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# Academic Advising, Time Management and the African American Male Scholar-Athlete

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## 1. Introduction

Every human being faces the realities of 24 hours in one day, 7 days a week, and 365 days in a given year. For the modern day student-athlete this day is filled with the endless “juggling act” of academics, athletics and the social life of a college student. Since 1906, various National Collegiate Athletic Association( NCAA) and higher education leaders have debated the issues and problems that impact the experiences of student-athletes (Smith, 1988). Managing academic and athletic time commitments are challenging for any student-athlete.

However, African American male student-athletes in high-profile sports receive a great deal of attention in terms of organizational analysis of higher education (Martin & Harris, 2006); the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) (Watterson, 2000) and academic issues related to athletic commitments (Miller & Kissinger, 2009). These issues pertain to recruiting, improper benefits, commercialization and the pressure to matriculate to the professional ranks. In the next section we examine the specific research analyses and how it relates to the constructs of time management, academic advising dynamics, and the success of the African American male scholar-athlete. One area that is often overlooked is the social and cultural factors that impact the time management dynamics in the daily lives of African American male scholar-athletes. In the next section we review the traditional literature on African American males that participate in American college athletics and attempt to change the direction of this literature by examining their success, their successful strategies and the factors that might contribute to this success.

## 2. Literature review: Time management factors that Influence stress & success

Deficit perspectives are a common mode of research focus with African American male student-athletes, especially in the revenue-producing sports of football and men’s basketball (Oseguera, 2010). Nonetheless, there are serious challenges that threaten the positive outcomes of academic success for this population and unique cultural identity on campus. These challenges are factors that prevent the proper management of time constraints of the modern day student-athletes. Factors include a full load of academic classes; practice on a

daily basis; study hall; mentoring by academic advisors; athletic meetings/weights/athletic training treatment of injuries/rehab; athletic contests; travel; social life; family; coaching expectations, and media interviews. This begs the question, is it possible for these factors to be managed in a positive and productive way?

By applying a theoretical framework such as the Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) and positive psychology framework(s) (Luthans, 2002a), the success of the African American male scholar-athlete can possibly be illuminated. Theoretically in past research in this area, few scholars or practitioners have applied or highlighted the tenets of positively oriented human resource's strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace" (Luthans, 2002a, p. 59). More research is evolving that focuses on the principles of positive psychology that fuels success and performance at work and other organizational contexts (Anchor, 2010). Quantitatively and/or qualitatively the perceptions and voices of success of African American male student-athletes is limited but does exist (Harrison & Lampman, 2001; Martin & Harris, 2006; Martin et al. 2010a; Martin et al. 2010b). Why is this the case? We feel that the focus and assumptions by some previous research has been that once African American male student-athletes receive a college athletic scholarship that they are less motivated with how they manage their academic time versus their athletic duties. This has implications on how we think about the *real* time management challenges of student-athletes. Sellers & Chavous (1997) capture this debate about structural inequities or individual motivation including successful academic performance with time management:

"Other studies have reported evidence which suggests that many of the African American student-athletes who are excluded from full participation and scholarship opportunities by the initial eligibility requirements would actually graduate if they are given the chance (NCAA, 1984; Walter, Smith, Hoey, & Wilhelm, 1987). The NCAA reported findings regarding the graduation class of 1984, two years before Proposition 48 went into effect, that 54% of African American male athletes who attended and subsequently graduated from the surveyed institutions would have been disqualified from freshman eligibility by the standardized test requirement of Proposition 48 (NCAA, 1984). Similarly, Walter and his colleagues (1987) reported that 60% of the African American football players at the University of Michigan from 1974-83 would not have been eligible under Propositions 48 and 42. Yet, 87% of those African American football players who would have been excluded under Propositions 48 and 42 actually graduated. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA's) almost exclusive focus on increasing initial eligibility requirements has been based on the assumption that the academic problems of student-athletes are motivational in nature. Specifically, the argument has been that too many student-athletes place too much emphasis on athletics and not enough emphasis on academics. Thus, the higher admission criteria is believed to send the message to potential student-athletes in junior high school and high school that they must place a greater emphasis on academics if they plan to play sports in college. Further, potential student-athletes' improved academic preparation at the secondary level will result in increases in the graduation rates once they reach college. Some proponents of the current reform movement also believe that the initial eligibility requirements also send a message to high schools that they must also do a better job of preparing their athletes academically for the rigors of college work (p.4)."

Sellers (1992) also found that neither effort (as measured by hours spent studying) nor aspirations (the importance of obtaining a degree) was a significant predictor of student-athletes' grade point average. In an American Institute of Research(AIR) report focusing specifically on African American student-athletes, over one-third of the African American football and basketball players who regarded earning a degree as being of the greatest importance had earned Grade Point Averages( GPA's) of less than 2.0 (Center for the Study of Athletics, 1989). Sellers also suggest that more research is needed before anything definitive can be concluded regarding the role of academic motivation in the academic performance of student-athletes. We feel that one key approach in investigating the academic performance of student-athletes is to find out how they feel about managing the academic and athletic roles.

