

## **ABSTRACT**

HOWARD, KEITH PATRICK. Race, Identity, and Belonging: Examining the Importance of Recreational Sport in the Lives of African American Students at Historically White Institutions. (Under the direction of Dr. Jason Bocarro.)

Recreational sport participation has been promoted as a way for college students to connect to the campus community, improve overall physical health, and moderate anxiety and stress. However, limited research has been conducted with racial and ethnic minority students at colleges and universities in the United States to determine if their experiences are similar to those of the majority population. In this study, a national sample of African American undergraduates (n=150) attending historically White institutions in the United States was surveyed to assess interest in specific recreational sport activities and describe their overall experiences with campus recreation. In addition, 16 face-to-face interviews were conducted with African American undergraduates who attend a historically White university in the Southeastern United States to gain perspectives about the importance of campus recreation to their overall college experience. Results supported the expectation that campus recreational programs and services play an important role in helping students establish social connections, transition to the university, and feel a greater sense of campus belonging. Survey results showed that African American undergraduates at historically White colleges and universities have a wide variety of recreational sport interests, and results from interviews revealed that media images, parent socialization, and early involvement in recreation play an important role in shaping beliefs about the importance of recreation and sport activities generally. Findings from this study also indicate that levels of interest in outdoor activities such as rock climbing, kayaking, and camping may be of greater interest than previous literature may suggest, although levels of interest in outdoor recreation still

appear to be lower among African Americans when compared to White student peers.

Underlying reasons for specific patterns of leisure involvement are discussed along with implications for recreation and sport literature related to race and socioeconomic status, along with potential strategies for developing greater levels of inclusion in campus recreation programs at historically White colleges and universities.

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Race, Identity, and Belonging: Examining the Importance of Recreational Sport in the Lives  
of African American Students at Historically White Institutions

by  
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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother: A great mom, a terrific person, and someone who always emphasized the importance of education.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Keith Howard is an instructor in the Department of Health and Exercise Studies at North Carolina State University. He earned a master's degree in sport administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a bachelor's degree in exercise and sport science from Colorado State University.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies in the recreation literature have shown that use of campus recreational facilities (CRFs) contributes to greater satisfaction with the college experience, positive academic outcomes, and improved physical and psychological health (e.g., Belch, Gebel, & Maas, 2001; Bray & Born, 2004; Danbert, Pivarnik, McNeil, & Washington, 2014; Elkins, Forrester, & Noel-Elkins, 2011; Forrester, 2015; Guo & Ross, 2014; Henchy, 2013). As a result, campus recreation has been promoted as a way for students to moderate stress and anxiety, and become more integrated into the campus community (Artinger et al., 2006; Dalgarn, 2001; Henchy, 2011; Huesman, Brown, Lee, Kellogg, & Radcliffe, 2009; Miller, 2011; Moffitt, 2010; Toperzer, Anderson, & Barcelona, 2011). Notably lacking from the recreation literature, however, is research examining the needs and interests of racial and ethnic minority students, and in particular, the needs and interests of minority students attending historically White institutions. The lack of research in this area is somewhat surprising when considering that racial and ethnic diversity has increased at many four-year institutions in the United States (Musu-Gillette et al., 2016). As an illustration of the change that has taken place during the last several decades, African American undergraduate enrollment at four-year colleges and universities in the United States grew from 943,000 in 1976 to 2,270,000 in 2008. The number of Latino students attending four-year institutions increased by more than 1,700,000 during the same time frame (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The percentage of White students enrolled in four-year institutions, meanwhile, decreased from eighty-two to sixty-three percent (Musu-Gillette et al., 2016). More recent statistics paint a similar picture. In 2014 three million (17%) of the 17.3 million undergraduates enrolled at four-year degree-granting institutions in the U.S. were Hispanic,

2.4 (13%) million were African American, and one million (5%) were Asian/Pacific Islanders.

Growing racial and ethnic diversity on college campuses has led to increased awareness of the importance of ensuring that all students feel academically and socially integrated into the campus community (Torres, Jones, & Renn, 2009). One of the common ways to measure levels of student engagement and related academic outcomes has been to track undergraduates' four year and six year graduation rates, as well as first-to second-year rates of retention (Goodman & Pascarella, 2006; Herzog, 2005; Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008). Graduation rates, in fact, have long been a concern for college administrators, especially since statistical data shows that they have been on the decline during the last few decades (DeAngelo, Franke, Hurtado, Pryor, & Tran, 2011; Morrow & Ackerman, 2012). Moreover, literature in higher education indicates that many college students struggle with the social and academic demands of college life, which may lead to transferring to other institutions or leaving college altogether (DeAngelo et al., 2011; Kuh et al., 2008). For example, among the cohort of undergraduates who enrolled at public universities in the United States starting in 2007, only 43% of White undergraduates graduated within four years, 30% of Hispanic students graduated within four years, and 21% of African Americans graduated within four years (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Multiple scholars have asserted that making the transition to college may be difficult for racial and ethnic minority students attending historically White institutions (Chavous, 2000; 2005; Cole & Arriola, 2007; DeAngelo et al., 2011; Locks, Hurtado, Bowman, & Oseguera, 2008; Patterson, 2015; Pittman & Richmond, 2014). Many students of color sense that the social opportunities, course curricula, and the overall campus climate are almost

exclusively geared towards their White peers, and not reflective of the diversity that is often celebrated as part of the mission of the university (Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Feagin, 1992; Harper & Hurtado, 2005; Rankin & Reason, 2005). Studies also indicate that many racial and ethnic minority students perceive aspects of the campus environment to be unwelcoming and even hostile (Ancis et al., 2000; Cabrera, Nora, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Hagedorn, 1999; Feagin, 1992; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009). For example, Solórzano Ceja, & Yosso (2000) conducted focus groups with thirty-four African American students attending “elite,” historically White institutions in the United States and found that most of the students categorized their campus environment as “racially tense.” In a similar study by Fries-Britt and Turner (2001), African American students voiced frustration with having to constantly prove their academic capabilities to White peers, and many were bewildered by the negative images, stereotypes, and misconceptions that White students held towards African Americans. Not surprisingly, students feeling this way find it difficult to become socially integrated into the overall campus community.

Researchers have recognized that these specific types of stressors are unique to racial and ethnic minorities attending historically White institutions (Wei et al., 2010). Perhaps as a result of these unique stressors related to race and making the transition to college, Guiffrida (2003) found that one of the most important needs for African American students at historically White institutions was being able to connect with other African Americans on campus. He asserted that many African American students become dismayed at being the only student of their race in lecture classes, on their residence hall floor, or in various social situations on and around the campus. His findings revealed that students wanted

opportunities to share experiences with others who could appreciate and understand what it is like to be an African American student on a campus with so few students of color.

### **The Current Racial Climate at Many Historically White Institutions**

Racially charged incidents continue to plague many colleges and universities in the United States (Anderson, 2016; Hurtado; 2012). These have ranged from racist graffiti appearing on campus buildings to discriminatory images and comments posted by students on social media (Jaschick, 2016; Wong & Green, 2016). At the University of Missouri, for example, inaction by the university administration in response to multiple racist incidents on campus led to student protests in the fall of 2015, including a two-day boycott by members of the university's football team (Canon & Rose-Williams, 2017; Matter, 2015). National attention over the incident led to the eventual resignation of the university chancellor and system president. At several other universities in the United States, including American University, Ithaca College, and the University of California at Los Angeles, students of color have protested, voiced frustrations over the growing number of racist incidents occurring on college campuses generally, and have demanded that university administrators take actions that will improve the campus racial climate (Jaschick, 2016; Watanabe, 2017; Wong & Green, 2016). At the University of Alabama, Georgetown University, the University of North Carolina, and Yale University, for example, students have asked university officials to rename campus buildings that bear the names of known segregationists and proponents of slavery (Rozen, 2016; Stancill, 2015; Svrluga, 2016). Incidents such as these are common on many universities and colleges across the United States, and it has become apparent that university administrators will need to confront these issues to create a safe and welcoming environment for all students. In an era that some have labeled as "colorblind" or "post-

racial” (see for example Lum, 2009; Worthington, Novarro, Loewy, & Hart, 2008), discrimination and race prejudice, even at institutions of higher learning, appears to be alive and well.

### **The Value of Campus Recreation to College Students**

Administrators at several colleges and universities have encouraged and supported involvement in clubs, campus organizations, and extracurricular activities, including programs and services offered through university recreation (Dalgarn, 2001; Haines, 2001; Huesman, et al, 2009). In fact, involvement in intramural sports and use of campus recreational programs has been viewed as one of the ways for students to become more integrated into the university community (Artinger et al., 2006; Blanchard et al., 2008; Henchy, 2011, 2013 Miller, 2011). As a result, collegiate recreation professionals and leisure researchers alike have noted the importance of identifying barriers related to campus recreational facility (CRF) usage, and several scholars have conducted studies to determine what it is that students value most in their campus recreational experiences. Forrester (2015), for example, surveyed students from colleges and universities across the United States, and found that seventy-five percent of undergraduates had used campus recreation facilities, programs, and services at some point during their college experience, and that fifty-six percent of those students had visited CRFs at least two times per week. Twenty-one percent of these students, however, reported that they never participated in campus recreation at all, and fewer than half of the students reported exercising three or more days per week. A more encouraging finding was that sixty-eight percent of the survey respondents stated that campus recreational facilities influenced their decision to attend their current undergraduate institution, and seventy-four percent said that recreational facilities played a role in their

decision to remain at their particular academic institution. Based on these metrics, it appears that the value of campus recreational facilities, programs, and services goes beyond the physical and social health benefits offered to students.

### **Racial Identity and Campus Recreational Involvement**

The concept of racial identity has seldom been applied to studies pertaining to leisure and recreation, and has not been used in understanding patterns of college recreation participation. Racial identity has been referred to as the significance placed upon membership in a particular racial group (Anglin & Wade, 2007). Due to the racialized nature of sport and leisure activities in North American society (see Carrington, 1986, 1998; Coakley & Pike, 2009; Harrison, 2013; Martin, 2004), it is possible that race and racial identity could influence choices made about certain types of sport and leisure activities, as well as levels of comfort in certain recreational and sport environments (Philipp, 1997, 1998).

Racial identity can be viewed as a natural extension of the concept of race, and although racial identity is just one component of *overall* identity, it is often one of the most significant forces driving social interaction and personal beliefs (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Stets & Burke, 2000; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Thomas & Speight, 1999). Most identity scholars also agree that racial identity is shaped by family, peers, and other community members, along with media images and existing stereotypes (Dovidio et al., 2001; Harrison, Harrison, & Moore, 2002; Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). According to Hurd, Sellers, and Cogburn (2013), the concept of racial identity has been framed as either “process-oriented” or “content-oriented” (p. 3). Process-oriented models—or stage theories, revolve around changes that occur over time (see for example

Cross, 1971; Helms, 1990; Phinney, 1992), while content-oriented models have to do with the importance of belonging to a particular race group at a given point in the lifespan or during a particular set of circumstances (Hurd et al., 2013). In either case, racial identity, as most scholars have conceptualized it, is something that is often evolving, and may have different levels of salience for different individuals, depending on either their stage of overall identity development or the set of social circumstances that bring about beliefs about race and its importance (Cross, 1971; Helms, 1990; Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith; 1997).

### **Why Race Matters**

“Race” can be thought of as a separate construct from “ethnicity.” Ethnicity is closely associated with a country of origin, native language, or certain traditions (Hughes, Watford, & Del Toro, 2016; Quintana, 2007) and is often associated with the concept of *culture*. Culture has been viewed as a phenomenon that is “external, acquired, and transmissible” (Smedley & Smedley, 2005, p.17). Race, in contrast, is generally based on descriptive features such as eye color, skin tone, and hair color (Chavez & Guido-DeBrito, 1999; Hochschild & Weaver, 2007; Quintana, 2007) although an individual’s genetic or “racial” background is unique and nearly impossible to define (Kaplan & Bennett, 2003). Historically, race has been used as a way to categorize groups, rank individuals, and legitimize various forms of oppression (i.e. slavery and *Jim Crow* segregation) and it is routinely used to explain differences in religious, social, behavioral, and political behaviors (Omi & Winant, 2003; Smedley & Smedley, 2005).

As an outcome of the racialized stratification system in the United States, attitudes and beliefs associated with the White middle- and upper-class have become the or dominant

ideologies within society (Feagin, 1991; Solarzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000), and for this reason, race plays a central role in shaping beliefs about the worth, interests, and abilities of others, while also helping to shape an individual's social identity (Anglin & Wade, 2007; Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Stryker & Burke, 2000).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Although the benefits of recreational sports have been championed for college students in general, very little is known about the recreational interests and behaviors of African American college students and their general perceptions of campus recreation and its potential contributions to improving the overall academic and social experience.

### **Study Purpose**

The aim of this study is to add to the literature pertaining to race and leisure, gain additional knowledge about African American undergraduates' perspectives of campus recreational environments, and to use the findings from interviews and surveys to support previous scholarship or provide new perspectives related to theory used in understanding patterns of recreation and leisure among African Americans generally. The concept of racial identity will be used to frame this study and will be used to determine if correlations exist between the meaning of race and perceptions of the importance of recreational and sport activities within the campus environment.

### **Implications and Importance of this Study**

Racial diversity at United States colleges and universities is steadily increasing. Understanding student perspectives of students in campus recreational environments can help inform collegiate recreation administrators about the most inclusive approaches to delivering programs and services to a diverse population. The use of campus recreational facilities

(CRFs) has been associated with the ability to cope with anxiety and stress, as well as opportunities to become more socially integrated into the campus community. In the recreation and leisure field, there is a substantial amount of evidence showing marked differences in the recreational behaviors of racial and ethnic groups in the United States (e.g., Byrne & Wolch, 2009; Erickson, Johnson, & Kivel, 2009; Floyd & Shinew, 1999; Martin, 2004; Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004; Wilhelm-Stanis, Schneider, Chavez, & Shinew, 2009). Recreation and leisure scholars have, for example, found that participation rates in activities such as camping, hiking, beach-going, and skiing are considerably lower among African Americans and Latinos (Byrne & Wolch, 2009; Harrison, 2013; Johnson, Bowker, English, & Worthen, 1998; Lee & Scott, 2016; Shinew et al., 2004; Wolch & Zhang, 2004), the two largest racial minority groups in the United States, and the two largest minority populations at most public colleges and universities in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Although most of this research has been conducted with adult populations, it is likely that similar patterns exist among college undergraduate students. Studies that help further understanding of within-group differences of African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities are also needed. Several leisure scholars have, in fact, stated that within-group differences may be even more pronounced than differences between broad categories of groups (Floyd, Shinew, McGuire, & Noe, 1994; Floyd, 1998; Monk, 2015; Shinew, Floyd, McGuire, & Noe, 1996). An intended outcome of this study is to broaden the perspectives used in understanding social and structural factors that contribute to differences in recreational behaviors within the African American population, as well as differences between African Americans and Whites in their overall recreation habits and levels of interest.

Developing this study around African American undergraduate students can provide needed perspectives about the importance of recreation for a population that has rarely been the focus of studies in campus recreation, and can offer perspectives from a younger population. Examining recreational behaviors in a college setting can also be beneficial in understanding recreational interests of college students since most college campuses provide multiple recreational resources, and amenities that are readily available to students, thus eliminating many of the constraints and limitations cited in other studies related to leisure and recreation participation. Most importantly, focusing on African Americans undergraduates is worthwhile since this population has been cited in higher education literature as a population with higher than average rates of non-degree completion (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Museus & Quaye, 2009) and lower levels of comfort with different race peers at historically White institutions (Fink & Hummel, 2015; Guiffrida & Douthit, 2010; Saenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007).

