc., 1990/1933. 215 pp. \$9.55.
- Bassey, M. O. (2015). The centrality of experience in Carter G. Woodson’s The Mis-Education of the Negro. *Journal of Philosophy & History of Education*, 65(1), 123-135.
- Beamon, K., & Bell, P. A. (2006). Academics versus athletics: An examination of the effects of background and socialization on African American male student athletes. *The Social Science Journal*, 43(3), 393-403.
- Beamon, K. K. (2008). “‘Used Good’”: Former African American College Student-Athlete” Perception of Exploitation by Division I Universities. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 352-364.

- Beamon, K. K. (2010). Are sports overemphasized in the socialization process of African American males? A qualitative analysis of former collegiate athletes' perception of sport socialization. *Journal of black studies*, 41(2), 281-300.
- Beamon, K. K. (2012). 'I'm a baller': athletic identity foreclosure among African-American former student-athletes. *Journal of African American Studies* 16(2): 195–208.
- Benton, M. A. (2001). Challenges African American students face at predominantly White institutions. *Colorado State University Journal of Student Affairs*, 10, 21-28.
- Bernal, M., London, B. A., & Bourdieu, P. (1977): *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans R. Nice (Cambridge). Branham, B. (1989): *Unruly Eloquence: Lucian and the Comedy of Traditions*.
- Bimper Jr, A. Y., Harrison Jr, L., & Clark, L. (2013). Diamonds in the rough: Examining a case of successful Black male student athletes in college sport. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 39(2), 107-130.
- Birnie, I. (2021, August 2). 13 James Baldwin quotes that are still painfully true today. Penguin Books UK. <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/2021/08/best-james-baldwin-quotes-still-true-relevant-today>
- Bouchard, T. J., Jr. (1976). Unobtrusive measures: An inventory of uses. *Sociological Methods and Research*, 4, 267-300.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline theory of practice* (Vol. 16). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1990). *Reproduction in education, society and culture* (Vol. 4). Sage.
- Branch, T. (2023, October 5). *The shame of college sports*. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/10/the-shame-of-college-sports/308643/>

- Brewer, B. W., Van Raalte, J. L., & Linder, D. E. (1993). Athletic identity: Hercules' muscles or Achilles heel? *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 24(2), 237-254.
- Brewer, B., & Cornelius, A. (2001). Norms and factorial invariance of the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale. *Academic Athletic Journal*, 15(2), 103-113.
- Brewer, B. W., Cornelius, A. E., Stephan, Y., & Van Raalte, J. (2010). Self-protective changes in athletic identity following anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction. *Psychology of sport and exercise*, 11(1), 1-5.
- Bridges, E. M. (2011). Racial identity development and psychological coping strategies of undergraduate and graduate African American males. *Journal of African American Males in Education (JAAME)*, 2(2), 150-167.
- Brooms, D. R., & Davis, A. R. (2017). Exploring Black male" community cultural wealth and college aspirations. *Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men*, 6(1), 33-58.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2000). *Ecological systems theory*. Oxford University Press.
- Bruce, D. D. (1992). WEB Du Bois and the idea of double consciousness. *American Literature*, 64(2), 299-309.
- Burke, K. (1993). Negative stereotyping of student-athletes. In W. D. Kirk & S. V. Kirk (Eds.), *Student-athletes: Shattering the myths and sharing the realities* (pp. 93-98). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Caccamo, P. (2017, December 07). The Crisis of Sports in Inner-City America. Retrieved November 21, 2020, from <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-crisis-of-sports-in-i-b-9410796>
- Cade, J. B. (1935). Out of the mouths of ex-slaves. *The Journal of Negro History*, 20(3), 294-337.

- Campbell, D. T., & Fiske, D. W. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 81-105.
- Capers, B. (2023, February 15). *How many NCAA players actually go pro*. EXACT Sports. <https://exactsports.com/blog/how-many-ncaa-players-actually-go-pro/2023/02/15/>
- Carver, R. L., & Enfield, R. P. (2006). John Dewe's philosophy of education is alive and well. *Education and Culture*, 55-67.
- Christensen, R., Pearson, L. M., & Johnson, W. (1992). Case-deletion diagnostics for mixed models. *Technometrics*, 34(1), 38-45.
- Clayton, A. B., McClay, L. P., Davis, R. D., & Tevis, T. L. (2023). Considering both HBCU and PWI options: Exploring the college choice process of first-year Black students. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 94(1), 34-59.
- Cliburn, E. (2021, June 21). *The equity debate in College Sports Goes Beyond Financial Compensation*. INSIGHT Into Diversity. Retrieved April 8, 2023, from <https://www.insightintodiversity.com/the-equity-debate-in-college-sports-goes-beyond-financial-compensation/>
- Coakley, J. (2015). *Sports in society: Issues and controversies* (11th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Cole, N. (2019). What is cultural capital? Do I have it? An overview of the concept. *Thought Co*. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-cultural-capital-do-i-have-it-3026374>.
- Cooper, J. N. (2016). Excellence beyond athletics: Best practices for enhancing black male student athlete's educational experiences and outcomes. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 49(3), 267-283.