In order to “give voice” and perspective to the real-life experiences of those student-athletes managing the challenges of academic and athletic time management factors, a qualitative approach was incorporated. In terms of perspective, both authors of this chapter are former NCAA football and men’s basketball participant observers respectively and have experienced the benefits of habitual time management skills that can also be transferred to other contexts besides athletic participation. In the next section we summarize the methods and procedures used to buttress our analysis of academic advising, time management and African American male student-athletes that build on the concept of “voice” with a sample population of contemporary African American male scholar-athletes.

### 3. Methodology

A phenomenological approach is a form of qualitative inquiry, which focuses on human experience and giving voice in this instance to the student-athlete. This approach’s primary goal is to inductively and holistically understand human experience in context-specific settings (Patton, 2001); in this case we feel that approaching time management issues with contemporary student-athletes enables us to understand the human effects with this issue. Due to the sensitive nature of the study and the aim of the researchers, a phenomenological interview was employed to collect data. One of the purposes of this study was to explore participants’ confidence about their academic achievement, which is a sensitive topic for college athletes, especially due to the many negative stereotypes associated with them. Phenomenological interviews (Thomas & Pollio, 2002) were utilized to gain insight and a deeper understanding into the academic experiences’ of African American male student athletes. The aim of a phenomenological interview is to obtain a first-person account of some specific domain of experience (Thomas & Pollio, 2002; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989), and the interviewer attempts to capture the perceived experience of the person interviewed in his or her own words. Researchers desire was to give participants an active and dominant voice. A phenomenological interview gives the participant control without predetermined structured questions (Patton, 2001). Typically the interview utilizes a probing statement, which is not even a question. This process allows the participants to share solely what is central to their experiences (Patton, 2001).

Patton’s (2001) strategy of *purposeful sampling* was employed. The purpose of this strategy is to select information-rich cases for in-depth study. The size of the sample and specific cases depend on the study’s purpose. According to Patton (2001), decision of sample size depends on the following factors: a) what the researcher wants to know; b) the purpose of the study;

c) what is at stake; d) what will be useful; e) what will have credibility, and f) what can be done with available time and resources. In this study, the following criteria were utilized to purposefully select participants: a) student athletes who attend Research I and Division I universities in the Western region of United States; b) cumulative grade point average at or above a 2.8; c) African American male student-athletes who participate in the intercollegiate sports of football, men's basketball, track and field or soccer; and d) African American male student athletes who are on schedule to graduate in five years or less.

### 3.1 Participants

Twenty-seven participants in 2004-05 were selected as eligible African American male undergraduates who had competed in football, basketball, track and field, and soccer. Participants were from four Research I institutions. The universities are located in the Western region of United States and are as follows: Stanford University, University of California at Berkeley, University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Southern California. These institutions are similar in terms of size, academic rigor, geographic proximity, and athletic conference. Collectively, the universities enroll 72,239 undergraduates, with 3,502 (4.9%) African-Americans. The enrollment of African American students ranges from 3.7% to 8.8% at the selected institutions. In addition, nearly 31% of the African American students at these institutions are men. Two universities are public and two are private.

### 3.2 Procedure

An initial consultation with the athletic administrators and counselors from the universities took place to introduce the aims of the study and to identify all African American male student athletes who were eligible for participation in the study. The required criteria for participant selection were conveyed to athletic administrators and athletic academic counselors at the universities. Initially, approximately forty African American male student athletes were recruited for this study. Due to limitations in regard to criteria and availability the participant pool was condensed. The participants contributed to this investigation on a voluntary basis. Prior to the interviews, participants read and signed the informed consent form. Next, the primary researcher participated in a bracketing interview in order to identify his biases, assumptions, and stereotypes. Bracketing means to suspend one's theoretical presuppositions prior to engagement with the phenomenon under investigation (Van Maanen, 1983). The aim is to utilize purposeful bracketing of one's preconception in order to understand phenomena from the perspective of those who experience it (Van Maanen, 1983). The interview is performed to sensitize the interviewer to conceptual biases that might serve to change his or her interpretive vision (Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997; Thomas & Pollio, 2002). After completion of the bracketing interview, the initial and follow-up interviews were conducted with each participant.

### 3.3 Interview protocol

The interview stage included two unstructured audio-taped interviews - an initial interview, followed by an analysis for theme development, and a follow-up interview. Interviews were conducted in a private, quiet room located at the participant's university. The initial interview lasted one hour and the follow-up telephone interview approximately 15-20 minutes. The use of open-ended statements allows the interviewer to gather the data



being sought without making the dialogue exchange inflexible and restrictive (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). During the initial interview, participants were prompted with the following four open-ended statements:

a) *Tell me about your academic experiences at your university;* b) *Tell me how you are perceived on campus as an African American male student-athlete;* and c) *Tell me about the challenges of balancing academics and athletics;* and d) *Tell me about your sources of motivation to perform well academically.* The primary researcher made an effort to make the interviews as conversational and exploratory as possible which allowed participants to be comfortable with expressing their perceptions, expectations, and values regarding their academic experiences.