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will be used to guide this study:

**Research Question 1:** To what extent can campus recreational programs and services help African American undergraduates feel more socially integrated at historically White colleges and universities?

**Research Question 2:** Are African American college students' recreational sport interests similar to those of their White student peers?

**Research Question 3:** What social and environmental factors influence levels of recreational sport interest?

**Research Question 4:** To what extent is racial identity associated with recreational sport interests and involvement among African American college students?

## **Definition of Terms**

*Campus Recreational Facilities* (abbreviated as CRFs) refer to gymnasiums, swimming pools, athletic courts, outdoor fields and spaces used for sport and recreational programs and services offered on college or university campuses (Huesman et al., 2009).

*Fitness* activities will be categorized as any non-sport or non-competitive activity done with a primary purpose of improving muscular strength or cardiovascular health (see Kilpatrick, Hebert, & Bartholomew, 2005). Examples of fitness activities are weight training, the use of stationary bikes or treadmills, lap swimming, running or walking for exercise, mind-body exercises such as yoga or aerobic dance, and martial arts. Fitness activities will be differentiated from *sport activities* although most sport activities also provide health-related benefits.

*Outdoor Sport Activities* will be used to describe non-competitive sport activities that would take place in outdoor leisure settings (e.g., kayaking, canoeing, hiking, mountain biking, skiing, and camping), or simulate activities that take place in these types of settings (i.e. indoor climbing).

*Recreational Activities* will generally describe all three categories of activity listed above, and will most often be used in reference to activities taking place within campus recreational facilities, or offered through campus recreational services and programs. This may include group fitness classes, intramurals, club sport teams, and informal recreation.

*Sport Activities* will be used to describe recreational activities done with a specific emphasis on competition or keeping score (see Coakley & Pike, 2009), and will include team

and individual activities that are regularly offered through club and intramural programs at most colleges and universities.

### **Contributions to Leisure Theory**

Leisure scholars have insisted that there is a need to examine multiple factors that influence recreational behaviors and preferences (e.g., Gómez, 2002; Shinew et al., 2006). Racial identity has rarely been applied in studies related to recreation and sport interest and involvement although it influences the way that individuals interact with others in various social environments, the way that individuals perceive discrimination from members of other race groups (Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Sellers et al., 2006), and the types of social activities that are viewed as appropriate for participation and interests (Banks, 2010; DiMaggio & Ostrower, 1990; Philipp, 1998; 1999). Therefore, centering this study in racial identity may contribute to previous leisure theory on perceived discrimination in leisure spaces, leisure identity as it relates to race specifically, leisure constraints, and constraint negotiation.

The present study will show how the salience of race to an individual can influence the way that they choose to “represent” themselves to others, which in turn impacts the choices made about recreational interests (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Samdahl, 1988), Examining recreational behaviors within the context of racial identity also provides a way of understanding how racialized messages conveyed through media images in television and print, along with peer influence, and family upbringing can shape recreational interests and behaviors (Dovidio et al., 2001; Martin, 2004).

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Race, Leisure, and Sport

Studies in the sport and leisure literature indicate that significant differences exist in the recreational sport behaviors of various racial and ethnic groups (e.g., Breuer, Hallmann, Wicker, & Feiler, 2010; Cronan, Shinew, Schneider, Stanis, & Chavez, 2008; Philipp, 1997; Shinew et al., 2004; Wolch & Zhang, 2004). Variations in recreational behaviors have been attributed to a multitude of social and psychological variables, such as racial discrimination (Floyd, 1995; Philipp, 1999; Sharaievska, Stodolska, Shinew, & Kim, 2010; West, 1989), stereotypes in print and television media (Bruce, 2004; Buffington & Fraley, 2011; Harrison & Worthy, 2001; Martin, 2004; Rada & Wulfemeyer, 2005), inequalities in access to recreational resources (Roux, Evenson, McGinn, Brown, & Moore, 2007; Wilhelm-Stanis et al., 2009) and racial segregation (Floyd & Mowatt, 2014; Foster, 1999; Wiltse, 2014). Several theoretical frameworks have been used to pinpoint definitive reasons for distinct patterns of behavior, but the complexity of the racial dynamics in the United States has made this especially difficult (Byrne & Wolch, 2009; Hutchison, 1988; Shinew et al., 2004; Shinew, et al., 2006). The general consensus among most scholars is that leisure behavior patterns can best be understood by considering the intersectionality of multiple social and structural influences and constraints (e.g., Floyd, 1998; Gómez & Malega, 2007; Kaczynski, Stanis, Hastmann, & Besenyi 2011; Li, Chick, Zinn, Absher, & Graefe, 2007; Shinew et al., 2006).

Harrison, Harrison, and Moore (2002), for example, asserted that the overwhelming number of media images showing African Americans competing in basketball and football reinforces the notion that *all* African Americans excel in these particular sports. In related

studies, Comeaux and Harrison (2004), and Ogden and Warneke (2010) found that many African Americans believed that baseball was a “White sport,” which may not be surprising when considering that only 7.7 percent of the players on opening day Major League rosters in 2017 were African American (Wright, 2017). To investigate this issue further, they developed an *Urban Identity Sport Scale* to measure African American high school students’ interests and perceptions of baseball. They administered the scale to student-athletes in Southern California area high schools, distributing it to African American student-athletes in football, baseball, and basketball. Findings revealed that football and basketball interest was high among baseball participants, but baseball interest among football and basketball participants was relatively low, indicating that football and basketball seemed to have more universal appeal. The authors hypothesized that a lack of community resources, such as summer camps and youth leagues for baseball, in comparison to the availability and number of community recreation opportunities in football and basketball contributed to differences in involvement.

### **Stereotyped Beliefs in Sport and Recreation**

In a series of studies in the late 1990s, Philipp (1997, 1998, 1999) suggested that Blacks and Whites may have different degrees of comfort in certain recreational spaces, and that they may also hold a preference for certain activities based on perceived stereotypes related to race. In a 1999 study of leisure interests of middle-class residents in the Southeastern United States, he asked participants to identify activities in which involvement by African Americans would be considered unacceptable, and to identify recreational spaces where African Americans might be considered unwelcomed. Basketball, going to the mall, going dancing, and fishing were considered by members of both race groups to be

“appropriate” activities for African Americans, while hunting, going to a country club, and going to a symphony were viewed as activities in which African Americans might face racial discrimination.

In yet another illustration of the influence of stereotypes on recreational involvement, Martin’s (2004) research on media images in outdoor recreation highlighted the dramatic differences in the way that Blacks and Whites are portrayed in magazines aimed at outdoor adventure seekers. He found that most images of individuals participating in activities in the “rugged” outdoors (i.e. locations in or near forests, lakes, mountains, and rivers) featured White leisure enthusiasts and very few—if any, African Americans. Martin found that this was true even in popular “African American” publications like *Ebony* and *Jet* (Martin, 2004).

In a similar study, Harrison (2013) discussed the racialized nature and underrepresentation of African Americans in skiing, as well as the institutional and economic disadvantages the sport places upon low income and racial minorities in North America. Such disadvantages include favoritism in marketing, by aiming advertising messages almost exclusively to White consumers, especially those with high levels of economic capital. Coleman (1996), several years before Harrison’s study, suggested that promoters of the skiing industry rarely attempt to include racial and ethnic minorities in their efforts to attract tourists and visitors, and may even make deliberate efforts to perpetuate the “whiteness” of the sport.

Viewing racial stereotypes from a different perspective, Steele and Aronson (1995) conceived the idea of “stereotype threat” as a way of understanding psychological behaviors related to race and performance on various tasks. According to their hypothesis, stereotyped beliefs about race and a person’s abilities, skill, or intelligence can lead to anxiety on task-

performance if the stereotype is internalized by the individual. Pressure to outperform expectations associated with given stereotypes often result in a negative performance on the task or activity (Steele & Aronson, 1995). The concept of stereotype threat has been applied in sport contexts by scholars such as Beilock and McConnell (2004), Hodge, Burden, Robinson, and Bennett, (2008), and Stone, Harrison, and Mottley (2012).

### **Marginality and Ethnicity Theory**

Washburne (1978) posited that the *marginality hypothesis* and the *ethnicity hypothesis* could be used to better understand underrepresentation of Blacks in wildland recreation areas in the United States. Marginality and ethnicity frameworks have been referred to in several studies as a starting point for understanding racial disparities in recreation participation. The marginality hypothesis is based on the idea that disadvantages such as lack of transportation, scarcity of financial resources, and disparities in access to recreational amenities in a given community are underlying reasons for differences in recreation participation. The ethnicity hypothesis revolves around the idea that leisure and recreation patterns reflect “cultural” preferences of all members of a particular ethnic group (Washburne, 1978; Washburne & Wall, 1980). The marginality hypothesis, however, as different scholars have asserted (see for example Floyd, 1998; Hutchison, 1988), fails to account for the variability in economic capital among particular race groups, and the ethnicity hypotheses implies that all African Americans (or other individuals of color) hold identical preferences for recreation participation, despite differences in upbringing, family background, or personal interest.

The marginality hypothesis was similar to Lindsay and Ogle’s (1972) *opportunity theory* (Floyd, 1998). According to this theory, availability of discretionary income and

economic resources improves the ability to participate in activities requiring admission fees, specialized clothing and equipment, and travel to distant locations (Lindsay & Ogle, 1972). Although opportunity theory did not address race specifically, socioeconomic disparities between racial and ethnic groups in the United States give it justification as a partial explanation for differences in recreational involvement since there is a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged African Americans and Latinos in the United States in comparison to Whites (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

### **The Intersection of Race, Class Status, and Gender**

Similar to the longstanding debate in the field of sociology, recreation and leisure involvement has been examined within the context of race and class. Stamps and Stamps (1985), for example, studied leisure preferences of lower- and middle-class Blacks and Whites and concluded that race was a better predictor than class status in determining recreation and leisure participation habits. In a related study, Woodard (1988) found that class status and regional differences related to upbringing and family background helped to explain variation among Blacks' recreation and leisure interests. As with any other social phenomena, however, understanding recreation and sport behaviors means understanding the effects of several different structural influences. Many leisure scholars have therefore insisted that the combined effects of different variables is what best helps to explain patterns of recreational sport behavior (Gómez, 2002; Shiner et al., 2006; Shores et al., 2007). One example is the *Multiple Hierarchy Stratification Model* (MHS), which incorporates race, gender, and age in understanding levels of involvement in Leisure Time Physical Activity (LTPA). The central premise of Multiple Hierarchy Stratification is that “singular” demographic variables collectively intensify constraints on leisure opportunity (Shores,

Scott, & Floyd, 2007). Gómez' (2002) *Ethnicity and Public Recreation Participation Model* (EPRP) is another example of a theoretical framework that includes multiple structural and psychological variables. The EPRP emphasizes the combined effects of perceived discrimination, expected benefits of recreational activities, socioeconomic status, and acculturation (Gómez, 2002).

### **Recreation and the College Experience**

The primary purpose of an academic institution is to provide the best social and educational outcomes for students. Reaching the goal of providing student success for *all* students depends on the ability to promote a welcoming, safe, and inclusionary campus environment (Astin, 1984; Kuh et al., 2008; Quaye & Harper, 2007; Tinto, 2012). This successful experience also hinges upon the students' ability to moderate stress and anxiety and cope with the demands of college life (Nguyen-Michel, Unger, Hamilton, & Spruijt-Metz, 2006; Thurber & Walton, 2012). Academic and social demands such as learning how to interact with people from a wide range of social, class, and political backgrounds, transitioning to an environment that is different from their home community (Beiter et al., 2015; Deckro et al., 2002; Freeman, Anderson, & Jensen 2007; Largo-Wright, Peterson, & Chen, 2005), and the stress related to making important life decisions can lead to anxiety and psychological distress that often impedes progress towards graduation (Kuh et al., 2008; Nguyen-Michel et al., 2006; Ruthig, Marrone, Hladkyj, & Robinson-Epp, 2011; Tinto, 2012). Data from the 2009 National Health College Assessment (American College Health Association, 2010) illustrates this point. According to the responses given, 50.6% of undergraduate students reported at least "more than average stress" within the twelve months before survey completion, and 21.1% reported "overwhelming anxiety" in the two weeks

preceding the survey. In the same year, data from UCLA's Higher Educational Research Institute (2009) revealed that 21.2% of college students sought personal counseling occasionally, and 35.1% reported that they frequently felt overwhelmed.

To help students cope with these challenges, university administrators have created various types of student support and academic advising programs, or have integrated similar programs into freshman orientation seminars and residence life education initiatives (Astin, 1984; Choate & Smith, 2003; Tinto, 2012). Many of these methods have been effective in helping students navigate the difficulties of college life, but statistics show that just under 38% of college undergraduates complete their degree in four years, 56.4% graduate within five years, and 61.2% complete college within a six-year time frame (DeAngelo et al., 2011). These statistics make it evident that more work is needed in the area of student retention and degree completion. Campus recreation has also been recognized as way for students to be more socially connected and feel as if they are a part of the larger campus community (Artinger et al., 2006; Hall, 2006; Lindsey, Sessoms, & Willis, 2009; Miller, 2011; Zizzi, Ayers, Watson, & Keeler, 2004). As a result, administrators have placed greater emphasis on using campus recreation a way to improve the college experience for students (Forrester, Arterberry, & Barcelona, 2006; Steinbach, 2007), and at many colleges and universities, campus recreation centers have become one of the primary places for social interaction (Stier et al., 2005). Researchers in higher administration have insisted that participation in extracurricular activities such as clubs, student organizations, and intramural sports contributes to greater levels of social integration, which in turn increases the chances of academic success (Cheng, 2004; Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, & Kinzie, 2008; Saenz, Marcoulides, & Young, 1999). Astin (1984), for example, maintained that students who become involved in

extracurricular activities are more likely to feel connected to the campus community, and therefore, more likely to persist towards degree completion.

### **Campus Recreation and Student Wellness**

Lower, Turner, and Petersen (2013) asserted that “university recreational sports departments have the unique opportunity to provide diverse programs that act as conduits for physical activity and assisting the promotion, education, and development of a healthy lifestyle.” (p. 66). This healthy lifestyle and its related factors are often referred to as *wellness*. The potential health benefits of campus recreation and its contribution to overall student wellness has been recognized by several college administrators (Dalgarn, 2001; Huesman et al., 2009). Myers, Sweeney, and Witmer (2000) described wellness as an “optimum state of health and well-being” that a person is capable of achieving” (p. 252). The general idea behind the wellness concept is that it places emphasis on the relationship between social, physical and psychological components of health (e.g., Artinger et al., 2006; Clark & Anderson, 2011; Dalgarn, 2001; Hall, 2006; Miller, 2011). The emphasis on developing and maintaining quality recreational amenities and offering multiple opportunities to be involved in campus recreation illustrates the importance of wellness in facilitating overall student success. In recent decades, campus recreation’s role in this process has been elevated, since numerous colleges and universities have reduced or eliminated the minimum requirements for physical activity courses needed in order to graduate (Cardinal et al., 2012; Sparling, 2003). In response to the increased emphasis on student outcomes, construction and renovation of recreational facilities has increased at many colleges and universities throughout the United States and the quality of facilities has improved (Blumenthal, 2009; Huesman et al., 2009; Kampf, 2010; Stier et al., 2005). In

addition to indoor tracks, cardiovascular fitness areas, multi-purpose courts, and aquatic areas, amenities often include wellness centers, places to do homework, indoor climbing walls, and even lazy rivers (Huesman et al., 2009; Stier et al., 2005).