- Cooper, J. N., & Hall, J. (2016). Understanding black male student athletes' experiences at a historically black college/university: A mixed methods approach. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 10*(1), 46-63.
- Cooper, J. N., & Hall, J. (2016). Understanding black male student athletes' experiences at a historically black college/university: A mixed methods approach. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 10*(1), 46-63.
- Cooper, J. N., Porter, C. J., & Davis, T. J. (2017). Success through community cultural wealth: Reflections from Black female college athletes at a historically Black college/university (HBCU) and a historically White institution (HWI). *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport, 10*(2), 129-156.
- Cooper, J. N. (2019). Why are black males supported only when they're athletes. *The Boston Globe*.
- Cooper, J. N., Corral, M. D., Macaulay, C. D., Cooper, M. S., Nwadike, A., & Mallery Jr, M. (2019). Collective uplift: the impact of a holistic development support program on black male former college athletes' experiences and outcomes. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 32*(1), 21-46.
- Cooper, J. N., Davis, T. J., & Dougherty, S. (2017). Not so black and white: A multi-divisional exploratory analysis of male student-athletes' experiences at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) institutions. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 34*(1), 59-78.
- Connelly, L. M. (2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Medsurg nursing, 25*(6), 435.
- Cottongim, N. (2023, September 15). *Top 20 college athletes with the highest Nil Valuations*. 93.5 / 107.5 The Fan. <https://1075thefan.com/playlist/top-20-college-athletes-with-the-highest-nil-valuations/item/1/>

- Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark V. L., Gutmann, M., & Hanson, W. (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. In *Handbook on mixed methods in the behavioral and social sciences*, ed. A. Tashakkori and C. Teddlie, 209–40. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Guetterman, T. C. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (6th ed.). Pearson.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cross, W. E., Jr. (1991). *Shades of Black: Diversity in African American identity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Criswell, J. (2023, July 1). *What is the difference between FCS and FBS?* Chron. <https://www.chron.com/sports/college/article/difference-fcs-fbs-18180717.php>
- Dayal, S. (1996). Diaspora and double consciousness. *The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, 29(1), 46-62.
- Deci, E. L. (1975). *Intrinsic motivation*. New York: Plenum
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.
- Deci, E. L., Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). Motivation and education: The self-determination perspective. *Educational psychologist*, 26(3-4), 325-346.

- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2023). *Critical race theory: An introduction* (Vol. 87). NyU press.
- Different types of offers: Athletic scholarships*. NCSA College Recruiting. (2024, January 24).
<https://www.ncsasports.org/recruiting/managing-recruiting-process/walk-on-vs-scholarship#full-ride-scholarship-offer>
- Dillard, C. B. (2000). The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: Examining an endarkened feminist epistemology in educational research and leadership. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13(6), 661–681.
- Dika, Sandra L., Miguel A. Pando, Brett Q. Tempest, and Monica E. Allen. 2018. “Examining the Cultural Wealth of Underrepresented Minority Engineering Persisters.” *Journal of Professional Issues in Engineering Education and Practice* 144 (2): 05017008.
[https://doi.org/10.1061/\(ASCE\)EI.1943-5541.0000358](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)EI.1943-5541.0000358)
- Dover, A. G. (2013). Teaching for social justice: From conceptual frameworks to classroom practices. *Multicultural perspectives*, 15(1), 3-11.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903a). *The talented tenth* (pp. 102-104). New York, NY: James Pott and Company.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903b). *Souls of Black folk*. A. C. McClurg.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (2018). *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches*. University of Massachusetts Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv346v0g>
- Edwards, H.T. (1983). The Exploitation of Black Athletes. *AGB Reports*, 25(6), 37-46.
- Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 62(1), 107-115.
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). Qualitative content analysis: A focus on trustworthiness. *SAGE open*, 4(1), 2158244014522633.