Following the initial interview, the audiotape was transcribed, and a copy of the transcript was given to the participant. If the participant felt some aspect of the contents needed revision, he so indicated and then returned the transcript. A follow up interview was conducted with each participant via telephone. Themes were developed through the use of an interpretive research group prior to the follow-up interview that was conducted with each participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This process will be detailed in the data analysis section. During the follow-up interview, a summary description of the themes for each transcript was given to the participant. The purpose of this interview was to obtain clarification and offer the participant an opportunity to add any other information (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). All participants confirmed the accuracy of their individual transcripts and offered agreement concerning the themes for each transcript.

### 3.4 Data analysis

Before coding and analyzing the data, the primary researcher critically examined himself as the investigator of this study. This self-examination process known as *epoché*, allows the researcher to remove, or at least become aware of prejudices, viewpoints or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2001). Thus, it was important for the researcher to enter the analysis phase with a fresh and open viewpoint excluding any prior knowledge or experiences of the population under study.

According to Patton (2001), phenomenological analysis seeks to grasp and elucidate the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people. Similarly, Creswell (1998) posits, phenomenological data analysis occurs through information reduction, analysis of relevant statements, identification of common themes, and a search for all possible meanings emerging from the data.

An interpretive research group, which consisted of four individuals trained in qualitative research methodology, one of which was the primary researcher, was utilized throughout the data analysis process. To begin with, the interpretive research group read the transcripts focusing on the time management strategies of each participant separately to get a sense of the whole of each transcript. Moustakas' (1994) recommendation of finding statements from the interviews about how the participants experienced the phenomenon (in this case time management) was utilized by interpretive group members. The interpretive team continued the process of the African American male scholar-athletes' data by listing their significant expressions and thoughts about managing their academic and athletic time management strategies in the margins and treated each statement as having equal worth. This process is

called *horizontalization*. Next, the researchers organized and sorted key phrases using NVivo, a qualitative data management software program. After the 23 invariant constituents were identified, *textural descriptions* (what the academically driven student athletes experienced) and *structural descriptions* (how the participants had experienced the phenomenon) were written for each of the 27 participants in the larger study. These summaries were then used to generate accurate descriptions of how the phenomenon was experienced. A combination of 27 textural and structural descriptions, coupled with the 23 invariant constituents, produced three major themes in the area of time management that captured the true essence of the participants' shared experiences for the purposes of this chapter.

#### 4. Qualitative data: Voices of African American male scholar-athletes (Note: All names of the student-athletes are pseudonyms)

##### 4.1 1<sup>st</sup> Major theme "What I Looked For: Academics and Athletics" (see table 1)

More than half of the participants in this study were All American student-athletes in high school. Hence, they were recruited by hundreds of Division I programs across the country. Though "big time" intercollegiate programs touted them, they consistently noted that their college choices were predicated on the academic reputations of the institutions, rather than the publicity of their athletic successes. USC student-athlete Daniel Kaiser commented: "I wanted to major in Business. A lot of other schools like Florida State, Washington, and Arizona recruited me, but I knew that USC had a reputable Business school. Majoring in Business was more important, because I knew that football would take care of itself."

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#### Graphical Representation of Quotes

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What I  
Looked For:  
Academics and  
Athletics

*I wanted to major in Business. A lot of other schools like Florida State, Washington, and Arizona recruited me, but I knew that USC had a reputable Business school. Majoring in Business was more important, because I knew that football would take care of itself.<sup>1</sup>No one puts it together better than Stanford.<sup>2</sup>*

*It seemed like everyone around me wanted me to go to a football powerhouse like Georgia, Alabama, and other schools in the Southeastern Athletic Conference (SEC). I really liked coach Willingham's vision of being a champion in both academics and athletics. I also liked the fact that I would be able to study with some of the brightest people in the world. I knew that that would pay off for me in the end.<sup>3</sup> Everyone in Memphis had opinions about what school was best for me. Some people said that I should stay closer to home and a lot of my coaches wanted me to go to one of the Florida schools. People in my neighborhood would say, 'With your talent, you should be playing at a school like USC or Texas.' I got tired of what people had to say. I don't think they understood that football wasn't the most important factor in my decision.<sup>4</sup> I realize that I'm one of the few Black males from the ghetto that has the opportunity to earn one of the more respected degree's in the world. Earning this degree will allow me to leave footprints for other brothas' in the South Central Los Angeles to follow. I chose USC for the chance to become a leader in my community.<sup>5</sup>*

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 Graphical  
 Representation of  
 Quotes
 

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The Academic  
 Support  
 Center Has  
 Inspired Me