Studies that illustrate the connection between campus recreation and student success include Belch, Gebel, and Maas' (2001) comparison of the use of recreational facilities among first-time freshman with retention and rates of graduation, and similar studies by Danbert et al. (2014), and McElveen and Rossow (2014). Belch, Gebel, and Maas's study revealed that rates of persistence for students at a university in the southwestern U.S. were greater for those who regularly used campus recreational facilities (CRFs), and that the use of CRFs helped students "find a sense of belonging." McElveen and Rossow (2014) compared student grade point averages to the number of visits to the campus recreation center and concluded that intramural sports created opportunities for student involvement without compromising academic performance. Danbert et al. (2014) found that student users of the recreational sports and fitness center at a large Midwestern university had higher rates of first to second-year retention and higher grade point averages in comparison to non-users.

### **The Connection between Campus Recreation and Student Success**

Huesman et al. (2009) tracked student visits to CRFs over a five year period and linked measures of academic success and student persistence to the number of visits to campus recreational facilities at a large Midwestern university. Hall (2006) conducted surveys with student users of recreation centers at a private, liberal arts institution in the Northwest and a similar institution in the southwestern United States, and based on the results, maintained that use of CRFs helped students develop a sense of community, establish friendships, and meet people from diverse backgrounds. Lower et al. (2013) found that

students valued the opportunities to stay physically fit and interact with peers, and believed that one of the benefits of intramural sports was the chance to be involved in sports without sacrificing the time needed for academics. Lower et al.'s study involved the use of the *Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire*, and the *Perceived Benefits Scale*. In addition to the favorable views of intramural sport opportunities in general, they found that having opportunities to interact with individuals from different cultural backgrounds was a perceived benefit among students, along with feeling more integrated into the university's campus environment. In a similar line of inquiry, Elkins et al. (2011) also reported that students perceived the use of campus recreational facilities as providing a way for students to meet and interact with students from different cultures. In the field of higher education, Umbach and Kuh (2006) emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for students to interact with others from diverse backgrounds, and furthermore, they noted that interaction with diverse peers can help prepare students for the social realities of life beyond graduation while also helping to "refine their way of thinking" (p. 169) about multicultural issues. Artinger and colleagues also found that greater involvement in intramural sport activities correlated with a perceived ability among students to work with diverse groups.

Miller (2011) found that use of campus recreation centers increased overall satisfaction with the university, and also played a role in student decisions to attend the university. Also finding support for student use of CRFs and campus recreation services, Phipps, Cooper, Shores, Williams, and Mize (2015) found that students who maintained involvement in intramural sports were more likely to maintain a sense of community and attachment to the university, while the "emotional connection" (p. 113) to the university decreased for non-users as they moved closer to their senior year.

Henchy's (2011) survey research with intramural participants at a southeastern university showed that nearly all of the students at the university felt that campus recreation improved their quality of life, and approximately three-fifths of the respondents believed that their fitness level had improved. In addition to fitness and health benefits, the majority of participants in her survey reported feeling a greater sense of belonging to the university, and at least one-third of the students believed that campus recreation contributed to creating or developing friendships (Henchy, 2011). In Henchy's (2013) study comparing undergraduate and graduate student use of CRFs, survey participants indicated that recreational facilities played a significant role in their reason to attend and remain at the university. A notable finding from this study was that a higher percentage of freshman and sophomores reported using CRFs when compared to juniors and seniors, perhaps suggesting that campus recreational opportunities may have significant value for students when they first arrive on campus.

### **African Americans' Campus Recreational Involvement**

In one of the few studies aimed at understanding preferences and behavior patterns of African American students in campus recreational environments, Lindsey, Sessoms, and Willis (2009), reported that just 50% of the students at a historically Black college in the southern United States felt that sport and fitness activities would be important after graduation. They also noted that sport and fitness participation rates among female students at the university were much lower than rates of participation among the male students at the university. In a similar study dating back to 1992, Bradley, Phillipi, and Bryant, examined minority students' responses to a recreational quality of life survey given to students at six different colleges in the United States. The results showed that minority students believed

that student employment within campus recreation, and positions of responsibility in recreational sport clubs were positive ways to become integrated into the campus community. The respondents to this survey viewed campus recreation as being more valuable than White undergraduates who completed surveys at the same six colleges (Bradley et al., 1992). Minority students involved in this study also felt that hiring racially diverse student staffs enhanced the campus recreational environment and served as a way for students to interact with individuals from different backgrounds. In a similar survey, Milton and Patton (2011) reported that African American and White students had similar preferences for campus recreational activities and students from both populations viewed recreational programming as a way to develop friendships and improve physical health.

Lindsey and Sessoms (2006), in a study conducted at a historically White institution in the southeastern United States, found that eighty-three percent of the students at the college wanted to be involved in some sort of recreational sport activity, and more than a one-third said that the availability of campus recreation contributed to their decision to return to the university. It is important to note that students in this study were recruited through health and physical activity classes at the institution, which may have influenced the rates of interest in sport and recreation. In another study at a historically Black college in the southeastern United States, Lindsey & Sessoms (2006) determined that seventy-nine percent of the students felt that campus recreation helped them feel like they were a part of the university, and that seventy-five percent of the students believed that campus recreational involvement helped them develop friendships during college.

## **Campus Recreational Interests of Students of Color**

Recognizing the need for more examinations related to recreational sport behaviors of ethnically diverse undergraduate populations, Hoang, Cardinal, and Newhart (2016) examined possible constraints to recreational sport involvement among ethnic and racial minority students at a university in the Pacific Northwest, and discovered that overcrowded facilities and extra fees for certain classes were a hindrance to participation. More significantly, perhaps some students who responded to their survey felt that being one of few “students of color” in the recreational settings was perceived as one of the negative aspects of visiting campus recreational facilities at the university. On a positive note, however, Hoang et al. (2016) found that being in the presence of students who were trying to be healthy was perceived as one of the more popular aspects of involvement in campus recreation.

In a study from the field of higher education, Flowers (2004) measured the relationship between different aspects of college life on the personal and academic development of African American college students and found moderate associations between student development and recreational sport involvement. Stronger links were observed between experiences such as interactions with faculty and peers and satisfaction with courses offered, but all of the extracurricular activities examined had some level of positive impact on student development.

### **Racial Identity Theory and Related Concepts**

Racial identity consists of an individual’s attitude towards the group with which they identify and the level that these attitudes are either favorable or unfavorable (Helms, 1990; Helms & Carter, 1991; Thompson & Carter, 1997). Although racial identity has been conceptualized in different ways, most scholars agree that social and environmental factors

play a primary role in its development. As researchers such as Neville, Viard and Turner (2015), Shelton and Sellers (2000), and Sellers et al. (2006) have explained, racial identity plays a role in shaping what people view as important, the way they view themselves and others, and the way that they interact with peers, co-workers, and others within the community. The concept of racial identity has been used in understanding such phenomena as achievement in secondary and post-secondary education, social adjustment of African American students to predominantly settings, and parent socialization messages about perceived racial discrimination and the general importance of race (e.g. Demo & Hughes, 1990; Neville, Heppner, & Wang, 1997; Pillay, 2005; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Sellers et al., 2006).

Many of the earlier Black Identity models were created as a way to measure the relationship between racial identity and individuals' social and psychological health (Constantine, Richardson, Benjamin, & Wilson, 1998). Recent models of racial identity have centered on the *qualitative* meaning of being African American and the internalization of social and structural variables such as parent socialization, unique life experiences, and community influence (Sellers et al., 1997, 1998). Cross' *Nigrescence Model* (Cross, 1971, 1991), one of the most cited of all racial identity models, posited that Blacks move along a "five-stage continuum" that begins with a lack of awareness of Black identity, and ends with the embodiment of racial pride and awareness in all aspects of life. In Cross' original work (1971), the initial stage was referred to as the *pre-encounter stage*, and was thought of as a point when individuals give little consideration to how race influences their lives. In the *encounter stage*, a sudden awareness of race and its importance occurs as the result of a negative experience with a "majority out-group" member or a series of negative events with

out-group members. The third stage of the model was called the *immersion/emersion* stage, and was characterized by a “pro-Black” and “anti-White stance on racial matters. The *internalization* stage immediately followed immersion/emersion, and was marked by a decline in negative feelings toward the White majority, and lastly, the *internalization-commitment* stage was typified by actions and behaviors promoting a positive sentiment towards being Black. A later version of the model included only the Pre-Encounter, Encounter, Immersion-Emersion, and Internalization stages of the model (Worrell, Cross, & Vandiver, 2001).

Alderfer (2013) viewed racial identity within the framework of *Embedded Intergroup Relations Theory*, which posits that individuals are born into certain groups, and membership in these groups is beyond their control. At the individual level, however, people can choose to belong to certain *other* groups or claim membership in groups in which they have similar beliefs. Embedded intergroup relations can help explain the within-group variation that exists, say among African Americans who may be alike in race group ascribed, but different in personality, interests, class status, or upbringing. This aspect of intergroup relations is part of the core foundation of Sellers et al.’s *Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity*, and it is here where Sellers et al.’s racial identity framework begins to depart from the stage theories developed by Cross and other racial identity theorists (e.g. Carter & Helms, 1988).

### **The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity**

To understand the complex nature of identity within the context of race, Sellers et al. formulated the *Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity* (MMRI). The basic premise of this model is that people have different identities arranged in a hierarchical order, and race is one of many identities that may be more or less salient for individuals. The MMRI was

designed to be a guiding framework for understanding the diverse interests of African Americans. A key component of the model is that racial identity helps people frame beliefs about the significance and meaning of race, and helps them determine how they “fit” within their “social world” (Rowley, Sellers, Chavous & Smith, 1998). Sellers’ framework of racial identity allows for variation in the extent of racial importance and its meaning to individuals in different situations. For example, in an environment such as a historically White college or university, race may become more salient for African Americans who, in this setting may be more conscious of their minority status.

To operationalize the MMRI, Sellers et al. (1998) developed the *Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity* (MIBI), a 51 item questionnaire that assesses the level of importance of unique aspects of racial identity. Sellers et al.’s Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity was derived from two broader theories: *Identity Theory* and *Social Identity Theory*, with the former being related to the roles that people play within society and the expectations attached to these roles (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Stryker & Burke, 2000), with the latter being described as a prioritized set of beliefs about belonging to a particular group, and how a person’s traits and behaviors match that group (Brekhaus, 2008; Stets & Burke, 2000). As explained by Ellemers et al. (2002) all individuals have “a range of different, cross-cutting, social identities” (p. 164) and different elements of social identity may be activated in certain settings. Sellers et al.’s (1997) conceptualization of racial identity, in fact, views race as one of the important components of a person’s overall social identity, and like other identities that they consider their own its salience may increase or decrease depending on the circumstances and setting.

The MIBI is divided into four primary identity components: *salience*, *centrality*, *regard*, and *ideology*. Salience measures the importance of race in a given situation; centrality assesses the importance of race as a constant *across* given situations; regard is a measure of positive or negative feelings about members of one's own group; ideology is a measure of an individual's beliefs about how members of the self-prescribed group should act within society generally (Sellers et al., 1997, 1998). The inventory is comprised of several statements that are paired with response items measured on a seven-point scale, and the questions within each of the four subscales are measured separately. Scores indicate the degree or level of importance for each subscale category (Sellers et al., 1998).

Sellers et al.'s (1998) scale is one of many developed in the last half-century. Most racial identity scales have included questions about various social viewpoints and behaviors perceived to be important to African Americans, such the importance of involvement in certain social activities, intensity of certain political beliefs, interest levels in certain types of music and art, and viewpoints on topics such as religion. While most racial identity scales have been designed to measure Black Identity, attempts have also been made to measure the racial and ethnic identity of Latinos, Native Americans, and European Americans (Johnson, Kurpius, Rayle, Arredondo, & Tovar-Gamero, 2005) although scales designed to measure "White" racial identity have been more difficult to conceptualize (Mercer & Cunningham, 2003).

Racial identity theory, though applied often in areas such as academic achievement and self-esteem among African American high school and college students (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Oyserman, Harrison, & Bybee, 2001; Quintana, 2007; Worrell, 2007), has rarely been applied in attempts to understand patterns of sport and recreational behavior. It

may however, offer considerable explanatory value since many sport and recreational activities in North American society have become strongly associated with one race group or another. In one of the few applications of identity to leisure and recreation, Allen, Drane, Byon, and Mohn (2010) developed a scale to assess the relationship between involvement in campus recreational sports and maintenance of *cultural* identity for international students. They administered surveys with questions designed to develop a better understanding of the way that friendships with peers from differing cultural backgrounds helped students adapt to the campus environment and North American culture in general. They found distinct patterns of involvement in sports based on country of origin (e.g. soccer for students from European countries, badminton for students from Asian nations, and cricket for students from South Asia) and that international students used sport as a vehicle for adapting to new cultures and meeting others of the same nationality. In the discussion about their findings, the authors noted that sport activities given the most funding in college recreation departments were less likely to be the “traditional” sports played in other countries, which may be a hindrance to students’ opportunities to be involved in sport, and therefore to interact with diverse populations in recreational sport settings. As a result, these authors insisted that a need exists for collegiate recreation administrators to reevaluate recreational program offerings, to find ways to promote more culturally inclusive environments.

In another application of racial identity in the leisure and recreation, Shinew, Mowatt, and Glover (2007) explored the link between racial identity and community involvement, by incorporating survey questions from Sellers et al.’s (1997) *Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity* and McNeilly et al.’s (1996) *Perceived Racism Scale*. The results showed the nearly all of the African Americans in their study exhibited a strong sense of racial identity,

but those with higher levels of volunteerism had stronger affiliations towards Black identity. In a study from the sport culture literature, Harrison, Harrison, & Moore (2002) applied Cross' theory of racial identity development to sport interest among adolescents, suggesting that the race of athletic role models influences youth's levels interest in certain sports and reinforces racial stereotypes about certain sport activities.

### **Self-Categorization Theory**

Self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) is closely related to social identity theory (Turner et al., 1987), which was developed by and describes the way that individuals identify with multiple groups within society and the level of attachment to each group helps to define their overall identity. As explained by, Hornsey, (2008), self-categorization theory differs from social identity theory in the sense that individual identity can be viewed as “operating at different levels of inclusiveness” (p. 208). The first being an all-encompassing category of *human identity*, the second being the person's *social ingroup membership*, and the third being the individual's *personal identity*. As one component becomes more significant to the individual, the others become less relevant (Hornsey, 2008). Self-categorization is also viewed as a dynamic process (Hornsey, 2008), meaning that it can change depending on situational context, or the presence of certain out group members (Hogg & Reid, 2006).

The basic premise of self-categorization theory is that individuals behave in a manner that represents a “prototype” of a desired behavior. Prototypes can be compared to group norms, which become a defining feature for how “in-group” members are expected to act (Hogg & Reid 2006). This prototype therefore incorporates the norms, attributes, beliefs, and behaviors that are thought to represent the desired in-group membership, thus helping to

distinguish the individual from other groups (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Behaviors that maximize the “stereotypical expectations” or prototype of the ingroup can be referred to as a *normative fit* (Hornsey, 2008). Behaviors viewed as maximizing *differences* between the desired ingroup and other groups are referred to as a *comparative fit* (Hornsey, 2008).