- Engstrom, C. M., Sedlacek, W. E., & McEwen M. K. (1997). Faculty attitudes toward male revenue and nonrevenue student-athletes. *Journal of College Student Development, 36*, 217-227.
- Fairchild, A. J., Horst, S. J., Finney, S. J., & Barron, K. E. (2005). Evaluating existing and new validity evidence for the Academic Motivation Scale. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 30*(3), 331-358.
- Fergus, E., & Noguera, P. (2010). Theories of change among single-sex schools for Black and Latino boys: An intervention in search of theory. New York: Metropolitan Center for Urban Education.
- Fisher, T. A., & Padmawidjaja, I. (1999). Parental influences on career development perceived by African American and Mexican American college students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 27*(3), 136-152.
- Fitzgerald, A., Parr, G., & Williams, J. (2022). Diverse perspectives and lived experiences of educational work. *The Australian Educational Researcher, 49*(3), 481-488.
- Franklin, V. P. (1995). Living our stories, telling our truths: Autobiography and the making of the African-American intellectual tradition. New York: Scribner.
- Fraser, J., Fahlman, D. W., Arscott, J., & Guillot, I. (2018). Pilot testing for feasibility in a study of student retention and attrition in online undergraduate programs. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 19*(1).
- Freeman, K. (1999). HBCs or PWIs? African American high school student' consideration of higher education institution types. *The Review of Higher Education, 23*(1), 91-106.
- Gaston-Gayles, J.L. (2004). Examining Academic and Athletic Motivation Among Student Athletes at a Division I University. *Journal of College Student Development 45*(1), 75-83. doi:10.1353/csd.2004.0005.

- Gay, G. (1975). Organizing and designing culturally pluralistic curriculum. *Educational Leadership, 33*, 176–183.
- Gay, G. (1980). Ethnic pluralism in social studies education: Where to from here? *Social Education, 44*, 52–55.
- Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*, 106–116.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Gay, G. (2013). Teaching to and through cultural diversity. *Curriculum inquiry, 43*(1), 48-70.
- Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. teachers' college press.
- Gayles, J. G., Comeaux, E., Ofoegbu, E., & Grummert, S. (2018). Neoliberal capitalism and racism in college athletics: Critical approaches for supporting Student-Athletes. *New Directions for Student Services, 2018*(163), 11-21.
- Goggin, J. A. (1993). *Carter G. Woodson: A life in black history*, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press
- Grusky, D. (2019). *Social stratification, class, race, and gender in sociological perspective*. Routledge.
- Guiffrida, D. A., & Douthit, K. Z. (2010). The Black student experience at predominantly White colleges: Implications for school and college counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 88*(3), 311-318.

- Hall, S. (2006). What is this 'black' in black popular culture?. In *Stuart Hall* (pp. 479-489).
Routledge.
- Harmon, D. A., & Ford, D. Y. (2010). The underachievement of African American males in K-12 education. *The state of the African American male*, 3-17.
- Harper, S. R., Williams, C. D., & Blackman, H. W. (2013). *Black male student-athletes and racial inequities in NCAA Division I college sports*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education.
- Harper, S. R. (2018). *Black male student-athletes and racial inequities in NCAA Division I college sports: 2018 edition*. Los Angeles: University of Southern California, Race and Equity Center.
- Harper, S. R., & Kuykendall, J. A. (2012). Institutional Efforts to Improve Black Male Student Achievement: A Standards-Based Approach. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 44(2), 23–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2012.655234>
- Harris, O. (1997). The role of sport in the Black community. *Sociological Focus*, 30(4), 311-319.
- Harris, P. C. (2015). Counseling and advising black male high school student-athletes. In *Black males and intercollegiate athletics: An exploration of problems and solutions* (pp. 1-19). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Harrison, C. K., & Lawrence, S. M. (2003). African American student athlete" perceptions of career transition in sport: A qualitative and visual elicitation. *Race ethnicity and education*, 6(4), 373-394.
- Harrison, C. K. (2008). "Athleticated" versus educated: A qualitative investigation of campus perceptions, recruiting and African American male student-athletes. *Challenge Online*, 14(1), 39-60.