*I had one writing tutor who told me I should consider exploring poetry. She said I should not waste my talents by being like a lot of other students-athletes. She told me that I don't have to be a slave to the program – that I could be much more than a football player. That really inspired me to get more serious about my writing.<sup>1</sup>*

*Calculus was tough for me last semester. To be honest, I really didn't think that I could get higher than a C in the course. My tutor spent a lot of time with me going over tips and different ways to prepare for exams. He also gave me pre-test motivational speeches, kind of like a coach. I thought that was kind of cool. I got a B in the class. My advisor is rare mix between advisor, tutor, and friend. He played football here at Stanford and he's still young enough to understand some of the challenges I go through. He's been there for me when I had no one else to turn to.<sup>2</sup> My advisor definitely keeps me in check.<sup>3</sup>*

*Sometimes being the best student and athlete is tough. I've been guilty of slacking off at times. Nothing major, but I just get a little lazy on the academic side. It's times like that when I need someone to get me back on track to doing the things that will help me in the long run. My advisor always finds a way to keep me on a system for success.<sup>4</sup>*

I Want To Play  
 In the League

*I want to be in a financial situation where I can help kids grow as students. I want them to grow up thinking that being smart is cool and that going to college is definitely attainable.<sup>1</sup> The 'white collar' Donnie will earn a nice salary and have a certain level of status in society; but Donnie the professional football player will be able to show love and respect to the people who carried me through the rough times. I will make enough money for my brothers and sisters to go to private schools; to stop my mom from working two jobs just to make it; and to give my close friends a solid financial foundation for them to succeed.<sup>2</sup> If I make it to the league, it should be a celebration for the entire race. Luke mentioned this celebration, because he aspires to help African Americans in meaningful ways – providing life skills resources for the homeless; buying textbooks for inner-city schools; being a life-long mentor for young African American boys; and creating counseling centers for troubled teenagers. Luke clearly communicated that a significant portion of his earnings would be allocated to the overall advancement of African American youth. He believed, By targeting the young kids, I will be contributing to society, because my efforts will allow another Black kid to fulfill the dreams that he or she never thought could be attained. As a Black male who has succeeded beyond the odds, I feel that this is my obligation.<sup>3</sup>*

*Growing up in South Central Los Angeles wasn't the easiest thing in the world to do. I lived in an environment where people were just mad at the world and just trying to survive. I want to be in a position where I can create a positive vision for people in my community. Having a solid financial base will allow me to do this on a larger level.<sup>4</sup>*

Table 1.



“No one puts it together better than Stanford,” stated Manny Mason. All of the participants from Stanford University agreed with this assertion. They spoke extensively about the ways in which their family impacted their decision. Leslie Todd reflected on some of his pressures as a highly recruited student-athlete from Atlanta, Georgia.

It seemed like everyone around me wanted me to go to a football powerhouse like Georgia, Alabama, and other schools in the Southeastern Athletic Conference (SEC). I really liked coach Willingham’s vision of being a champion in both academics and athletics. I also liked the fact that I would be able to study with some of the brightest people in the world. I knew that that would pay off for me in the end.

Similarly, Stanford participant Paul Grass communicated his frustration with individuals offering unsolicited advice during his recruiting process. He commented:

Everyone in Memphis had opinions about what school was best for me. Some people said that I should stay closer to home and a lot of my coaches wanted me to go to one of the Florida schools. People in my neighborhood would say, ‘With your talent, you should be playing at a school like USC or Texas.’ I got tired of what people had to say. I don’t think they understood that football wasn’t the most important factor in my decision.

Participant Keith Taylor vehemently expressed that his college decision was not based on the Track & Field tradition at USC. He spoke of how an International Relations degree from USC would allow him to serve as a model for other African American male students to follow. He spoke at length about his college decision being more about others than himself. “I realize that I’m one of the few Black males from the ghetto that has the opportunity to earn one of the more respected degree’s in the world. Earning this degree will allow me to leave footprints for other brothas’ in the South Central Los Angeles to follow. I chose USC for the chance to become a leader in my community.”

#### **4.2 2<sup>nd</sup> Major theme “The Academic Support Center Has Inspired Me” (see table 1)**

The study participants also cited student-athlete academic support centers as significant factors in their academic development. Academic support centers at all four institutions provided resources for student-athletes to enhance their academic skills, receive direction in course selection, participate in life skill development workshops, and in many cases, for overall academic and personal empowerment. Although it was not mandatory for the student-athletes to utilize the services and resources, all but two of the participants took full advantage of the available tutors, advisors, and programs offered by the various academic support centers.

Tutors were major facilitators in instilling confidence in the participants. Instead of lowering their self-assurance, many tutors dissuaded the student-athletes against being “dumb jocks”—being locked into having only athletic identities. USC student-athlete Luke Jacobson offered the following remarks:

I had one writing tutor who told me I should consider exploring poetry. She said I should not waste my talents by being like a lot of other students-athletes. She told me that I don’t have to be a slave to the program—that I could be much more than a football player. That really inspired me to get more serious about my writing.