### **Symbolic Interactionism in a Recreation and Leisure Context**

Another theory related to group identity formation is *Symbolic Interactionist Theory*, or *symbolic interactionism* (Blumer, 1958). Symbolic interactionist theory is rooted in the works of Charles Horton Cooley (1902, 1922), who posited that individuals’ behaviors are a reflection of the views and opinions of others (see Lundgren, 2004; Scheff, 2005), and George Herbert Mead, whose writings revolved around the idea that society shapes individual behaviors, but individual behaviors are also developed through social interaction (Blumer, 1966; Stryker, 2008). In an attempt to apply symbolic interactionist theory to leisure participation, Samdahl (1988) discussed the balance between self-expression and leisure and how the appropriateness or inappropriateness of an activity for a certain groups may be viewed as a leisure constraint. Individual actions, as Samdahl explained, are mediated by the way that a person interprets the context and importance of a given environment, and actions occur as part of a process of meeting the perceived roles and expectations of others—namely those in which a person wishes to claim group membership. In this sense, an individual’s actions reflect the way behaviors are modified to fit the expectations of others (see Park, 1927; McCall & Simmons, 1966).

### **Cultural Capital and Recreation Participation**

Looking at recreation participation patterns from a historical perspective, it is well-documented that leisure has been used as a way to convey class status and to establish

connections to various social networks (Bourdieu, 1984; Wilson, 2002, Veblen, 1899) and that various recreational pastimes have held symbolic meaning (Bourdieu, 1978, 1980; Veblen, 1899). In one of the earliest theoretical doctrines related to recreational sport and leisure, Veblen used the term “conspicuous consumption” to describe how income and wealth were used to distinguish members of the upper class from other class status groups (Veblen, 1899). This type of conspicuous consumption was a direct contrast to the lack of leisure time available to African Americans discussed in DuBois’ *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (1899). DuBois work detailed African Americans’ social patterns and behaviors, educational and economic opportunities, and struggles with racial segregation and daily life for Blacks living in Philadelphia leading up to the beginning of the twentieth century. Most of the leisure activities were centered in church activities, since this was one of the few times during the week that occupational obligations did not limit time for leisure.

The class status representation discussed by Veblen was closely associated with the idea of *cultural capital*, which is often used to describe cultural attitudes, preferences, and behaviors of a certain class-status group (Lamont & Lareau, 1988). Sociologists have applied cultural capital in understanding the transmission of beliefs and attitudes across generations and in understanding differences class status mobility (Bourdieu, 1980). Cultural capital is shaped by a wide range of factors such as social class, language, and religion (Goldenburg, 2014) and acquired through formal education and parental upbringing (Banks, 2011 Bourdieu, 1984; 1986; Stalker, 2011). Appreciation of classic literature, fine art, and classical music, for example, could be viewed as a form of cultural capital associated with “high status” (Bourdieu 1984; DiMaggio & Ostrower, 1990; Stalker, 2011).

Cultural capital is linked to the idea of parent socialization (Kraaykamp & Van Eijck, 2010; Sullivan, 2001) which refers to the process in which beliefs about the environment and how to interact with others within that environment are passed on from parent to child (Arnett, 1995; Stevenson, 1995). Beliefs about race and its importance to overall identity, for example, shape the content and delivery of parent messages about race in society and how to interpret and react to certain events (White-Johnson, Ford & Sellers, 2010; Sellers et al. 2006). White-Johnson and colleagues (2010), for example, asserted that “many African American parents spend a significant amount of time and energy socializing their children to the role that race will play in their lives” (p.237). Naturally, parent socialization would also include messages about the significance and importance of certain types of recreation and leisure behaviors., as well as other social activities.

Goldenbeg (2014, p. 7) stated that “it cannot be assumed that people who identify as the same race, possess the same cultural capital.” In fact, when attempting to understand differences related to race in our society, much of the difficulty that arises stems from different applications of the idea of “culture.” Wilson (2010) referred to *culture* as a commonality in modes of behavior and outlooks resulting from being placed in the same or similar circumstances and settings. “Culture” has also been referred to as a learned behavior from group membership or belonging (Goldenburg, 2014). Past conceptualizations of culture have included references to particular values, beliefs, and ways of thinking, and in certain instances, the notion that one group’s values are superior to others (Swidler, 1986).

Another form of *capital* related to cultural capital and class status advantage is “social capital.” Social capital refers to relationships, social networks, and the way that extended social networks can increase social, educational, and economic opportunity (Coleman, 1988).

It manifests in social reinforcement of accepted norms and sanctions for deviating from these norms (Coleman, 1988). Social capital is also related to the extent of social networks and interpersonal connections that contribute to opportunities in other aspects of life (Portes, 1998; 2000). Similar to cultural capital, the amount of social capital accessible to individuals is also related to class status and position with society, and is also closely tied to intergenerational mobility (Granovetter, 1973; Lin, 1999).

### **The Impact of Socioeconomic Status and Racial Residential Segregation**

Socioeconomic status (SES) is generally understood to be the combination of an individual's levels of educational attainment, income, and occupational status (Bornstein et al., 2003; Iceland & Wilkes, 2006). Since the community in which a person lives is also tied to their socioeconomic status, it stands to reason that socioeconomic factors would impact the types of recreational behaviors available to individuals (see for example, Bultena & Field, 1978; Giles-Corti & Donovan, 2002; Lindstrom, Hanson, Ostergren, 2001). For example, research shows that recreational amenities like greenways, open spaces, and playgrounds are more likely to be located in communities where individuals have higher levels of median household income (e.g. Abercrombie et al., 2008; Lopez & Hynes, 2006; McCormack, Toohey, & Hignell, 2010; McKenzie, Moody, Carlson, Lopez, & Elder, 2013; Moore et al., 2010; Roux et al., 2007; Vaughan et al., 2013). Not surprisingly, scholars in recreation and leisure have also found that individuals with higher levels of wealth and income are more likely to participate in a broader range of recreational sport activities (Barnett, 2008; Burton, Turrell, & Oldenburg, 2003; Cerin & Leslie, 2008; Searle & Jackson, 1985; Wilson, 1980; Wilson, 2002).

Socioeconomic and class status differences are also reflected in some of the racial residential segregation patterns observed in many communities in the United States (Charles, 2000, 2003; Pattillo, 2005; Pattillo-McCoy, 2000). Charles (2003), Iceland and Wilkes (2006) and Pattillo-McCoy (2003) have demonstrated how racial segregation patterns have persisted even for African Americans of middle class status in both urban and suburban communities. For African Americans living in predominantly White neighborhoods, however, there may still be a desire to maintain social interaction and connections with members of their own race, and this may influence social behaviors and patterns of involvement in certain activities (Durant & Sparrow, 1997; Lacy, 2004, 2007; Landry & Marsh, 2011). Lacy's (2004) *Strategic Assimilation Model*, for example, provides an illustration of the way that many middle-class African Americans maintain strong connections with Blacks at different class-status levels, even in instances where they are separated from them in occupational, school, or community settings. Building upon the work of Portes and Zhou (1993), Lacy described strategic assimilation as a process used by middle-class African Americans to successfully navigate the "mainstream (i.e. middle-class White) society" while still maintaining ties with members of their own race. She asserted that many middle class Blacks living in predominantly White communities make deliberate efforts to stay involved in activities aimed at strengthening racial pride and awareness, or activities in which many other African Americans are likely to be involved. Applying this concept to recreation, it is conceivable that African Americans of different socioeconomic or class status levels might use certain sport or leisure activities either to demarcate class standing, or to maintain connections with African Americans perceived as having a different level of class status.

## **Discrimination in Recreation Settings**

In recreation settings, discrimination can contribute to negative experiences for individuals and a lowered desire to return to a certain recreational setting. Discrimination has, in fact, been hypothesized as a reason for lower levels of recreational involvement among African Americans and Latinos (Floyd & Gramann, 1995; Gobster; Sharaievska et al., 2010; Shinew, Mowatt & Glover, 2007; West, 1989), as well as underrepresentation of African Americans in sports such as golf, swimming, and baseball (Brown & Bennett, 2014; Comeaux & Harrison, 2004; Gobster, 1998). As some of these scholars have found, racial discrimination can be a deterrent for minority *and* majority groups in recreation and leisure settings (e.g., Gobster, 2002; Sharaievska et al., 2010; Philipp, 1999; Shinew, Floyd, & Parry, 2004; West, 1989). While many scholars insist that obvious forms of racial discrimination have become less common when compared to previous decades in U.S. history, others are quick to point out that subtle forms of racial discrimination have become more prevalent (see Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Feagin, 1991; Pager, & Quillian, 2005; Royster, 2003; Solarzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000).

The fact that members of different racial and ethnic groups—especially Blacks and Whites—are still highly segregated (Iceland, Sharpe, & Steinmetz, 2005; Pais, Crowder, & South, 2012) can also contribute to instances of racial discrimination. The spatial and social separation of racial and ethnic groups in the United States sometimes means that people may rely on stereotypes as a way of framing their understanding of other group's behaviors and interests (Dovidio et al., 2001). In the United States, segregationist policies and discriminatory acts throughout the 1900s limited the ability of African Americans to visit certain tourist destinations, amusement parks, movie theaters, museums, and similar types of

leisure settings (Carter, 2008; Floyd & Mowatt, 2014; Ross et al., 2014; Wolcott, 2012) and though racial segregation became entrenched in the southern U.S. through Jim Crow legislation, segregation was just as prevalent in the North, West, and Midwest (Massey & Denton, 1993). Laws and statutes enacted during the Civil Rights Era brought an end to many segregationist practices, however, racism, prejudice, and *de facto* segregation have persisted. As a result of the segregation and discrimination of the past *and present*, many African Americans have had limited access to economic, occupational, and educational opportunities. Furthermore, as Feagin (1991) and others (e.g. Cole & Omari, 2003; Landry & Marsh, 2011; Royster, 2003) have found, African Americans of all class status levels, places of residence, levels of education, and type of occupations are vulnerable to racial discrimination.

In West's (1989) study of urban park use by African Americans in Detroit, Michigan, for example, survey respondents reported that they were reluctant to venture to parks outside of their neighborhood due to fears of discriminatory treatment from White park users in outlying areas. Blahna and Black (1993), in a study of leisure patterns of college students in Northern Illinois, documented several instances of perceived discrimination in local parks and outdoor areas, and found that recreational spaces were highly stratified by ethnicity and race. Sharaievska et al. (2010), in a similar study, discovered that nearly one out of four Latino residents felt that they had been discriminated against because of their ethnicity, and focus group data from this study indicated that many of these residents did not return to the locations (e.g. swimming pools, beaches, and restaurants) where discriminatory incidents occurred.

A select number of leisure scholars have examined the effect of past instances of race prejudice and racial discrimination in parks and leisure spaces, and its impact on the desire among various racial and ethnic groups to visit certain recreational spaces (e.g. Wolch, & Zhang, 2009; Erickson et al., 2009; Floyd, 1999; Lee & Scott, 2016). Many national recreation areas and historical monuments in these places have local, regional, or national histories that may serve as a reminder of the segregationist past that exists in the United States or discriminatory instances that have occurred in United States history (Erickson et al., 2009; Floyd, 1999; Johnson et al., 1998; Lee & Scott, 2016). Lee and Scott (2016) for example, discovered Blacks and Whites have different perceptions of a nearby state park in the Dallas-Fort Worth area as a result of the segregationist history of the park. Erickson and colleagues (2009) found that many African Americans living near Rocky Mountain National Park, just outside of Denver, Colorado, did not view visiting national parks as a “Black thing” (p. 540), and others simply felt uncomfortable in a non-urban setting where very few of the visitors would be African American, which may be related in part to past discrimination and segregation in many outdoor recreational spaces.

In a historical account of racial segregation and the development of swimming pools and private swim clubs in the United States, Wiltse (2014) asserted that modern-day differences in patterns of swimming behaviors between African Americans and Whites were borne out of past segregation and discriminatory practices—primarily in the South, but also in other regions of the United States. The author detailed how racial disparities in access to public and private pools across the United States created a culture in which swimming and “pool-going” became an integral part of White recreational behavior, but less so for many African Americans.

## **Stereotypes and Racialized Images in Recreation and Leisure**

Racial stereotypes, such as those perpetuated through television and other forms of print and electronic media, can become entrenched in the minds of people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds (Adams-Bass, Stevenson, & Kotzin, 2014; Coakley & Pike, 2009; Edwards, 2000; Harrison & Worthy, 2001) and therefore influence beliefs about a group or individual's abilities and interests (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). African American college students attending historically White colleges and universities, for example, are undoubtedly aware of existing racial stereotypes in U.S. society generally, and most are likely to be aware of the pervasiveness of racial stereotypes in social spheres such as recreation and sport. There are scholars, however, who insist that the current cohort of college students has been raised in a "post-racial," or colorblind society, where "race" no longer matters (Gallagher, 2003; Johnston, Pizzolato, & Kanny, 2015; see also Worthington et al., 2008). Though the dynamics of race may be different in comparison to previous eras, many people would still argue, however, that racism, prejudice, and race-related stereotypes are just as prevalent as they have ever been.

As Dovidio and colleagues (2011) noted, stereotyped beliefs can lead to racial discrimination, especially when one race group has limited contact with the other, and this limited contact might also influence interactions that occur between different racial groups in spaces perceived to be the "domain" of White participants. In fact, racial discrimination may be one of the *unintended* effects of the racialized messages about recreational involvement discussed by Martin (2004) and other sport and leisure scholars (e.g. Bruce, 2004; Buffington & Fraley, 2011; Philipp, 1998). Repeated messages, whether as visual images or in print media, influence beliefs about recreational interests and abilities of all individuals. These

beliefs may then be reflected in day-to-day conversations between different individuals and groups, and might also influence personal views and opinions of youth sport coaches, recreational sport administrators, park rangers, mentors, volunteers and other community members who have an influence on involvement in recreational activities in our society. This has been addressed by scholars such as Allison and Hibbler (2004), Floyd and Johnson (2002), Floyd and Mowatt (2014), Scott (2014), Taylor, Floyd, Whitt-Glover, and Brooks (2007) in larger discussions of institutional racism, and social and environmental justice. In an example of racialized perceptions of leisure and recreation, Finney (2014) found that just 103 of 4,602 images in a popular recreation and fitness magazine contained pictures of African Americans, and she also noted that the majority of these African Americans were prominent male sports figures. Furthermore, she found that the images of African Americans primarily involved sports such as basketball and track, or were advertisements for athletic apparel and automobiles. Based on her findings in this study, Finney asserted that African Americans are involved in a wide array of outdoor activities, but this variety of interests and involvement is not represented in magazines and national park brochures. This study is a prime example of how leisure images and stereotypes influence beliefs and behaviors, but may create a belief among individuals that is not an accurate representation of what is actually occurring in society.

## **Summary**

The conceptual model below summarizes several of the main points of this chapter and provides a representation of the way that social and psychological variables can influence recreational involvement for African Americans and other persons of color. In this model race-related stereotypes and images, along with outside “social forces” such as

community, parents, and peers are hypothesized to be direct influences on recreational beliefs. Structural factors (i.e. discrimination, spatial segregation, access to social capital, education, and employment networks, etc.) are viewed as having a direct influence on community residence and location, and therefore having an *indirect* influence on recreational interests and involvement. Socioeconomic status (SES), most often defined as the combination of family income level and parent education level, is also conceptualized as having an *indirect* influence on recreational interests and involvement via the availability of recreational resources and amenities. Finally, strength of racial identity is postulated to influence preferences for certain types of recreation.