- Harrison, C. K., Rasmussen, J., Connolly, C., Janson, N., Bukstein, S., & Parks, C. (2010). Diggi"deeper into the culture of revenue sports. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 4(3), 325-332. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 4(3), 325-332.
- Harrison, L., Harrison, C. K., & Moore, L. N. (2002). African American racial identity and sport. *Sport, Education and Society*, 7(2), 121-133.
- Harrison, L., Bimper, A. Y., Smith, M. P., & Logan, A. D. (2017). The mis-education of the African American student-athlete. *Kinesiology Review*, 6(1), 60-69.
- Harry, M. (2023). Expanding Yoss's Community Cultural Wealth to Intercollegiate Athletics. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*.
- Haynes, S. (2020, December 3). Zanele Muholi Documents Black, queer life in South Africa. Time. <https://time.com/5917436/zanele-muholi/>
- Hester, S. R. (2017). *The effect of motivation on academic performance in traditional and non-traditional freshmen college students* (Doctoral dissertation, Grand Canyon University).
- Helms, J. E. (1990). An overview of Black racial identity theory. *Black and White racial identity: Theory, research, and practice*, 9-32.
- Herndon, M. K., & Hirt, J. B. (2004). Black students and their families: What leads to success in college. *Journal of Black Studies*, 34(4), 489-513.
- Himelhoch, C. R., Nichols, A., Ball, S. R., & Black, L. C. (1997). A Comparative Study of the Factors Which Predict Persistence for African American Students at Historically Black Institutions and Predominantly White Institutions. ASHE Annual Meeting Paper.
- Hiramori, D., Knaphus-Soran, E., Lamar Foster, J., & Litzler, E. (2024). Critically quantitative: Measuring community cultural wealth on surveys. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 1-19.

- Hoberman, J. (2000). The price of black dominance. *Society*, 37(3), 49.
- Hodge, S., Burden, J., Robinson, L., & Bennett, R. (2008). Theorizing on the stereotyping of Black male student-athletes: Issues and implications. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 2(2), 203-226.
- Hoiness, A.R., Weathington, B.L. & Cotrell, A.L. (2008) Perceptions of female athletes based on observer characteristics. *Athletic Insight*, 10(1). *Online Journal of Sport Psychology*, Available at: <http://athleticinsight.com/Vol10Iss1/PerceptionsofFemales.htm> [Accessed: 14th January 2010].
- Hosick, M. B., & Sproull, N. (2012). NCAA: Eligibility and Success. *Journal of College Admission*, 217, 31-33.
- Houle, J. L. W., Brewer, B. W., & Kluck, A. S. (2010). Developmental trends in athletic identity: A two-part retrospective study. *Journal of Sport Behaviour*, 33(2), 146-159.
- Howard, T. C. (2013). How does it feel to be a problem? Black male students, schools, and learning in enhancing the knowledge base to disrupt deficit frameworks. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1), 54-86.
- Howard, T. C., & Reynolds, R. (2013). Examining Black male identity through a raced, classed, and gendered lens: Critical race theory and the intersectionality of the Black male experience. In *Handbook of critical race theory in education* (pp. 252-267). Routledge.
- Houston, S. L., Pearman, F. A., & McGee, E. O. (2020). Risk, protection, and identity development in high-achieving Black males in high school. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 30(4), 875-895.
- Howe, J. E. (2020). Manifestations of athletic identity in Black male collegiate student-athletes: Introduction of a model. *Journal of Amateur Sport*, 6(2), 107-135.

- Howe, J. E. (2023). Black male college athlete identity: A scoping review. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 58(1), 43-65.
- Hurtado, S. (2015). The transformative paradigm. In A. M. Martínez-Alemán, B. Pusser, & E. M. Bensimon (Eds.), *Critical approaches to the study of higher education: A practical introduction* (pp. 130–152). Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hurtado, S. (2022). THE TRANSFORMATIVE PARADIGM. *Advancing Culturally Responsive Research and Researchers: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods*, 2.
- Ivankova, N. V., Creswell, J. W., & Stick, S. L. (2006). Using mixed-methods sequential explanatory design: From theory to practice. *Field methods*, 18(1), 3-20.
- Jack, A. A. (2019). *The privileged poor: How elite colleges are failing disadvantaged students*. Harvard University Press.
- Jemison, M. (2001). *Find where the wind goes: moments from my life*. New York, Scholastic.
- Jiji, T. (2021, February 22). *Remembering the wise words of miss Nina Simone-- Nina Simone quotes singer*. L'Officiel USA. <https://www.lofficielusa.com/pop-culture/nina-simone-singer-quotes-jazz>
- Jessop, A., Baker, T. A., Tweedie, J. W., & Holden, J. T. (2023). Charting a new path: Regulating college athlete name, image and likeness after NCAA v. Alston through collective bargaining. *Journal of Sport Management*, 37(5), 307-318.
- Johnson, D. A., & Acquaviva, J. (2012). Point/counterpoint: Paying college athletes. *The Sport Journal*, 15(1).
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of mixed methods research*, 1(2), 112-133.
- Kalman-Lamb, N., Silva, D., & Mellis, J. (2021). I signed my life to rich white guys?: athletes on the racial dynamics of college sports. *The Guardian*.