Adrienne West, another participant from USC, talked about how his Math tutor gave him that extra “push” to succeed in a course. He concluded:

Calculus was tough for me last semester. To be honest, I really didn't think that I could get higher than a C in the course. My tutor spent a lot of time with me going over tips and different ways to prepare for exams. He also gave me pre-test motivational speeches, kind of like a coach. I thought that was kind of cool. I got a B in the class.

Academic advisors also aided in providing the student-athletes with an additional support outlet. The participants frequently referenced their academic advisors as being good people – individuals who genuinely cared about the well being of all students. All of the participants identified at least one academic advisor who had been there to comfort them emotionally. Though the advisor's primary jobs were to provide academic guidance and support, many served in familial capacities for the participants in times of doubt, fear, and other various crises. Manny Mason added: “My advisor is rare mix between advisor, tutor, and friend. He played football here at Stanford and he's still young enough to understand some of the challenges I go through. He's been there for me when I had no one else to turn to.”

“My advisor definitely keeps me in check,” asserted UCLA student-athlete James Wooden. James talked about whenever he even thought about going down the “wrong road,” his advisor always reminded him of his purpose for being at UCLA. He further elaborated:

Sometimes being the best student and athlete is tough. I've been guilty of slacking off at times. Nothing major, but I just get a little lazy on the academic side. It's times like that when I need someone to get me back on track to doing the things that will help me in the long run. My advisor always finds a way to keep me on a system for success.

Without exception, the participants had academic advisors and tutors who supported, encouraged, and uplifted them. From their perspective, the advisors' extensions of genuine care motivated them to achieve academically.

#### **4.3 3<sup>rd</sup> Major theme “I Want To Play In the League” (see table 1)**

Though the participants were commendable students, all of them expressed desires to play professional sports after college. Indeed, almost all of the student-athletes had an interest in attending graduate school shortly after their days in college; however, they also wanted to live out their dreams of being professional athletes. Unlike some of their teammates who aspired to play professionally for the fame and fortune, the participants offered more humanitarian reasons for wanting to play professionally. For instance, USC student-athlete Adam Holden expressed his desire to create reading and writing programs for African American students back in his hometown of Boston, Massachusetts. He talked about how earning money on the international Track & Field circuit would enable him to implement major educational programs for African American youth in Boston. “I want to be in a financial situation where I can help kids grow as students. I want them to grow up thinking that being smart is cool and that going to college is definitely attainable,” he noted.

Berkeley student-athlete Devan McCoy spoke of how his financial earnings from the NFL would allow him to take care of his family. He stated that he owed a great deal to his family and close friends because they have supported him when nobody else seemed to care. His willingness to financially provide for his them was conveyed in the following reflection:

The 'white collar' Donnie will earn a nice salary and have a certain level of status in society; but Donnie the professional football player will be able to show love and respect to the people who carried me through the rough times. I will make enough money for my brothers and sisters to go to private schools; to stop my mom from working two jobs just to make it; and to give my close friends a solid financial foundation for them to succeed.

USC student-athlete Luke Jakobson viewed his opportunity to play in the NFL as a success for all African Americans. "If I make it to the league, it should be a celebration for the entire race. Luke mentioned this celebration, because he aspires to help African Americans in meaningful ways—providing life skills resources for the homeless; buying textbooks for inner-city schools; being a life-long mentor for young African American boys; and creating counseling centers for troubled teenagers. Luke clearly communicated that a significant portion of his earnings would be allocated to the overall advancement of African American youth. He believed, "By targeting the young kids, I will be contributing to society, because my efforts will allow another Black kid to fulfill the dreams that he or she never thought could be attained. As a Black male who has succeeded beyond the odds, I feel that this is my obligation."

Although UCLA student-athlete James Wooden expressed long-term aspirations of being an educator, he mentioned that professional Track & Field was in his near future. He talked about wanting to take advantage of maximizing his skills and talents at a fairly young age in order to live a comfortable life after his competition days are over. Similar to the ambitions of the aforementioned participants, James also shared his desire to uplift the lives of African Americans in South Central Los Angeles. "Growing up in South Central Los Angeles wasn't the easiest thing in the world to do. I lived in an environment where people were just mad at the world and just trying to survive. I want to be in a position where I can create a positive vision for people in my community. Having a solid financial base will allow me to do this on a larger level."

It was vividly clear that the participants wanted to help other African Americans be successful in all endeavors. Though the student-athletes admitted to living out their dreams of being professional athletes, they consistently talked about being change agents for society.