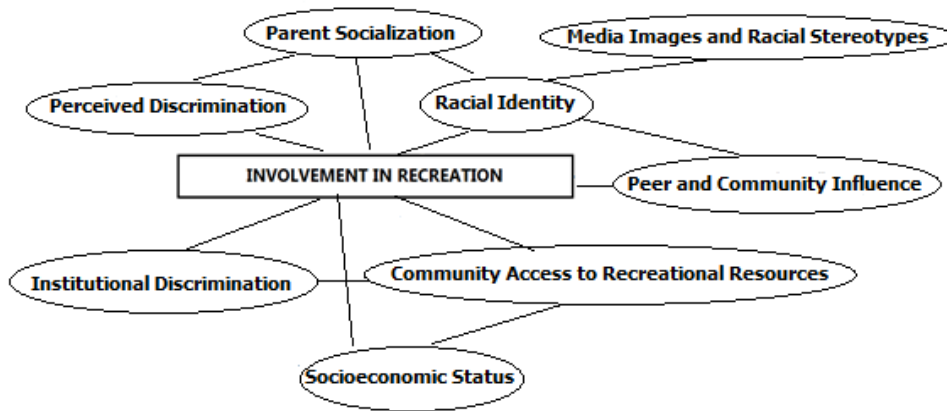


Figure 1.1. Conceptual Model of Racial Identity and Recreational Involvement

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### Study Design

The purpose of this study was to determine levels of interest and involvement in campus recreational activities among African American undergraduates at historically White institutions and compare these interests and participation rates to those of White undergraduate peers at similar institutions. Additional aims of this study were to gain perspectives about African American students' experiences in campus recreation settings at historically White institutions, and to examine the influence of racial identity on African Americans undergraduates' interest and involvement in recreation and sport activities.

To address the research questions used to guide this study, I implemented a concurrent, mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2009), integrating the results of two national, web-based surveys, with the results of sixteen semi-structured interviews with African American undergraduates attending a comprehensive, historically White, state-supported, research institution in the southeastern United States. An underlying assumption of mixed methods research is that multiple data sets allow for integrative approaches to understanding given phenomena, leading to a more thorough understanding of the research problem being examined (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Mixed methods approaches are also based on the idea that "there are multiple legitimate approaches to social inquiry" (Greene, 2008, p. 20). An appealing aspect of this mode of research was having an opportunity to compare and contrast findings from quantitative and qualitative data sets, and having the ability to draw from the strengths of each method (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In the present study, the interviews provided detailed, in-

depth explanations of developing patterns, while survey responses provided perspectives from multiple respondents from several different universities.

Another advantage of mixed methods research is that it provides a way of understanding the “meaning, context, and process” of the data being analyzed, while enhancing the ability to gain knowledge about prevailing trends (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007, p. 175). Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) insisted that an added benefit of combining multiple research approaches to a single study is that it provides complementary ways to address the same research questions. Thurmond (2001) viewed this type of approach as a form of “triangulation,” insisting that mixed methods studies provide “meaningful information that may have remained undiscovered with the use of only one approach” (p. 255). Mixed methods studies also allow for qualitative and quantitative methodologies to be conducted independently with the intent to be combined at a later stage in the research process (Bergman, 2008; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

The use of a mixed methods approach, however is not without controversy. Doyle, Brady, and Byrne (2009) noted that traditional methods of inquiry have forced researchers to choose between the “positivist scientific model of research associated with quantitative methods and the interpretative model associated with qualitative ones” (p. 177). Bryman (2006) and Sandelowski (2000) pointed out that difficulties can arise when trying to determine the best way to merge quantitative and qualitative results. Counter to these arguments, however, Doyle et al., (2009) asserted, however, that mixed methods inquiry allows for “completeness” in understanding unanticipated findings in the research process.

## Survey Methods

### Measures and Questionnaire Development

In the current study, analysis of survey data occurred at the same time that interviews were being conducted, coded, and transcribed. I attempted to give “equal weight” (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007, p. 64) to the survey results and interview data. I coded each data set independently, and combined the themes from each set at a second stage of analysis (Saldaña, 2009). The aim of this “convergent” approach was to add to the validity of overall findings by having a separate set of responses that could be compared for similarities and differences (see Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

I used *Qualtrics* software to build the Active Leisure Participation Survey (ALPS) and the Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey (RLIS). The ALPS and RLIS were each created specifically to assess interest and participation in activities commonly offered in recreational settings at colleges and universities, or activities that are generally popular among college-aged individuals. The surveys were identical, with the exception of subscale items from Sellers et al.’s (1998) *Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity* (MIBI) that were included in the Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey. I received e-mail consent for the use of subscale questions from MIBI from Dr. Robert Sellers on September 4, 2014. Survey items were modified slightly to fit the scaling and format of the surveys used in this study, but the general content was not changed. *Qualtrics* provided a format that was compatible with multiple operating systems on smart phones and similar electronic devices, and also provided a feature that allowed for previewing of the survey as it was being created. The surveys were designed to be broad enough for use in future studies with similar populations and students at other universities. Certain survey questions in the ALPS and

RLIS were also adapted in part from the *NASPA College Recreation Survey*. I contacted a representative from NASPA on December 10, 2015 via e-mail to request permission to include these questions and permission was granted on December 16, 2015.

I selected the *nationalist* and *humanist* subscales from the *Multiple Inventory of Black Identity* (MIBI) because it had been used successfully in multiple studies (e.g., Banks & Kohn-Wood, 2007; Chavous, Rivas-Drake, Smalls, Griffin, & Cogburn, 2008), and because it was designed specifically for use with African American undergraduates at historically White institutions (Sellers et al., 2008). This survey was developed by Sellers (2008) and colleagues at the University of Michigan to assess racial identity levels among African American college undergraduates. The MIBI contains fifty-six questions designed to measure different “dimensions” of racial identity as described by Sellers et al. (2007). These three dimensions are centrality, ideology, and racial regard. The ideology scale has four subscales: the *assimilationist* subscale, the *humanist* subscale, the *oppressed minority* subscale, and the *nationalist* subscale (this scale can be found in Appendix F). All questions use Likert-style responses with seven response items ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and a neutral response item in the middle. The MIBI has been used primarily in the field of educational psychology and has been implemented with both college undergraduates and high school students. The model in which the scale is based on attempts to explain the relationship between behavioral choices of African Americans and the importance of race as a subcomponent of an individual’s overall identity.

Subscale items from the MIBI are scored on a seven-point, bipolar scale with the following response choices: 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *somewhat agree*, 4 = *neither agree or disagree*, 5 = *somewhat disagree*, 6 = *agree*, and 7 = *strongly agree*. A mean score

close to “1” on the nationalist subscale would indicate that race is likely to play an important role in shaping viewpoints about social interactions and patterns of behavior. The humanist subscale includes questions that measure an individual’s likelihood of thinking that people of all races should hold similar perspectives and beliefs about social issues.

The ALPS was designed to take five to seven minutes; the RLIS was designed to be completed in ten minutes or less. The completion time for the RLIS was estimated to be a few minutes longer since it also included subscale questions from the MIBI. At the beginning of the ALPS and the RLIS, students were asked to indicate all race and ethnic groups in which they felt described their own unique background and heritage. Racial and ethnic categories listed were adapted from demographic categories established by the U.S. Department of Education (2007). Categories included Hispanic or Latino as an indicator of ethnicity, and White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander as options for race. In the administration of the ALPS, any student selecting a category other than White as their preferred racial background was taken directly to the end of the survey. The RLIS, in contrast, was delimited to students who identified as African American, however, respondents marking African American, along with another race or ethnicity were also allowed to complete the survey. The purpose of this was to capture opinions from students who identified as African American, but also identified with other racial backgrounds. As social scientists such as Cheng and Lee (2009), Doyle and Kao (2007), and Renn (2008) have noted, physical appearance influences the way individuals perceive themselves and their racial identity, the culture in which they identify, and even the choice of peer groups. More importantly, the way others perceive individuals and develop beliefs about their viewpoints and personal

characteristics is also influenced by physical appearance (Renn, 2008). Therefore, I felt that it was appropriate to allow students marking additional racial and ethnic backgrounds in addition to African American to complete the RLIS. The total number of respondents indicating a racial or ethnic background other than African American in this study was nine (i.e. 94% of the RLIS respondents indicated that their racial background was African American only). In the process of identifying potential survey participants, *Qualtrics* administrators contacted individuals within their panel database who identified as African American, so the inclusion of screening questions at the start of my survey served as a second level of racial identification.

Several “screening” questions were placed at the beginning of the RLIS to obtain a sample of students who matched the needed demographic for the study, as well as participants with attributes similar to the students completing face-to-face interviews in the qualitative component of the study (e.g., race and type of college attended). Screening requirements included attending a four-year, historically White college or university with campus recreational facilities, attending a college or university with a campus recreational “aquatic center” or pool, and a college or university with intramurals and club sports. In addition to screening questions about race, the survey included demographic questions requiring students to provide an indication of parents’ level of education, community background (i.e. the population and suburban/urban/rural description of the participant’s hometown before college, and perceived class standing (this question was included in the RLIS only). The question related to perceived class status was added after a slight modification made after implementation of the ALPS (the ALPS was launched one week prior to the RLIS).

Another screening requirement for both the ALPS and the RLIS was that participants must be a current student or recent graduate of a four-year, public institution in the United States (recent graduate was determined to be anyone who received their undergraduate degree within the last 365 days). This was done in order to collect data that could be compared to recent findings from related studies about student retention, and examinations of graduation rates of racial minority students at four-year colleges and universities. Also, to capture the growing number of non-traditional age students attending four colleges, age parameters for both surveys were set to 18-30. Two sub-categories were included here: an “18-24 year-old” category and a “25-30 year-old” age category.

To ensure that the sample truly represented undergraduates from all regions of the United States, participants in the ALPS and RLIS were asked to report the state in which their university was located. Survey respondents were also asked to provide a geographic and population description of the community in which they lived before coming to college. 1 = metropolitan region with 1,000,000 or more residents, 2 = metropolitan region with 100,000 – 999,999, 3 = urban area with 10,000 – 99,999, 4 = “rural fringe” area, less than ten miles from an urban area, and 5 = “rural distant” area more than ten miles from an urban area.

The responses to the RLIS question assessing perceived class status were 1 = upper class, 2 = upper-middle class, 3 = lower-middle class 4= blue collar/working class, and 5 = poor/working class. The categories were based in part on categories commonly used in social sciences research as well as a review of studies examining approaches to measuring socioeconomic status (see Barbeau, Krieger, & Soobader, 2004; Krieger, Williams, & Moss, 1997; Shavers, 2007

At the end of the ALPS, an open-ended question was included to assess student's overall perceptions of the campus recreational facilities at their university. This same question was included in the RLIS along with an additional follow-question added to elicit more detailed information about the perceptions of the campus recreation and its connection to the college experience. Like the question related to perceived class status, this question was added after the ALPS had already been implemented.

Questions in both surveys were built with a "force response" option so that respondents would be required to answer before moving to the next question. Certain questions had multiple response choices within the question. With the exception of demographic "screening" questions, which were placed at the beginning of the survey, general demographic questions about parent education and socioeconomic status were placed at the end of the survey. Questions from the *Multiple Inventory of Black Identity* were placed in the final section of the RLIS (Groves et al., 2011). Questions that I perceived to be easy to answer, along with what I thought to be the most interesting questions were placed near the beginning of the survey. Finally, the wording of questions, and general format of the survey was designed to be consistent across questions, as were the scale sequences and scale response choices (see Dillman, Christian, & Smyth, 2014; Groves et al., 2011).

Dillman methods for online surveys were used (see Dillman et al., 2014) (e.g. the use of color and bold print, managing survey length, incorporating social exchange theory, etc.) in the construction of the surveys. I included the university logo and *Qualtrics* logo on the first page of the survey (see Dillman et al., 2014; Tourangeau et al., 2013). The first page also included a brief paragraph that described the purpose of the survey, emphasizing the participant's role in making a significant contribution to research and practical applications.

Participants were given the option to return to earlier sections of the survey to edit responses, and they were also allowed to save responses and return to the survey at a later time. A progress bar was included so that participants would know how many questions were left and the approximate amount of time to completion. Finally, I placed an emphasis on making sure questions were easy to read and respond to on smart phones and mobile devices (Buskirk & Andres, 2013; Millar & Dillman, 2011) and felt that this was especially important since the surveys were being administered to college students (see Hingorani, Woodard, & Askari-Danesh, 2012; Kim, Chun, & Lee, 2014).

### **Development of Primary Survey Questions**

I attempted to focus on a small set of central research questions that could be addressed with a subset of more focused questions revolving around the specific areas of interest (Creswell, 2007). According to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) and Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2006), an important part of the development of research questions is allowing theory to guide their development. Therefore I attempted to assess levels of interest *and* participation in recreational activities, and to collect data that might support or refute the existence of limiting or constraining factors such as perceived discrimination.

Each of the questions assessing level of interest started with the *phrase “please indicate your level of interest in the following [sport, fitness, or outdoor] activities.”* Each of the questions assessing level of participation (i.e. *involvement*) started with the phrase “*in a typical college semester, how often do you participate in team or individual sport activities? Do not include participation in physical education classes taken at your college or university?*” Levels of interest in recreational sport activities were numerically coded as 1 = *not interested*, 2 = *somewhat interested*, 3 = *interested*, 4 = *very interested*. Levels of

involvement were coded on six levels, with 1 = never, 2 = less than once per week, 3 = 1-2 days per week, 4 = 3-4 days per week, 5 = 5-6 days per week, and 6 = 7 days per week. The last two categories were later collapsed resulting in five levels instead of six. Response categories for parent education level included four responses for *highest level of education completed by either parent (or guardian)* which were 1 = high school diploma, 2 = bachelor's degree, 3 = master's degree, and 4 = doctoral degree. These categories were later collapsed to into two levels, 1 = non-college degree and 2 = college degree, based on the distribution of responses.

### **Reliability and Validity**

The survey (along with the interview questions and the description of the study), was submitted to the university's Institutional Review Board on March 28, 2016 and approved on April 22, 2016. I contacted representatives from *Qualtrics* (a survey and marketing research organization based in Provo, Utah) immediately following IRB approval to initiate the first steps of implementing the *Active Leisure Participation Survey* and the *Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey* and also began the process of pilot testing the survey.

Upon approval from the Internal Review Board, all questions in the ALPS and RLIS were pilot tested by students and expert faculty at the university. Multiple versions of each survey were created and modified before final versions were adopted for implementation. The surveys were pilot tested with twelve undergraduate students from general fitness classes at the university, and those selected included males and females, as well as students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds (although all students selected to test the RLIS were African American). Individuals who agreed to pilot test the survey were e-mailed an anonymous link to the pilot survey and asked to provide feedback via e-mail. Students were

also asked to take the survey on their smart phones if possible since it was likely that many respondents to the final survey would attempt to complete the actual questionnaire in this manner.

All but one of the students indicated that they survey was easy to navigate and easy to read on a smart phone. Recommendations from pilot tests included changing the wording of two of the subscale questions in the MIBI. Student respondents participating in pilot tests reported time frames between six and ten minutes, with one student stating that survey completion was about ten to twelve minutes with a deliberate and careful reading of each question and response item. After receiving feedback from students, I changed the sequence of questions to improve the flow of the survey. I also and modified certain questions and removed others to decrease the length of the survey. I moved two questions from the MIBI to the end of racial identity section of the survey but did not change the wording. Cronbach's alpha for the eight nationalist subscale items from the MIBI was .79 (determined using Stata 14 software).

Survey font was changed to a bold print and a different style to improve readability, while leaving other elements of the survey unaffected. Once changes based upon student feedback were made, I e-mailed the survey to faculty members with expertise in survey methods and recreation and knowledge of survey administration and sampling methods. Recommendations from faculty included adding a perceived class status question to the RLIS, restructuring the response categories for the frequency of participation questions, and providing an "other" category to the sport, fitness, and outdoor recreation interest questions. After reviewing their recommendations and feedback about wording, content, and potential data analysis concerns, and making recommended changes, I reviewed the survey a final time

to check for formatting errors, spelling mistakes, and correct skip pattern logic. At this point I e-mailed the survey to *Qualtrics* for review, and a final round of formatting, and preparation for survey implementation.