- Kelly, D. D., & Dixon, M. A. (2014). Successfully navigating life transitions among African American male student-athletes: A review and examination of constellation mentoring as a promising strategy. *Journal of Sport Management, 28*(5), 498-514.
- Kernodle, T. L. (2008). "I Wish I Knew how it would Feel to be Free": Nina Simone and the Redefining of the Freedom Song of the 1960s. *Journal of the Society for American Music, 2*(3), 295-317.
- Kim, Y. (2011). The pilot study in qualitative inquiry: Identifying issues and learning lessons for culturally competent research. *Qualitative Social Work, 10*(2), 190-206.
- Kimball, A., & Freysinger, V. J. (2003). Leisure, stress, and coping: The sport participation of collegiate student-athletes. *Leisure sciences, 25*(2-3), 115-141.
- Kim, E., & Hargrove, D. T. (2013). Deficient or resilient: A critical review of Black male academic success and persistence in higher education. *The Journal of Negro Education, 82*(3), 300-311.
- Köseoglu, Y. (2013). Academic motivation of the first-year university students and the self-determination theory. *Educational Research and Reviews, 8*(8), 418.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995a). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Theory into practice, 34*(3), 159-165.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995b). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American educational research journal, 32*(3), 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers college record, 97*(1), 47-68.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2022). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. John Wiley & Sons.

- Lapchick, R.E. (1987). The high school athlete as the future college student-athlete. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 1-2, 104–121.
- Lapchick, R. (2008). Breaking the college color barrier: Studies in courage. *ESPN Go*.
- Lamont-Mills, A., & Christensen, S. A. (2006). Athletic identity and its relationship to sport participation levels. *Journal of science and medicine in sport*, 9(6), 472-478.
- Lee, J., & Opio, T. (2011). Coming to America: Challenges and difficulties faced by African student athletes. *Sport, Education and Society*, 16(5), 629-644.
- Lewis, T. (2010). The heavy burdens of black college athletes. *The Crisis*, 12-7.
- Lorde, Audre, author. (1984). *Sister outsider: essays and speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press,
- Lorde, A. (2000). *The collected poems of Audre Lorde*. WW Norton & Company.
- Lorde, A. (2017). *Your silence will not protect you*. Silver Press.
- Lomax, M. E. (2000). Athletics vs. education: Dilemmas of Black youth. *Society*, 37(3), 21.
- Lifschitz, A., Sauder, M., & Stevens, M. L. (2014). Football as a status system in US higher education. *Sociology of Education*, 87(3), 204-219.
- Lyons, J. (2019, August 6). Oprah, Barack Obama pay tribute to late author Toni Morrison: “she was our conscience. our seer. our truth-teller.” Good Morning America.
<https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/culture/story/tributes-pour-social-media-late-author-toni-morrison-64804070>
- Majid, M. A. A., Othman, M., Mohamad, S. F., Lim, S. A. H., & Yusof, A. (2017). Piloting for interviews in qualitative research: Operationalization and lessons learnt. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(4), 1073-1080.
- Malcolm, X. (1990). *Malcolm X speaks: Selected speeches and statements*. Grove Press.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2011). *Designing qualitative research* (5th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

- Matias, M. (2022). Name, Image & Likeness (NIL): Three Key Legal Issues Facing Businesses In College Athlete Endorsement Deals To Date. *Mondaq Business Briefing*, NA. https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A690425085/GPS?u=tel_s_tsla&sid=bookmark-GPS&xid=c8d0f8c7
- May, R. A. B. (2009). The good and bad of it all: Professional black male basketball players as role models for young black male basketball players. *Sociology of sport journal*, 26(3), 443-461.
- Melendez, M. C. (2008). Black football players on a predominantly White college campus: Psychosocial and emotional realities of the Black college athlete experience. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 34(4), 423-451.
- Menke, D. J. (2016). Inside the bubble: College experiences of student-athletes in revenue-producing sports. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 10(1), 16-32.
- Mero-Jaffe, I. (2011). 'Is that what I said?' Interview transcript approval by participants: an aspect of ethics in qualitative research. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 10(3), 231-247.
- Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary. (10th Ed.) (1993), Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster
- Merriweather Hunn, L. R., Guy, T. C., & Mangliitz, E. (2006). Who can speak for whom? Using counter-storytelling to challenge racial hegemony.
- Mertens, D. M. (2007). Transformative paradigm: Mixed methods and social justice. *Journal of mixed methods research*, 1(3), 212-225.
- Mertens, D. M., Bledsoe, K. L., Sullivan, M., & Wilson, A. (2010). Utilization of mixed methods for transformative purposes. *SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*, 2, 193-214.
- Milner IV, H. R. (2007). Race, culture, and researcher positionality: Working through dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen. *Educational researcher*, 36(7), 388-400.