The participants underscored some of the major pitfalls that many African American male student-athletes fall victim to in the early stages of their college careers that relate to time management. Additionally, the participants commented on how they learned to stay focused on long-term goals; be a leader at all times; and take advantage of the many resources available at their respective institutions. Though their unique learning experiences and opportunities, the participants displayed commendable levels of wisdom that would be useful for all African American male student-athletes preparing to embark on the multi-faceted life and time consuming realities of being collegiate student-athletes at highly selective universities.

### 5. Discussion and conclusion: Policy recommendations to shape time management success

A common theme found in the academic literature contends that African American male student-athletes are channeled towards performing in the athletic setting rather than focusing their time on the academic field (see Tables 2 & 3). As a result of this colleges tend to provide the necessary athletic support while failing to ensure that there is also adequate academic support. To demonstrate this time crunch Tables 2 & 3 capture and quantify “a day in the life” a student-athlete. By filling Monday through Sunday with academic and athletic commitments, we are able to interpret the results and data in the following way(s). One, student-athletes in-season have zero days off. Second, the sports of USA football and men’s basketball require serious time commitments both in-season and off-season equaling the workforce hours of 9 to 5 in terms of a full-time job; this may create extra stress on an already stressful and challenging environment. Third, the data and results inside the time management grid involve a picture and deeper glimpse through descriptive quantification

Football Fall Scheudle										
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		Saturday		Sunday
	"Day Off"									
8:00-12	Class	8:00-12	Class	Class	Class	Class	9-9:30	Breakfast		
12-12:30	Lunch	12-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	11:00-3	Free Time		
5-5:30	Dinner	1:00-2	Weights	Weights	Weights	Weights	3-3:30	Lunch		
5:30-8	Work on New Game Plan	2:30-3	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	4:30	Be at stadium		
8:30-10	Study Hall	3:30-6:30	Practice	Practice	Practice	Practice	7:00-11	Game	6:00-10	Film
		7:00-8	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner				
		8:30-10	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall				

Football Spring Scheudle										
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		Saturday		Sunday
8:00-12	Class	8:00-12	Class	Class	Class	Class				Day Off
12-12:30	Lunch	12-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	11-11:30	Lunch		
5-5:30	Dinner	1:00-2	Weights	Weights	Weights	Weights	12:00-4	Spring Scrimmages		
5:30-8	Free Time	2:30-3	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	Meetings	5-5:30	Dinner		
8:30-10	Study Hall	3:30-6:30	Practice	Practice	Practice	Practice				
		7:00-8	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner				
		8:30-10	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall				

Table 2.

Basketball Fall Schedule										
	Monday	Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday	Friday		Saturday	Sunday
6-7:00	Free Throws	Free Throws			6-7:00		Free Throws			Day Off * 2 Hours of Film*
7-7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	7-7:30	Breakfast	7-7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	8:30-9	Breakfast	
8-12:00	Class	Class	8-12:00	Class	8-12:00	Class	Class	10-4:00	Game	
12:30-1	Lunch	Lunch	12-4:00	Free Time	12:30-1	Lunch	Lunch			
1:30-2:30	Film	Film	4-10:00	Game	1:30-2:30	Film	Film			
2:30-6	Weights/ Practice	Weights/ Practice			2:30-6	Weights/ Practice	Weights/ Practice			
6:30-7	Dinner	Dinner			6:30-7	Dinner	Dinner			
8:30-10	Study Hall	Study Hall			8:30-10	Study Hall				

Basketball Spring Schedule										
	Monday	Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday	Friday		Saturday	Sunday
6-7:00	Free Throws	Free Throws			6-7:00		Free Throws			Community Service at Completion of Season
7-7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	7-7:30	Breakfast	7-7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	8:30-9	Breakfast	
8-12:00	Class	Class	8-12:00	Class	8-12:00	Class	Class	10-4:00	Game	
12:30-1	Lunch	Lunch	12-4:00	Free Time	12:30-1	Lunch	Lunch			
1:30-2:30	Film	Film	4-10:00	Game	1:30-2:30	Film	Film			
2:30-6	Weights/ Practice	Weights/ Practice			2:30-6	Weights/ Practice	Weights/ Practice			
6:30-7	Dinner	Dinner			6:30-7	Dinner	Dinner			
8:30-10	Study Hall	Study Hall			8:30-10	Study Hall				

\*\* March Madness / Tournament Time. Additional games per week.\*\*

Table 3.

of all the juggling and managing of classes, meals, athletic meetings, study hall, weight lifting, practice travel for athletic contests, film watching for game preparation and little time for social life and family that may be visiting or live close by. These factors were aforementioned in the literature review section in this chapter. When all of these factors are managed effectively they have the potential to prepare a student-athlete for life and career (Shulman and Bowen, 2001).