### **Survey Administration**

The *Active Leisure Participation Survey* was launched on June 6, 2016 and completed on June 14, 2016. The *Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey* was launched on June 21, 2016 and completed on July 7, 2016. The Active Leisure Participation Survey (ALPS) was administered to a sample of White undergraduate students (n=154) attending historically White, four-year, degree-granting, public institutions in the United States. The Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey (RLIS), in contrast, was administered to a sample of *African American* undergraduate students (n=150) attending historically White, four-year, degree-granting, public institutions in the United States. Participants accessed the survey through an anonymous link, which is a process that has been found to improve response rates and increase the likelihood of genuine and honest responses (Couper, 2000; Dillman et al., 2014; Groves et al., 2011).

*Qualtrics* survey administrators contacted individuals who met the prerequisite demographic characteristics for inclusion in the surveys. *Qualtrics* builds databases of or “panels” of app users of various products, companies, and services and uses these databases to recruit potential survey respondents (see Callegaro & DiSogra, 2008). The advantage of using panels for recruitment of survey participants is that a near 100% response rate can eventually be achieved (Millar & Dillman, 2011). Surveys are sent to potential respondents until reaching the number of required respondents for the survey. The required number for

the ALPS and RLIS was  $n = 150$ , with no less than a 3:2 ratio of males to females or females to males.

Admittedly, a potential disadvantage of panel surveys is a potential bias in the demographic group responding to the survey (Millar & Dillman, 2011; Groves et al., 2011). To reduce such bias and reach the sample needed for this particular study, a set of “screening” questions was placed at the beginning of the ALPS and RLIS. For example, a filter question was placed in the middle of the surveys (by *Qualtrics* personnel) to identify participants who were taking the surveys without reading the questions carefully or completing the survey too quickly. Any respondents moving too quickly through the surveys or failing to respond correctly to the filter response questions were immediately taken to the end of the survey. Respondents to the RLIS were “screened out” (taken immediately to the end of the survey) if they indicated that were not enrolled in a historically white college or university, if they were not a current undergraduate student or recent graduate (graduating within the last 365 days), if the institution was not a four-year public institution, or if they were younger than 18 or over the age of 30. As stated previously, they were also screened out if they did not mark “African American” as one of the categories for self-described race. As also mentioned earlier, questions in the ALPS and RLIS were built with the “force response” option so that respondents would be required to answer before moving to the next question. This process eventually resulted in the sample size of  $n = 154$  for both the ALPS and  $n = 150$  for the RLIS. As an incentive to complete the ALPS and RLIS, respondents were given access to services and content within apps that would normally come at a cost (e-mail communication with *Qualtrics*, July, 2016).

## **Interview Methods**

### **Identification of Interview Participants**

All interview participants were recruited through purposive or snowball sampling methods (Esterberg, 2002; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), and each individual was recruited based on the same pre-established set of criteria. In this case, criteria included familiarity with campus recreational facilities and participation in campus recreational programs or activities at some point during undergraduate enrollment. The initial list of potential interview participants was derived from course rosters that included all African American students enrolled in physical education courses that I taught at the university between 2011 and 2015. The list included students from fitness classes (weight training, general fitness, and indoor group cycling), team sports classes (basketball, softball, and flag football), and individual sport and activity classes (racquetball and bowling). I narrowed the list of potential participants to students who had previously indicated (through general conversations in class) that they had an interest in some form of recreational sport, such as intramurals, club sports, or open recreation, or students who demonstrated a definite interest in recreational sport activities during the time they were enrolled in my class. I also made an effort to recruit students from different types of communities, including metropolitan regions, small towns, rural areas of the state, and different states. I delimited potential participants to former students to eliminate any conflicts of interest due to ties to grades, or any type of academic incentive to participate in the study.

Upon approval from the university's Institutional Review Board, students identified as potential interview participants were contacted through e-mail and invited to participate in the study. An attached consent form and explanation of the study was included in the initial

e-mail, and a consent form was also provided to students at the start of interviews (see Appendix C). Fourteen students were initially invited to participate in the study. Two did not respond, one was unable to participate due to participation in a student exchange program. The remaining eleven agreed to take part in the study, although one later elected not to participate due to scheduling conflicts. Several students who participated in interviews provided names of peers who would possibly be willing to help with the study. These students, recruited through snowball sampling (Groenewald, 2004; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006) helped to bring the total number of participants to sixteen (nine males and seven females).

Limiting the number of interview participants to sixteen allowed for successful completion of interviews, transcription, and data analysis, while also providing enough variation in participant responses to identify emerging themes. As an incentive to participate in interviews, students were given \$25 gift cards to the university book store. The amount was selected based on availability of allotted funds for the study and informal surveys of students about the amount and type of incentive that would be considered a valuable incentive. Participant interest in completing interviews may have also been driven by the fact that the topic under study was related to the students' personal experiences, thus giving students an opportunity to reconstruct their experiences from their own vantage point (Esterberg, 2002).

### **Conducting the Interviews**

Interviews were conducted in either the African American Cultural Center or the Health and Exercise Studies complex on the university campus. I opted for business casual dress for each interview to convey a professional appearance. I asked students to review and

sign the same consent form that I sent during the initial invitation to participate in the study, and I also explained the purpose of the study again to make sure that they did not have any questions or concerns. Students were reminded that they could stop the interviews at any time, and that pseudonyms would be used to ensure anonymity.

All interviews were audio recorded to ensure accuracy of responses, as well as the intonation and emphasis of participant's answers (Esterberg, 2002; King & Horrocks, 2010). The reason for using an audio-recording device was explained to each participant at the start of the interview, and they were all given the option to complete interviews without the use of a recording device (all agreed, however, to the use of audio recording). I also took notes of each interview with a laptop computer to highlight important statements made during the discussions.

My general intent was to approach each interview in a conversational manner (see Esterberg, 2002). Most, if not all of the questions included in the interviews, could be categorized as non-intrusive, and dealt primarily with recreational involvement on campus, the participants' general levels of interest in sport, recreation, and fitness, or recreation and leisure patterns among African Americans as a group. The interviews also included questions aimed at understanding reasons for early participation (or non-participation) in recreation and sport, as well as the connection between pre-college recreational sport participation and current involvement in campus recreation. Additionally, each participant was asked specifically about involvement and interest in outdoor recreation activities such as kayaking, camping, and hiking since participation in these types of activities has also been identified as being below average among African Americans (Martin, 2004).

As recommended by Esterberg (2002, p. 96), “easier and non-threatening questions” were placed at the beginning of the interview. Interviews were modeled after the “phenomenological” approach to inquiry (Creswell, 2007), allowing participants to describe experiences from their own perspectives. Phenomenological research allows participants to provide their own unique and personal perspectives while allowing the researcher to build a data set from a detailed analysis personal narratives and views. As opposed to a positivist type of approach, in which there is an attempt to construct a theory, the phenomenological approach uses participant’s responses about given experiences to create themes that describe the meaning of these experiences (Finlay, 1999). As stated by Creswell (2007, p. 57) “a ‘phenomenological study’ describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon.” The end goal of this mode of investigation is to find commonalities in the experiences of a group of individuals (Creswell, 2007). During the interviews, I allowed participants to elaborate on personal experiences relating to sport and recreation involvement, family leisure, perceptions of campus recreation programs, social interaction with others on campus, and perspectives on leisure and race in general. The responses and viewpoints gathered from these interviews were compared to statistical data and open-ended responses collected in the two surveys.

It may be important to note that I had an established rapport with some of individuals who participated in interviews, which may have helped some of the students feel a greater sense of trust, thus facilitating the ease in which students gave responses to questions. This is significant to note since many of the questions dealt directly or indirectly with race relations in society (as it related to sport and recreation) and personal experiences with race relations on campus. It should also be noted, however, that six of the sixteen interview participants

were students who I did not know until the interview. Most students provided responses to questions with little to no hesitation. All participants seemed to be responding with honesty, sincerity, and well-thought out opinions about each subject addressed in the interview. Most importantly, students were enthusiastic about their participation and seemed to appreciate the fact that their input and opinions were a valuable part of the study.

I made an attempt to ask questions in the same order in each interview, although respondents' answers sometimes necessitated asking some questions in a different sequence. After the interviews with the first two students, the questions related to campus recreation participation were shifted to the beginning of the interview script (see King & Horrocks, 2010) to place a greater emphasis on current levels of involvement and potential associations between campus recreational involvement and campus belonging. In order to maintain consistency across interviews, however, all questions included in the original script were also used in succeeding interviews. As recommended by researchers such as Groves et al. (2011), King and Horrocks (2010), and Esterberg (2002), "probing" or "follow-up" questions were used to generate more detailed responses and to encourage participants to elaborate on important topics.

### **Survey Data Analysis**

The purpose of analyzing survey responses was to determine the extent that the data collected could help predict levels of interest in specific recreational activities, and involvement in three general areas of recreation (sport, fitness, and outdoor). Independent variables in the analysis were race, gender, hometown before college enrollment, class status (for RLIS participants), parent education, and racial identity (also for RLIS participants). Parent education was based on the highest level of education of one or more parents or

guardians. Gender was coded as either male or female. Class status was derived from responses in which participants described the perceived class status of their community (categories were upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, working class blue collar, and working class poor). Racial identity was measured using responses to subscale items from Sellers et al.'s (1998) *Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity*. The term *community* was used to represent the size and description of the participant's hometown or home community before college enrollment. Communities were categorized as either *metropolitan* with a population over one million, *metropolitan* with a population between 100,000 and 999,999, *urban* with a population between 10,000 and 99,999, *rural* and within ten miles of a large metropolitan area, or *rural* and more than ten miles from a large metropolitan area. These descriptors were adapted from the United States Census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

I derived a mean interest score for each of the African American undergraduates responding to the RLIS for each of the 27 recreation activities surveyed. I also calculated mean interest score for White undergraduates (n = 154) who completed the Active Leisure Participation Survey, as well as interest scores for gender, and all undergraduates combined (i.e. African American and White). I also used survey responses to generate an overall median score for each participant (i.e. case) that was used to generate grand means for sport interest, fitness interest, and outdoor interest for African American and White undergraduate students (n = 304) participating in the survey. Each individual's (median) sport interest score was based on responses to the twelve sport activities included in the survey, (median) fitness interest scores were based on each individual's responses to the seven fitness activities included in the survey, and the *outdoor* interest (median) scores were based on responses

to the eight outdoor activities. Mean involvement scores were derived from scores reported in participation in days per week for sport, fitness, and outdoor activities. Survey responses were uploaded from Qualtrics into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Mean and median scores were calculated and uploaded into *Stata 14* for more detailed data analysis (i.e. regression analysis, comparison of means, verification of mean and median scores).

### **Regression Models**

Regression analysis was used to measure the effect of specific independent variables on interest and involvement in recreation. Since the *Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey* included two variables that were not included in the *Active Leisure Participation Survey*, separate regression analysis was conducted African American undergraduates, and the sample of African American and White undergraduates who completed questionnaires. This resulted in six models for data collected from RLIS participants, and six models for RLIS and ALPS participants combined. Since the independent and dependent variables were measured using *Likert*-type scales resulting in ordinal responses, I used Ordinal logistic regression to fit the models. The general model for ordinal logistic regression is written in the form  $\logit [P(Y_i \leq j)] = \alpha_j + \beta_1 x_{i1} + \beta_2 x_{i2} + \dots$ . Each predictor variable ( $x_i$ ) has its own “measured effect” (Menard, 2010) that can be determined when other predictor variables in the model are held constant (Agresti, 2010; Menard, 2010). Additionally, a greater magnitude of the  $\beta$  coefficients in model (a greater distance from zero) indicates a stronger effect for the predictor variables ( $x_i$ ). Results from ordinal logistic regression were reported with odds ratios that showed the likelihood of observing a particular measure in relation to a higher or lower score on the same variable (Fullerton, 2009; Peng & So, 2002). This also shows the

likelihood that a particular outcome will occur above or below a certain level (see Greenland, 1994).

One advantage of ordinal logistic regression is that it can be used with non-normal distributions (Agresti, 2010; Menard, 2010). As with ordinary least squares regression, interaction effects between predictor variables can sometimes occur with ordinal logistic regression. Interactions between variables can result in a violation of the *parallel lines assumption* (Fullerton, 2009; Peng & So, 2002). The parallel lines assumption (also known as the *equal slopes model*, Menard, 2010) means that there is a different slope for each predictor in the model, but the slope for each is parallel to the others in the model. As a result, collapsing several categories into smaller categories does not impact the ratios for the model (Agresti, 2010; Greenland, 2010; Menard, 2010). Several statistical tests can be used to determine if the parallel lines assumption has been violated. These include the *likelihood ratio test*, *score test*, *Brant test*, and *Wald test* (Menard, 2010). The *likelihood ratio test* is the most powerful of the three because it is more robust (Agresti, 2010; Menard, 2010), although each will produce comparable results with large samples (Menard, 2010). As explained by Menard (2010) and Peng and So (2002), the *parallel lines assumption* is often violated in practice.

### **Kruskal-Wallis Tests and Analysis of Means**

I used *Kruskal-Wallis equality of means* tests using Stata 14 statistical software to determine if significant differences between four subgroups of undergraduate students: *African American females, African American males, White females, and White males*).

Kruskal-Wallis tests are appropriate for ordinal level data, and the advantage of using this type of test is that it can be used to calculate differences between two or more means (Chan

& Walmsley, 1997; Ruxton & Beauchamp, 2008). The disadvantage is that the only way to know where specific differences exist is to follow up with a form of post-hoc analysis. Therefore, in the few cases where statistically significant differences did exist, I compared mean scores for each of the subgroups within that specific category with Mann-Whitney U tests, also calculated using *Stata 14*. Mann-Whitney tests are appropriate for ordinal level responses between two populations or independent groups (Ruxton, 2006).

### **Analysis of Interviews**

Interviews were transcribed to allow for a more detailed analysis of responses and to better understand the context of quotes (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Esterberg, 2002). I used a multiple stage descriptive coding process in the analysis interviews. As recommended by Saldaña (2009), and Esterberg (2002), this included an initial “read-through” of the interviews and a notation of important themes before moving to an “interpretive coding” stage of analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010; Saldaña, 2009). After making notations of important quotes and comments I uploaded transcribed text and notes into Atlas.ti 7 for further coding and analysis. Giving special attention to the connection between the participants’ previous experiences with recreational sport and current patterns of behavior as well as quotes that helped understand the connection between campus recreation and the overall college experience, I highlighted important quotes and made notations within the text. This was the first stage of analysis. The second stage involved “coding” each of the important quotes from all interviews by grouping them by general topics. This resulted in an initial set of eighty-nine groups that included codes with similar names and categorical themes. After establishing this preliminary set of codes, I reviewed the quotations included within each category to determine which ones could be merged into more streamlined set of

groups that would capture a broader, yet similar set of perspectives. Using the recode and merge functions in Atlas.ti 7, I was able to generate a list of five categorical themes and corresponding quotes within each category.

### **Anonymity for Survey Participants**

The initial set of transcripts for participants were labeled by number (participant #1, participant #2, etc.) and pseudonyms were assigned once transcription of each set of notes was completed. Pseudonyms were created to match the sequential and alpha order in which the interviews took place. The names given were distinctly different from the participant's actual name, and an attempt was made to assign common names that would not necessarily be associated with a particular racial or ethnic group.