- Mitchell, T., Rongen, F., Perry, J., Littlewood, M., & Till, K. (2021). "Validation of the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale in Youth Academy Soccer Players," *Journal of Athlete Development and Experience: Vol. 3: Iss. 3, Article 4.*
- Mitten, M., Musselman, J. L., & Burton, B. (2009). Commercialized intercollegiate athletics: A proposal for targeted reform consistent with American cultural forces and marketplace realities. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport, 2*, 202-232.
- Moore, E. (2011). The role of sports in the African American community: Modern day slavery or upward social mobility. *cognita, 1.*
- Murty, K. S., Roebuck, J. B., & McCamey, J. D. (2014). Race and Class Exploitation: A Study of Black Male Student Athletes (BSAS) on White Campuses. *Race, Gender & Class, 21*(3/4), 156–173.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43496990>
- Nassaji, H. (2015). Qualitative and descriptive research: Data type versus data analysis. *Language teaching research, 19*(2), 129-132.
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2011a). Trends in academic success rates and federal graduation rates at NCAA Division II institutions. Retrieved from
<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/NCAA/PDFs/2011/Trends+in+Academic+Success+Rates+and+Federal+Graduation+Rates+at+NCAA+Division+II+Institutions>
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2011b). Trends in graduation success rates and federal graduation rates at NCAA Division I institutions. Retrieved from
<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/NCAA/PDFs/2011/Trends+in+Graduation+Success+Rates+and+Federal+Graduation+Rates+at+NCAA+Division+I+institutions>

- National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics. (2024, January 10). *Division I learfield directors' cup standings*. <https://nacda.com/news/2024/1/11/directorscup-division-i-learfield-directors-cup-standings.aspx#:~:text=The%20LEARFIELD%20Directors'%20Cup%20was,institution's%20finish%20in%20NCAA%20Championships>.
- NCAA. (2021). *Trends in the graduation success rates and federal graduation rates at Division I institutions*. Retrieved October 2, 2021, from https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/research/gradrates/2021/2021D1RES_GSRTrends.pdf
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2024). [Official Athletics Website]. Retrieved from <http://www.ncaa.org>
- NCAA. (2022). *NCAA Demographic Database at Division I Institutions*. Retrieved April 12, 2023, from <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2018/12/13/ncaa-demographics-database.aspx>
- NCAA-Media Center. (2022). *NCAA student-athletes surpass 520,000, set new record*. NCAA.org. <https://www.ncaa.org/news/2022/12/5/media-center-ncaa-student-athletes-surpass-520-000-set-new-record.aspx>
- Nicholls, J. G. (1984). Achievement motivation: Conceptions of ability, subjective experience, task choice, and performance. *Psychological Review*, 91, 328–346.
- Njororai Simiyu, W. W. (2012). Challenges of Being a Black Student Athlete on U.S. College Campuses. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 5, 40–63.
- Noguera, P. (2001, February 11). The role and influence of environmental and cultural factors on the academic performance of African American males. *Motion Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/pnaamale1.html>
- Noguera, P. (2008). *The trouble with Black boys . . . and other reflections on race, equity, and the future of public education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Noguera, P. A. (2012). Saving Black and Latino boys: What schools can do to make a difference. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 93(5), 8-12.
- Obama, M. (2021). *Becoming*. Crown trade paperback edition. New York, Crown.
- Obenson, T. (2019, April 18). *How nia dacosta went from wide-eyed NYU film grad to Hollywood director on the rise*. IndieWire.
<https://www.indiewire.com/features/general/little-woods-nia-dacosta-tessa-thompson-neon-1202059462/>
- Okagbue, H. I., Oguntunde, P. E., Obasi, E. C., & Akhmetshin, E. M. (2021). Trends and usage pattern of SPSS and Minitab Software in Scientific research. In *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* (Vol. 1734, No. 1, p. 012017). IOP Publishing.
- Oliver, M., & Shapiro, T. (2013). *Black wealth/white wealth: A new perspective on racial inequality*. Routledge.
- Orfield, G. (2001). *Schools more separate: Consequences of a decade of resegregation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.
- Oriard, M. (2012). NCAA academic reform: History, context and challenges. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 5(1), 4-18.
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research*, 42, 533-544.
- Pallant, J. (2016). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using IBM SPSS* (6th ed.). McGraw Hill.
- Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational researcher*, 41(3), 93-97.