Student athletes psychological, cultural and social problems increase along with the expanding competitiveness of U.S. athletic programs. It has been found in part that student-athletes earn fewer bachelor's degrees than general students, they take longer to do so, their grades are lower and they take less demanding coursework (Dudley, Johnson, & Johnson, 1997). Conversely, some data also indicate that student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the general student body (Lapchick, 2010; NCAA, 2010). *African American male scholar-athletes in the current study exhibited mindsets that run counter to stereotypical trends despite*



*inherent time management problems of higher education tied to big-time college athletics* (Smith, 1988; Watterson, 2000). One, they looked for schools during their recruiting process that would validate their desires for academic and athletic balance. Two, the academic support centers inspired them at each respective institution versus having them “major in eligibility” with a “minor in beating the system” (See Harrison quotes, 2009 USA Today). Third, the African American males in the current study admitted to having aspirations of playing professional sports which means athleticism must be balanced with a high value on academics—in an environment with little extra time in either the academic or athletic domains. (See Table 2 football, Table 3 basketball fall & spring respectively).

The current study investigated and pinpointed certain factors that compelled the participants to commit their time to activities outside of the classroom while maintaining focus on academic success (See Table 3). Expanding on the limited research in this area, the findings provide insight to what the participants valued in their lives outside of their academic and athletic obligations which is highly correlated with effective time management. Applying Positive Organizational Behavior to the current study reveals that despite the quantitative reality that student-athletes must manage between (low) 40 to 70 (high) hours of academic & athletic commitments especially including extra study time during the week and weekends. A closer examination of the data gives ground for our conclusions and recommendations that follow on the next pages. In the next sub-heading we follow all the previous quantitative and qualitative assessments with this issue of time management by examining some appropriate models for contemporary time management challenges of today’s student-athlete by threading from the actual study and quotes from the student-athletes themselves which is a key feature and contribution of this chapter to scholars and practitioners (Kissinger & Miller, 2009).

However, we want to be clear about the contributions of this chapter in terms of added value, benefit and impact of the current research, and lastly the broader influence on the theory and practice with time management issues related to contemporary student-athletes in competitive situations in the United States and possibly globally if the structure of intercollegiate athletics and higher education is comparable. Our first contribution is in the area of Positive Organizational Behavior (POB). With the subordinates in an organizational context being student-athletes, our investigation went beyond the surface of quantifying the number of hours student-athletes spend academically and athletically. This was achieved by listening to them express their specific thoughts about managing academic and athletic pressures. This contribution of success by student-athletes was in concert with the organizational leadership of academic advisors in a positive way. Specifically, our chapter contributes to the structural (organizational) analysis of intercollegiate athletics and higher education as the African American male scholar-athletes in the current study described their relationships with many of the athletic administrators, advisors and tutors as positive, empowering and assisting them with the challenge of managing their time commitments in a positive and productive way. These findings can aid in how academic support services helps student-athletes realistically succeed off of the playing field and in the classroom. With a better understanding of the demanding schedules required of student athletes, coaches, recruiters, and counselors can more adequately prepare and manage student-athletes to increase their success throughout college. Often times incoming student-athletes are not sufficiently ready for the transition from high school to college, and do not anticipate the additional time commitments outside of class and practice, leaving them overwhelmed and often times setting

them up for failure. With accurate depictions of the time the student-athlete role requires, they can subsequently be more proactive with their time management skills.

Our second and third contribution of value is the methodological approach (and data results) to investigate time management issues with African American male scholar-athletes that are successful and higher achievers in the sports mostly of football and men's basketball. Previous quantitative approaches with this ethnic and racial group has focused on deficit or deductive reasoning approaches that negatively highlight aptitude attributes and sub-par academic performances in the areas of Scholastic Aptitude Testing (SAT), Grade Point Average (GPA), and other standardized testing predictors. We in part used descriptive quantitative methods in terms of the snapshot of various time commitments (Tables 2 & 3); however our qualitative data enables our analysis of time management with this unique student-athlete population to be buttressed with information beyond stigmatizing, labeling and stereotyping the lack of success by African American male scholar-athletes. To summarize before the next section, our chapter contributes to a positive organizational leadership analysis of academic advisors that are often stereotyped as being apathetic about student-athlete success beyond mere eligibility and low expectations about academic performance; the benefit is that theorists and practitioners can apply tenets from this chapter to their desired outcomes; and finally the influence of this chapter on theory and practice is that we have data from *African American male scholar-athletes themselves in their words, language, symbols, jargon, cultural perspective and "real-time" experiences*.

### 5.1 Models for effective time management

First, Academic support services need to be more cognizant of the academic and social needs of African American male student-athletes. Rather than relying on the coaches to be the primary source responsible for the success of student-athletes, the entire academic support network needs to play a role in this process. Key individuals must emphasize the importance of high academic achievement and appropriate behavior on campus. Roper & McKenzie (1988) presented a comprehensive model for advising Black college athletes. This model relies on the growth and balance of symbolization, allocentrism, integration, stability, and autonomy. Those African American male student-athletes who have demonstrated excellence in the classroom must be recognized for their success and can act as role models for the younger generations in the current study.