### **Analysis of Open-ended Responses**

I tallied and categorized all open-ended survey responses manually and then compared these categories to the themes identified from interviews. Based on the recommendations of Creswell (2007), I created a matrix using an Excel spreadsheet compare differences and similarities. Categories derived from interviews were listed on the horizontal axis, and initial themes from open-ended questions were listed on the vertical axis. The purpose of this of this stage of analysis was simply to identify similarities between the themes identified from interviews and those that emerged from the open-ended response quotes from the students responding to the Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey (RLIS). Since African American students' interests and experiences in campus recreation were the primary focus, quotes from the RLIS only were used in comparison and integration with interview data. Seventy-nine participants provided quotes that were used in analysis.

## **Merging Qualitative and Quantitative Data**

As described previously, the interviews and surveys were analyzed separately. After determining the key themes from interviews and calculating the results of regression models and mean comparisons, I compared the results of each method to determine if qualitative results helped to understand the trends observed in survey findings. The differences and similarities between the two data sets, along with expected outcomes of surveys, based on key themes from interviews are described in the discussion chapter of this study.

## **Summary**

This chapter described the strengths and weakness of mixed-methods research as well as the reasons for using a mixed-methods approach in this study. I described the methods used to develop survey measures and questions, recruitment of interview participants, the data collection process, and the process used in the analysis of survey responses and interviews, as well as the methodology used to merge the findings from quantitative and qualitative analysis.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The aims of this study were to develop additional knowledge about African American undergraduate's experiences with campus recreation at historically White institutions, and to determine if recreation and sport interests among African American were significantly different from those of their White peers at similar institutions. This chapter presents the results of surveys interviews conducted in this study, including findings related to interests in specific recreational sport activities, general involvement in sport, fitness, and outdoor endeavors, and the relationship between African American undergraduates' racial identity and recreational sport interests. This first section of the chapter includes an overview of the independent and dependent variables used in regression analysis and equality of means tests, along with an explanation of the results from the *Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey* (RLIS) and the *Active Leisure Participation Survey* (ALPS). The second half of the chapter includes the demographic descriptors of survey participants and a summary of interviews conducted with sixteen African American undergraduate students attending a historically White, comprehensive research institution in the southeastern United States.

The research questions used to guide this study are also included in this section. The first question centered on campus recreational involvement and its association with integration into the overall campus community. The second question revolved around differences between African American and White undergraduates' recreational interests. The third question dealt with factors influencing recreational interests. The fourth and fifth questions related to racial identity and patterns of recreational behavior.

## **Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** To what extent can campus recreational programs and services help African American undergraduates feel more socially integrated at historically White colleges and universities?

**Research Question 2:** Are African American college students' recreational sport interests similar to those of their White student peers?

**Research Question 3:** What social and environmental factors influence levels of recreational sport interest?

**Research Question 4:** To what extent is racial identity associated with recreational sport interests and involvement among African American college students?

## **Results from the Survey**

### **Independent Variables**

I administered a survey to a national sample of college students at four-year colleges and universities. Demographic data collected included the size and description of the participant's hometown or home community (i.e. the community in which they lived before college enrollment), race, gender, perceived class status of their pre-college hometown or community, and parent education level. Each of these variables were included in the regression analysis for this study. The five response levels within community were metropolitan with one million residents or more, metropolitan with 100,000 to 999,999 residents, urban with 10,000 to 99,999 residents, rural fringe (small town or rural area less than 10 miles from an urban area), and rural distant (small town or rural area more than 10 miles from an urban area). These categories were adapted from the residential descriptors used by the U.S. Census Bureau (2016).

The number of RLIS respondents from a metropolitan area with one million residents or more was  $n = 32$ . The number from a metropolitan area with 100,000 to 999,999 residents was  $n = 44$ . The total number of African American respondents who reported being from an area described as urban with 10,000 – 99,999 residents was  $n = 50$ , while  $n = 14$  and  $n = 10$  reported living in rural fringe and rural distant areas respectively.

The total number of ALPS participants reporting metropolitan with one million residents or more was  $n = 13$ ; for metropolitan with 100,000 – 999,999 residents the total number of respondents was  $n=39$ ; for urban with 10,000 to 99,999 residents the total was  $n = 62$ ; rural fringe was  $n = 22$ , while rural distant was  $n=18$ .

This predictor was collapsed from five to three levels (i.e. metropolitan, urban, or rural) after data collection and before data analysis. Metropolitan ( $n = 128$ ) represented communities with a population of 100,000 residents and above. Urban ( $n = 112$ ) was used to describe communities with a population between 10,000 and 99,999. Rural ( $n = 64$ ) was used to describe communities with fewer than 10,000 residents.

I designated the level of education based on the highest level of schooling obtained by at least one parent or legal guardian. The number of African American undergraduates (i.e. RLIS participants) categorized as having parents with a high school education was  $n = 64$ ; the number of African American undergraduates whose parent education level was determined to be a college degree was  $n = 86$ . In the parent education category for ALPS respondents,  $n = 52$  had parents with a high school education, and  $n = 102$  had parents were categorized as having a college education.

A variable for gender was also included in the regression models (coded as “0” for female, and “1” for male in both the ALPS and RLIS). The number of female participants in the RLIS was  $n = 83$  and the number of male participants was  $n = 67$ . The number of female participants in the ALPS was  $n = 93$  and the number of male participants was  $n = 61$ . Perceived class status and racial identity were also surveyed in the RLIS, and therefore used in regression analysis for African American undergraduates. The five original categories for perceived class status were upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, working-class blue collar, and working-class/poor. These were collapsed into *upper middle class* ( $n = 58$ ), *lower middle class* ( $n = 61$ ), and *working class* ( $n = 31$ ).

### **Collapsing Identity Variables in the Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey**

The Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey included a subset of questions from the nationalist and humanist subscales of Sellers et al.’s (1998) Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI). There are five subscales in the MIBI, but I delimited use to the humanist and nationalist subscales in an effort to manage the length of the survey. Higher scores on the MIBI can be interpreted as an indication that an individual is more likely to place significant emphasis on race when making decisions about involvement in various social activities, or in the personal views held by the person responding to the survey. Lower scores would be an indication that race is less salient to the individual on a particular topic.

Sixteen racial identity subscale questions were included in the *RLIS*. There were eight from the *humanist* subscale and eight from the *nationalist* subscale. I calculated median scores on the *nationalist* and *humanist* subscales for each survey participant ( $n=150$ ) which were then designated as the individual’s “identity” score, with a score of “1” being designated as a “high” identity score, and “7” being a “low” identity score. The majority of

responses for the humanist subscale skewed towards one end of the response scale. *Strongly agree* (1) = 63; *agree* (2) = 43; *somewhat agree* (3) = 14; *neither agree or disagree* (4) = 20; *somewhat disagree* (5) = 6; *agree* (6) = 2 *strongly agree* (7) = 2), therefore, I excluded this subscale from analysis in this study, leaving the nationalist subscale scores as the primary independent variable for racial identity. The distribution of responses for the nationalist subscale was *strongly agree* (1) = 14; *agree* (2) = 12; *somewhat agree* (3) = 26; *neither agree or disagree* (4) = 48; *somewhat disagree* (5) = 25; *agree* (6) = 13 *strongly agree* (7) = 12). Respondents with a median score of “1” or “2” were grouped into category 1 (high racial identity), respondents with a median score of “3” were grouped into category 2, respondents with a median score of “4” were grouped into category 3, those with a median score of “5” were grouped as category 4, and respondents reporting median scores of “6” and “7” were grouped as category 5 (low racial identity).

### **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variables in this study were *sport interest*, *fitness interest*, *outdoor interest*, *sport involvement*, *fitness involvement*, and *outdoor involvement*. As described in the previous chapter, survey participants reported their levels of interest for twenty-seven specific sport, fitness, and outdoor recreational sport activities that were aggregated into sport, fitness, and outdoor interest scores. Participants who reported “not interested” were coded as “1”; those indicating that they were somewhat interested were coded as a “2”; participants selecting interested were coded as a “3”; those selecting the category for very interested were coded as a “4”. Respondents were also asked to report the number of times each week that they participated in sport, fitness, and outdoor activities generally. The choices were *never* (1), *less than once per week* (2), *one to two days per week* (3), *three to*

*four days per week (4), five to six days per week (5), and seven days per week (6).* These six levels were later collapsed into three levels with 1 = *never to one to two days per week*; 2 = *three to four days per week*, and 3 = *five to seven days per week*. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show the demographic data for survey participants in this study.

### **Descriptive Data**

One-hundred fifty-four respondents met the screening requirements for the *Active Leisure Participation Survey*, and 150 respondents met the screening requirements for the *Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey*. Most of the survey participants in both surveys were juniors, seniors, and recent graduates. Twenty-two percent (35/154) of the ALPS respondents (i.e. White undergraduates) and 33% percent (50/150) of the RLIS respondents (i.e. African American undergraduates) were freshman and sophomores. Forty-seven percent (72/154) of the ALPS respondents and 48% percent (72/150) of the RLIS respondents were juniors and seniors. Students from colleges in thirty-seven states and five geographic regions in the United States completed the ALPS. Students from colleges in 34 states and the District of Columbia, and five geographic regions in the United States completed the RLIS. Regions included *Atlantic, South, West* (which was formed by collapsing the *Pacific* and *Mountain* regions), *Midwest*, and *Northeast*. A list of states within each region is provided in Appendix J.

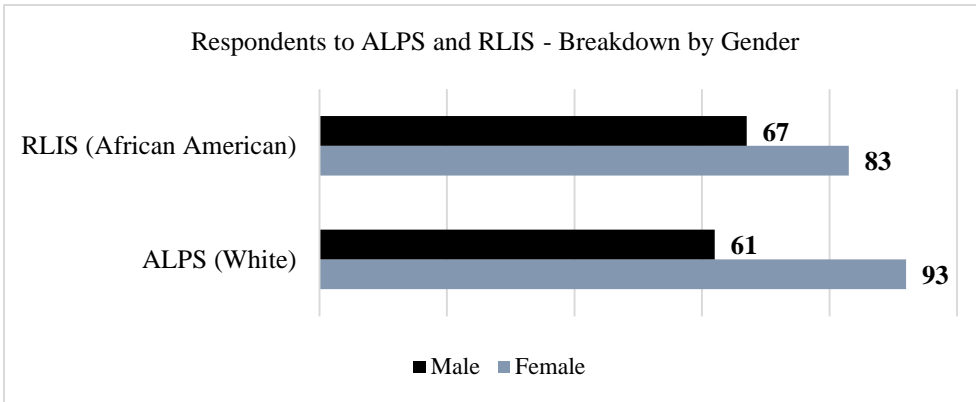


Figure 4.1. Number of Male and Female Participants in the ALPS and RLIS

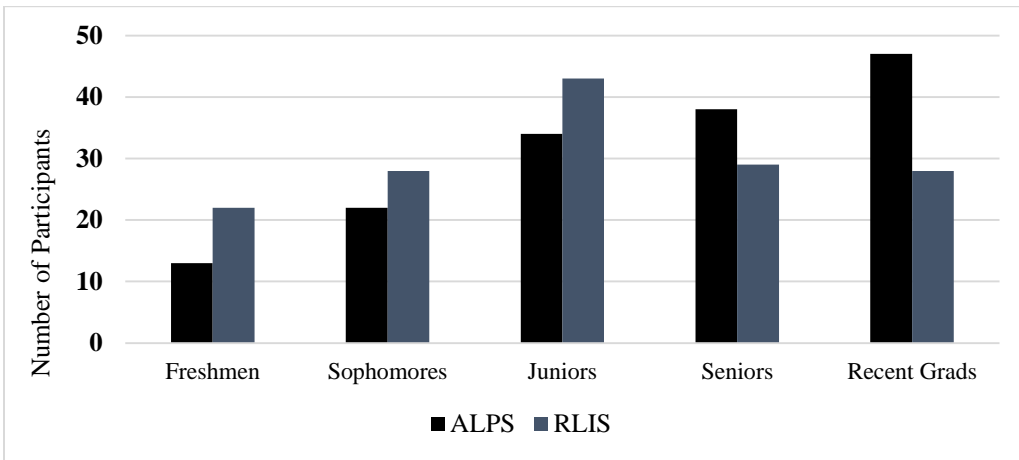


Figure 4.2. Number of ALPS and RLIS Participants by Year in School

## Demographic Data

Table 4.1

*Demographic Data for Undergraduate Students Completing Surveys*

	Frequency (%)	
<b><i>Parent Education Level</i></b>	<i>African American</i>	<i>White</i>
	<i>Undergraduates (n = 150)</i>	<i>Undergraduates (n = 154)</i>
high school graduate	64 (43.0)	52 (33.7)
bachelor's degree	50 (33.0)	58 (38.7)
graduate degree	36 (24.0)	44 (29.3)
<b><i>Size/Description of Hometown</i></b>	<i>African American</i>	<i>White</i>
	<i>Undergraduates (n = 150)</i>	<i>Undergraduates (n = 154)</i>
Metropolitan (> 999,999)	32 (21.3)	13 (8.4)
Metropolitan (100,000 - 999,999)	44 (29.3)	39 (25.3)
Urban (10,000 – 99,999)	50 (33.0)	62 (40.2)
Rural Fringe	14 (9.3)	22 (14.3)
Rural Distant	10 (6.7)	18 (11.7)
<b><i>Gender</i></b>	<i>African American</i>	<i>White</i>
	<i>Undergraduates (n = 150)</i>	<i>Undergraduates (n = 154)</i>
Male	67 (44.6)	61 (39.6)
Female	83 (55.4)	93 (60.4)
<b><i>Perceived Class Status</i></b>	<i>African American</i>	<i>White</i>
	<i>Undergraduates (n = 150)</i>	<i>Undergraduates (n = 154)</i>
Upper Middle Class	58 (38.7)	n/a
Lower Middle Class	61 (40.7)	n/a
Working Class	31 (20.7)	n/a
<b><i>Median Racial Identity Score</i></b>	<i>African American</i>	<i>White</i>
	<i>Undergraduates (n = 150)</i>	<i>Undergraduates (n = 154)</i>
1	26 (17.3)	n/a
2	26 (17.3)	n/a
3	48 (32.0)	n/a
4	25 (16.7)	n/a
5	25 (16.7)	n/a

## Analysis of Mean Scores

I calculated mean interest scores for African American and White undergraduates for each of the twenty-seven recreational activities surveyed, and compared differences in scores for the two populations. Among the twenty-seven recreation activities surveyed (see Table 4.2), African American undergraduates' overall mean scores were statistically significant, and higher for three sport activities. These were basketball ( $\chi^2 = 24.7, p < .001$ ), flag football ( $\chi^2 = 8.2, p < .01$ ), and soccer ( $\chi^2 = 5.4, p < .05$ ). Differences in mean interest scores for African American undergraduates were statistically significant and lower in hockey ( $\chi^2 = 8.1, p < .01$ ), and racquetball ( $\chi^2 = 5.4, p < .05$ ).

Among outdoor activities, mean differences were lower and statistically significant in canoeing ( $\chi^2 = 5.3, p < .05$ ), skiing ( $\chi^2 = 5.7, p < .01$ ), hiking, ( $\chi^2 = 13.3, p < .01$ ), and kayaking ( $\chi^2 = 9.4, p < .01$ ). Statistically significant differences did not exist for any of the fitness activities.

Tables 4.3 – 4.5 suggest that statistically significant differences between African American and White undergraduates in the sport interest category may be the result of lower mean scores among White undergraduate females in basketball and flag football. Mean interest scores for this population were lower than the means for the other three groups (see Table 4.3). This gives the appearance that race is the underlying factor in mean score differences, but differences are attributable to the combination of race and gender.