- Paule, A. L., & Gilson, T. A. (2010). Current collegiate experiences of big-time, non-revenue, NCAA athletes. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 3(2), 333-347.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pan, J., Fei, Y., & Foster, P. (2014). Case-deletion diagnostics for linear mixed models. *Technometrics*, 56(3), 269-281.
- Peach, J. (2007). College athletics, universities, and the NCAA. *The Social Science Journal*, 44(1), 12-22.
- Person, D. R., & LeNoir, K. M. (1997). Retention issues and models for African American male athletes. In M. J. Cuyjet (Ed.), *Helping African American men succeed in college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Pittman, J. P. (2016). Double consciousness.
- Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2010). *Essentials of nursing research: Appraising evidence for nursing practice*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. 8.
- Powell, S. (2008). *Souled out? How Blacks are winning and losing in sports*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Ramos, D. P. R., & Habig, E. G. (2019). Measuring the academic motivation of selected first year nursing students: A preliminary study. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 7(8), 173-182.
- Rashotte, L. (2007). Social influence. *The Blackwell encyclopedia of sociology*.
- Reiss, S. (2012). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. *Teaching of psychology*, 39(2), 152-156.
- Reynolds, L., Fisher, D., & Cavil, J. K. (2012). Impact of Demographic Variables on African-American Student Athletes' Academic Performance. *Educational Foundations*, 26, 93-111.

- Rhee, Y. C., Barnes, J., Kim, W., & Carroll, D. (2018). MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING UNIVERSITY SELECTION OF NON-REVENUE GENERATION SPORT STUDENT-ATHLETES. *Journal of Contemporary Athletics*, 12(3).
- Ronkainen, N. J., Kavoura, A., & Ryba, T. V. (2016). A meta-study of athletic identity research in sport psychology: Current status and future directions. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 9(1), 45-64.
- Rubin, L. M. (2016). The detrimental effects of big-time college sports on black student-athletes' academic success. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 10(3), 185-198.
- Ryan, R. M. (1982). Control and information in the intrapersonal sphere: An extension of cognitive evaluation theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 43, 450–461.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary educational psychology*, 25(1), 54-67.
- Sablan, Jenna R. 2019. "Can You Really Measure That? Combining Critical Race Theory and Quantitative Methods." *American Educational Research Journal* 56 (1): 178–203.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831218798325>
- Sage, G. H. (1987). The social world of high school athletic coaches: Multiple role demands and their consequences. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 4(3), 213-228.
- Saleh, A., & Bista, K. (2017). Examining factors impacting online survey response rates in educational research: perceptions of graduate students. *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation*, 13(20), 63-74.
- Schroder, C., Medves, J., Paterson, M., Byrnes, V., Chapman, C., O'Riordan, A., & Kelly, C. (2011). Development and pilot testing of the collaborative practice assessment tool. *Journal of interprofessional care*, 25(3), 189-195.

- Scott, J. A., Taylor, K. J., & Palmer, R. T. (2013). Challenges to success in higher education: An examination of educational challenges from the voices of college-bound Black males. *Journal of Negro Education, 82*(3), 288-299.
- Schaepkoetter, C. C., Bass, J. R., & Gordon, B. S. (2015). Student-athlete school selection: A family systems theory approach. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport, 8*(2), 266-286.
- Sellers, R. M. (1992). Racial differences in the predictors for academic achievement of student-athletes in Division I revenue producing sports. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 9*(1), 48-59.
- Sellers, M. (2022). Name, Image, and Likeness (NILs): What Impact Will NILs Have on Students in the Classroom?. Image, and Likeness (NILs): What Impact Will NILs Have on Students in the Classroom.
- Sgier, L. (2012). Qualitative data analysis. *An Initiat Gebert Ruf Stift, 19*, 19-21.
- Siegel, D. (1994). HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE PLIGHT OF THE BLACK MALE ATHLETE. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 18*(3), 207-223.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/019372394018003002>
- Simon, M. K., & Goes, J. (2011). What is phenomenological research? In *Dissertation and Scholarly Research: Recipes for Success*.
- Simmons, S. (2020). First-generation Black males' challenges in attending a PWI: Understanding what makes them persist.
- Simons, H. D., Van Rheenen, D., & Covington, M. V. (1999). Academic motivation and the student athlete. *Journal of College Student Development, 40*, 151-162.
- Smith, J. A., & Shinebourne, P. (2012). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis*. American Psychological Association.