Second, another key initiative to improving the college experience of African American student-athletes is to ensure recruitment and retention of African American administrators, academic staff, and coaches. The feedback from coaches, teammates, and peers is almost instantaneous when it comes to athletic performance. While this direct link is satisfying for the athletes, there is the danger of diverting the athlete's attention from their academics.

Clearly, the majority of literature on African American male student-athletes focuses on academic achievement and social adjustment (Edwards, 2000; Gaston, 1986; Harrison, 2000). Scholars contend that an oppositional relationship exists between sport and academic achievement and African American males are often encouraged to take their chances with athletics rather than reach their academic potential. The present study took more of a holistic approach to understanding the academic environment that many African American male student-athletes are subjected to and as such has determined the importance of qualitative research in examining issues related their academic and athletic achievement.



Dr. C. Keith Harrison as a participant observer has transferred his lessons from the scholar-athlete experience to his values as a faculty member with research, teaching and service to various communities. Part of these lessons that have continued since his playing days are to surround himself with a peer group that values the academic and athletic experience such as this photo with his colleagues that are former student-athletes (pictured left to right Drs. Harrison, Sutton and Lapchick (photo courtesy of Joslyn Dalton).



Dr. Brandon Martin has utilized his time management skills a former Division I Basketball Player who also played professionally in various global cities to ascend in leadership roles as a researcher and educator. Dr. Martin has over a decade of athletic administration experiences including senior level experience at the University of Southern California and currently the “number two” at the University of Oklahoma where he is the senior associate athletic director. Pictured is Brandon Martin next to a photo from his playing days at the Galen Center facility at USC (photo courtesy the Paul Robeson Research Center for Academic and Athletic Prowess).

## 6. Future research & policy suggestions: Eyeing the current study and data implications

Other studies in the future in this area might include women, women of color, examining various institutional levels of higher education culture such as Division I, II, III, community colleges, high school sports and even youth in sport as their attitudes of socialization are influenced early in life. Once again the current study is in line with researchers such as Sellers & Chavous that state "it is also important that researchers begin to examine the experiences African American student-athletes have once they are on campus. Research on such experiences may lead to the development of interventions for student-athletes once they are on campus that may enhance academic performance without the adverse side-effects on African American student-athletes that presently exist with the current reform efforts (Sellers, 1993)" (p.7).

In terms of policy suggestions, they should begin with reform efforts that target the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA); the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics (NAA); the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA); and the American Educational Research Association (AERA). These are groups that not only shape policy in ways that impact the student-athlete but groups such as AERA research this issue and have many former African American male scholar-athletes that serve can serve as mentors and role models that have successfully managed their time effectively during their scholar-athlete days while on athletic scholarship on campus.

In the final analysis, the data from the African American male scholar-athletes serve us well as we conclude this chapter when thinking about policy suggestions. Of the 13 quotes and narratives from the student-athletes they illuminate successful strategies in terms of who they effectively managed various time commitments. The African American male scholar-athletes do this in their own language, words and symbolic meanings based on their experiences managing themselves with serious pressures to perform academically and athletically. There are five relevant points that may guide us in a more innovative discussion with policy analysis of intercollegiate athletics and higher education when it comes to time management based on the quotes from the study. A closer look at the data reveals these five points. First, the African American male scholar-athletes took ownership of their time management challenges and embraced the idea of having broader identities on campus that were not athletically related such as poetry in one instance. Policies should continue to create situations and programs where student-athletes can "brand themselves" beyond media guides and other public relations materials in athletics departments that often overlook academic and career success. Second, the value that coaches place on a student-athlete's success in the classroom is beyond measure and sets the academic and time management mindset of a student-athlete during recruiting as stated by several of the African American males in the study. Policies should continue to encourage and require coaches to balance their own priorities with academics and athletics. Third, the African American male scholar-athletes in the current study were all preparing (even with struggles at times) for something more important than the sport they participated in. One policy implication is to match student-athletes with graduates and successful former players from the university so that they have a mentor they can connect with and relate to during this preparation for life after sport. Fourth, the African American male scholar-athletes



articulated that leadership and community were the pillars of their privilege to be on athletic scholarship and a personal obligation to share with others that might not have the same opportunity. Policies must continue to require student-athletes to spend time in the community with high quality programs of substance which currently many schools perform at an adequate level in this area. Lastly, and probably most importantly in terms of popular culture and the potential impact on society youth and young adults—is that the study participants embraced that “school is cool” and they were intrinsically motivated (Rasmussen, 2009) to compete in life beyond athletics. Policies must continue to create innovative ways to use media and new media to portray a new way of seeing student-athletes particularly in money making USA sports like football and men’s basketball. One ad campaign might focus specifically on time management as part of this new image and discussion about student-athletes that successfully manage their time in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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The time management is worthy goal of many human activities. It concerns variety problems related to goals definition, assessment of available resources, control of management policies, scheduling of decisions. This book is an attempt to illustrate the decision making process in time management for different success stories, which can be used as reference models by the interested audience.

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