- Spittle M, Jackson K, Casey M (2009). Applying Self-Determination Theory To Understand the Motivation for Becoming a Physical Education Teacher. *Teaching Teach. Educ.* 25(1):190-197.
- Suri, H. (2011). Purposeful sampling in qualitative research synthesis. *Qualitative research journal*, 11(2), 63-75.
- Spring, J. (2021). *Deculturalization and the struggle for equality: A brief history of the education of dominated cultures in the United States*. Routledge.
- Stanton, L. M., Taylor, L. M., Lobb, J. M., Holmes, P., Brady, S., & Scruggs, I. (2022). Book Review: Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? and Other Conversations About Race. *Journal of Youth Development*, 17(3), 10.
- Syed, M., & Fish, J. (2018). Revisiting Erik Erikson's legacy on culture, race, and ethnicity. *Identity*, 18(4), 274-283.
- Tatum, B. D. (1997). *"Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?"* Basic Books/Hachette Book Group.
- Thacker, K. O. (2014). *Graduation rates: A comparison of college graduation success rates of dual enrollment versus non-dual enrollment students at the community college* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga).
- The one chart you need to understand how income is distributed in the US*. World Economic Forum. (2022, July 6). <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/07/household-income-distribution-wealth-inequality-united-states/>
- Throsby, D. (1999). Cultural capital. *Journal of cultural economics*, 23, 3-12.
- Thompson-Miller, R., & Feagin, J. R. (2018). The reality and impact of legal segregation in the United States. *Handbook of the sociology of racial and ethnic relations*, 203-213.

- Toyon, M. A. S. (2021). Explanatory sequential design of mixed methods research: Phases and challenges. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science (2147-4478)*, 10(5), 253-260.
- Torraco, R. J. (2016). Writing integrative literature reviews: Using the past and present to explore the future. *Human resource development review*, 15(4), 404-428.
- Trotter II, R. T. (2012). Qualitative research sample design and sample size: Resolving and unresolved issues and inferential imperatives. *Preventive medicine*, 55(5), 398-400.
- Turner, J. C. (1991). *Social influence*. Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). Without health care coverage in ZCTA5 90804. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved September 27, 2022, from <https://data.census.gov/>
- Vallerand, R. J., Blais, M. R., Brière, N .M., and Pelletier, L . G. (1989). Construction et validation de l'Echelle de Motivation en Education (EME) (Construction and validation of the Echellede Motivationen Education (EME)]. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 21,323-349.
- Vallerand R., Pelletier L., Blais M., Brière N., Sénécal C., Vallières, E. (1992). The Academic Motivation Scale: A Measure of Intrinsic, Extrinsic and Amotivation in Education. *Educ. Psychol. Meas.* 52:1003-1017.
- Walker, A. (1982). *The color purple*. [Place of publication not identified], Pocket Bks.
- Walker, A. (2021, July 31). "the most common way people give up..." *Alice Walker quote*. QuotesCosmos. <https://www.quotescosmos.com/quotes/Alice-Walker-quote-1.html>
- Walter, C. (2023, February 28). *Black resilience*. Center For Employment Opportunities . <https://www.ceoworks.org/blog/black-resilience>
- Waters, M. C., Kasinitz, P., & Asad, A. L. (2014). Immigrants and African Americans. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40, 369-390.

- Webb, E. J., Campbell, D. T., Schwartz, R. D., & Sechrest, L. (1966). *Unobtrusive measures*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Wilson, R. (1994). The participation of African Americans in American higher education. *Minorities in higher education*, 195-209.
- Wolverton, B. (2009). Commercialization in College Sports May Have. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 55(38).
- Woodson, C.G. (1933a). *The mis-education of the Negro*. Lexington, KY: Seven Treasures Publications.
- Woodson, C. G. (1933b). *The Miseducation of the Negro*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Worthington, M. (2013). Differences between phenomenological research and a basic qualitative research design.
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 69–91.
- Zeng, Y., & Yao, D. (2023). A Literature Review of The Academic Motivation Scale (Ams) and Its Reliability and Validity. *International Journal of Education and Humanities*, 8(3), 43-46.
- Zhu, Z., Won, D., & Pastore, D. L. (2005). The Effects of Attitudes toward Commercialization On College Students' Purchasing Intentions of Sponsors' Products. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 14(3), 177.