## Comparison of Mean Scores for Interest and Involvement

Table 4.2

*Summary of Mean Levels of Interest in Recreational Activities for African American and White Students*

Recreational Activity	Means	
	African American (n = 150)	White (n = 154)
Baseball/Softball	2.00	2.17
Basketball***	2.91	2.26
Camping	2.37	2.58
Canoeing*	2.20	2.48
Flag Football**	2.27	1.90
Golf	1.75	1.68
Hiking**	2.33	2.87
Hockey**	1.59	1.89
Indoor Group Cycling	2.05	2.02
Kayaking**	2.19	2.60
Lacrosse	1.50	1.63
Lap Swimming	2.07	2.23
Martial Arts	2.31	2.16
Mountain Biking	1.97	2.11
Racquetball*	1.50	1.67
Rock Climbing	2.11	2.25
Rugby	1.61	1.57
Running/Jogging	2.66	2.47
Skiing*	1.91	2.18
Snowboarding	2.03	2.08
Soccer*	2.44	2.14
Tennis	2.25	2.01
Treadmills/Elliptical	2.47	2.58
Ultimate	1.72	1.86
Volleyball	2.40	2.23
Weight Training	2.84	2.70
Yoga/Pilates	2.51	2.55

*Note.* Interest was measured on a scale of 1 – 4 with 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *somewhat interested*, 3 = *interested*, and 4 = *very interested*. Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to determine if significant differences existed between African American and White undergraduates. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 4.3

*Comparison of Mean Interest Scores for Recreational Activities by Race and Gender Subgroup*

Recreational Activity	Means			
	African American (n = 150)		White (n = 154)	
	Female (n = 83)	Male (n = 67)	Female (n = 93)	Male (n = 61)
Baseball/Softball*	2.13	1.84	1.98	2.17
Basketball***	2.71	3.16	1.87	2.26
Camping	2.37	2.36	2.64	2.66
Canoeing	2.28	2.10	2.49	2.46
Flag Football***	2.12	2.46	1.66	2.43
Golf***	1.66	1.87	1.40	2.11
Hiking**	2.40	2.26	2.81	2.87
Hockey**	1.63	1.66	1.70	2.16
Indoor Group Cycling	2.18	1.90	2.17	1.80
Kayaking**	2.33	2.03	2.60	2.70
Lacrosse	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.80
Lap Swimming	2.19	2.19	2.26	2.20
Martial Arts*	2.28	2.36	1.96	2.49
Mountain Biking*	1.88	2.07	1.96	2.36
Racquetball	1.62	1.48	1.62	1.93
Rock Climbing	2.20	2.00	2.27	2.21
Rugby*	1.49	1.76	1.42	1.79
Running/Jogging	2.70	2.63	2.34	2.67
Skiing	1.92	1.90	2.13	2.26
Snowboarding*	1.86	2.26	1.96	2.26
Soccer*	2.36	2.66	2.01	2.33
Tennis	2.34	2.13	1.94	2.16
Treadmills/Elliptical***	2.76	2.12	2.73	2.36
Ultimate*	1.63	1.84	1.67	2.16
Volleyball	2.66	2.21	2.26	2.18
Weight Training	2.77	2.93	2.63	2.77
Yoga/Pilates***	3.01	1.88	2.87	2.07

*Note.* Interest was measured on a scale of 1 – 4 with 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *somewhat interested*, 3 = *interested*, and 4 = *very interested*. Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to determine if significant differences existed between four race and gender subgroups: African American males, African American females, White males, and White females. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 4.4

*Mean Interest Scores in Recreational Activities for African American and White Undergraduate Males*

	Recreational Activity	Means	
		Male/African American	Male/White
		(n = 67)	(n = 61)
1	Basketball	3.16	2.85
2	Weight Training	2.93	2.77
3	Soccer	2.66	2.33
4	Running/Jogging	2.63	2.67
5	Flag Football	2.46	2.43
6	Camping	2.36	2.66
7	Martial Arts	2.36	2.49
8	Hiking*	2.26	2.82
9	Snowboarding	2.26	2.25
10	Volleyball	2.21	2.18
11	Lap Swimming	2.19	2.20
12	Tennis	2.13	2.15
13	Treadmills/Elliptical	2.12	2.36
14	Canoeing	2.10	2.46
15	Mountain Biking	2.07	2.36
16	Kayaking*	2.03	2.59
17	Rock Climbing	2.00	2.21
18	Indoor Group Cycling	1.90	1.80
19	Skiing	1.90	2.26
20	Yoga/Pilates	1.88	2.07
21	Golf	1.87	2.11
22	Baseball/Softball**	1.84	2.46
23	Ultimate	1.84	2.16
24	Rugby	1.76	1.79
25	Hockey*	1.66	2.16
26	Lacrosse*	1.62	1.80
27	Racquetball**	1.48	1.93

*Note.* Interest was measured on a scale of 1 – 4 with 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *somewhat interested*, 3 = *interested*, and 4 = *very interested*. Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to determine if significant differences existed between African American and White male undergraduates. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 4.5

*Mean Interest Scores in Recreational Activities for African American and White Undergraduate Females*

	Recreational Activity	Means	
		Female/African American	Female/White
		(n = 83)	(n = 93)
1	Yoga/Pilates	3.01	2.87
2	Weight Training	2.77	2.63
3	Treadmills/Ellipticals	2.76	2.73
4	Basketball***	2.71	1.87
5	Running/Jogging*	2.70	2.34
6	Volleyball	2.66	2.26
7	Hiking*	2.40	2.81
8	Camping	2.37	2.64
9	Soccer*	2.36	2.01
10	Tennis*	2.34	1.94
11	Kayaking	2.33	2.60
12	Canoeing	2.28	2.49
13	Martial Arts	2.28	1.96
14	Rock Climbing	2.20	2.27
15	Lap Swimming	2.19	2.26
16	Indoor Group Cycling	2.18	2.17
17	Baseball/Softball*	2.13	1.98
18	Flag Football***	2.12	1.66
19	Skiing	1.92	2.13
20	Mountain Biking	1.88	1.96
21	Snowboarding	1.86	1.96
22	Golf	1.66	1.40
23	Hockey	1.63	1.70
24	Ultimate	1.63	1.67
25	Lacrosse	1.62	1.62
26	Racquetball	1.62	1.62
27	Rugby*	1.49	1.42

*Note.* Interest was measured on a scale of 1 – 4 with 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *somewhat interested*, 3 = *interested*, and 4 = *very interested*. Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to determine if significant differences existed between African American and White female undergraduates. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

## Overall Mean Scores by Race

Table 4.6

*Mean Differences in Recreation Interest and Involvement by Race*

Race Group	<i>n</i>	Sport Interest	Fitness Interest	Outdoor Interest	Sport Involvement	Fitness Involvement	Outdoor Involvement
		<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
African American	150	1.78 (0.92)	2.41 (0.98)	2.09* (1.06)	3.06* (1.31)	3.34 (1.21)	2.23 (1.27)
White	154	1.70 (0.79)	2.37 (0.89)	2.39* (0.95)	2.74* (0.95)	3.52 (1.29)	2.40 (1.14)

*Note.* *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. \*  $p < .05$ .

There are statistically significant differences ( $p < .05$ , 95% CI) between African American undergraduates ( $\bar{x} = 2.09$ ,  $SD = 1.06$ ) and White undergraduates ( $\bar{x} = 2.39$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ) in outdoor interest. Statistically significant differences between African American undergraduates ( $\bar{x} = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ) and White undergraduates ( $\bar{x} = 2.74$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ) also exist in sport involvement ( $p < .05$ , 95% CI). Outdoor involvement was lowest for both race groups in comparison to the two other involvement categories. Higher mean scores for sport involvement and fitness involvement may be related to the fact that certain activities falling within the outdoor category (e.g. skiing, snowboarding, hiking, and camping) are not as accessible as sport and fitness activities for undergraduate students living on or near a campus setting. Outdoor activities involve traveling to distant locations from campus, which requires a greater time commitment and access to transportation. Sport activities, in contrast, are readily available through club sports, intramurals, and open recreation on the fields and courts provided through campus recreation. Fitness activities such as weight training, running, and lap swimming are also easily accessible through most campus recreation departments.

### Overall Mean Scores by Race and Gender

Outdoor *involvement* was higher for African American males ( $\bar{x} = 2.46$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ) when compared to African American females ( $\bar{x} = 2.04$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ), reaching statistical significance at the  $p < .05$  (95% CI) level. It should be pointed out, however, that outdoor interest for African American females ( $\bar{x} = 2.12$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ) was higher than outdoor interest for African American males ( $\bar{x} = 2.07$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ), although not statistically significant. A similar trend was observed for White female undergraduates ( $\bar{x} = 2.15$ ,  $SD = 0.95$ ) and White male undergraduates ( $\bar{x} = 2.79$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ). White males' mean level of *outdoor involvement* was higher than that of White female undergraduates ( $p < .01$ , 95% CI) although interest was similar between the two groups.

Although involvement scores were calculated in days per week and interest was generated by aggregating median scores from specific recreational activities, the fact that lower mean scores existed for African American *and* White females when reported levels of interest in outdoor activities were the same or higher, suggests that constraints may exist related to gender and outdoor involvement.

Gender differences may also exist in the category of sport, but only among White undergraduates. Mean scores for sport *interest and* sport *involvement* were lower for White undergraduate females when compared to White undergraduate males, as well as the three other groups shown in Table 4.7. African American females' overall *interest and involvement* in sport was similar to that of African American males.

Table 4.7

*Mean Differences in Recreation Interest and Involvement by Gender (within Race)*

Population	<i>n</i>	Sport Interest	Fitness Interest	Outdoor Interest	Sport Involvement	Fitness Involvement	Outdoor Involvement
		<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Female/African American	87	1.72 (0.96)	2.61* (0.99)	2.12 (1.13)	2.90 (1.38)	3.41(1.20)	2.04* (1.20)
Male/African American	63	1.84 (0.85)	2.15* (0.96)	2.07 (0.99)	3.25 (1.26)	3.67 (1.22)	2.46* (1.31)
Female/White	93	1.51** (0.66)	2.42 (0.90)	2.35 (1.08)	2.32** (1.04)	3.19 (1.24)	2.15** (0.95)
Male/White	61	1.98** (0.85)	2.30 (0.88)	2.43 (1.08)	3.36** (1.37)	3.54 (1.30)	2.79** (1.26)

*Note.* *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$

Table 4.8

*Mean Differences in Recreation Interest and Involvement by Race (within Gender)*

Population	<i>n</i>	Sport Interest	Fitness Interest	Outdoor Interest	Sport Involvement	Fitness Involvement	Outdoor Involvement
		<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Male/African American	63	1.84 (0.85)	2.15 (0.96)	2.07* (0.99)	3.25 (1.26)	3.67 (1.22)	2.46 (1.31)
Male/White	61	1.98 (0.85)	2.30 (0.88)	2.43* (1.08)	3.36 (1.37)	3.54 (1.30)	2.79 (1.26)
Female/African American	87	1.72 (0.96)	2.61 (0.99)	2.12 (1.13)	2.90** (1.38)	3.41 (1.20)	2.04 (1.20)
Female/White	93	1.51 (0.66)	2.42 (0.90)	2.35 (1.08)	2.32** (1.04)	3.19 (1.24)	2.15 (0.95)

*Note.* *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

## Regression Analysis

Ordinal logistic regression (see Tables 4.9 – 4.20) was used to fit models for interest and involvement in sport, fitness, and outdoor recreation for all undergraduates (African American and White) who completed surveys (i.e. the ALPS and RLIS). Predictor variables in the model were race (African American or White), community (metropolitan, suburban, or rural), parent education (non-college degree or college degree), and gender (male or female). A separate model for the 150 African Americans who completed questionnaires was fit with the variables community, parent education, gender, class (upper middle, lower middle, or working class), and racial identity (five categories ranging from high to low) since measures for class and racial identity were not included in the Active Leisure Participation Survey.

## Sport Interest

The respondent's gender, level of parent's education, and size of community in which they lived before entering college all significantly influenced levels of *sport interest*. Students who had at least one parent with a college degree ( $n = 188$ ) were almost twice as likely to have an interest in *sport* activities ( $OR = 1.74$ ,  $p = .016$ , 95%, CI 1.11, 2.75). The likelihood of having an interest in *sport* activities increased as the size of community increased. Differences between *metropolitan* and *rural* were statistically significant ( $OR = 0.44$ ,  $p = .006$ , 95%, CI .24, .79). Males were almost two times as likely to have an interest in *sport* activities ( $OR = 1.92$ ,  $p = .004$ , 95%, CI, 1.24, 2.97). The full model ( $LR \chi^2_{(5)} = 24.20$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was a better fit than the null model without predictors.

In the model fit for African American undergraduates' sport interest, the full model ( $LR \chi^2_{(10)} = 19.20$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was also a better fit than the model without predictors. Parent education and gender, however, were not statistically significant. Community, in contrast,

emerged as a statistically significant predictor when comparing the rural category to metropolitan ( $OR = .21$ ,  $p = .003$ , 95% CI .08, .58). Students from rural communities were less likely to have an interest in sport activities when compared to students from metropolitan areas.

Table 4.9

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Sport Interest for African American and White Undergraduates (n = 304)*

Predictor	$\beta$	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Race						
African American (reference)						
White	.018	.230	0.00	.936	1.02	[0.65, 1.58]
Parent education *						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.559	.404	5.85	.016	1.74	[1.11, 2.75]
Gender **						
Female (reference)						
Male	.659	.431	8.70	.004	1.92	[1.24, 2.97]
Community **						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.373	.173	2.19	.128	0.68	[0.43, 1.13]
Rural	-.824	.133	7.39	.006	0.44	[0.24, 0.79]
df	5					
LR $\chi^2$	24.20					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. \* $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Table 4.10

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Sport Interest for African American Undergraduates (n = 150)*

Predictor	B	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Parent Education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.303	.464	0.79	.376	1.35	[0.70, 2.65]
Gender						
Female (reference)						
Male	.463	.526	1.96	.162	1.59	[0.83, 3.04]
Community **						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.371	.244	1.10	.295	0.70	[0.34, 1.38]
Rural	-1.543	.109	9.12	.003	0.21	[0.08, 0.58]
Class						
Upper middle class (reference)						
Lower middle class	-.635	.197	2.89	.089	0.53	[0.25, 1.10]
Working class	-.149	.379	0.12	.735	0.86	[0.36, 2.04]
Racial Identity						
1 High race salience (reference) <sup>a</sup>						
2	.084	.700	0.02	.896	1.09	[0.31, 3.84]
3	-.522	.375	0.68	.409	0.59	[0.17, 2.05]
4	-.590	.359	0.83	.362	0.55	[0.16, 1.97]
5 Low race salience	.259	1.034	0.10	.745	1.29	[0.27, 6.19]
df	10					
LR $\chi^2$	19.20					

Note. SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. <sup>a</sup>Identity includes five categories ranging from 1 (high race salience) to 5 (low race salience). \*\* p < .01.

## Fitness Interest

Gender and community were both significant predictors fitness interest. Males were less likely to have an interest in fitness activities than females ( $OR = .60$ ,  $p = .021$ , 95% CI .39, .93).

Table 4.11

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Fitness Interest for African American and White Undergraduates (n = 304)*

Predictor	$\beta$	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Race						
African American (reference)						
White	.114	.250	0.26	.610	1.12	[0.72, 1.73]
Parent education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.311	.306	1.93	.165	1.36	[0.88, 2.12]
Gender *						
Female (reference)						
Male	-.508	.133	5.34	.021	0.60	[0.39, 0.93]
Community *						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.451	.158	3.27	.070	0.64	[0.41, 1.05]
Rural	-.654	.154	4.84	.028	0.52	[0.29, 0.91]
df	5					
LR $\chi^2$	13.45					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is fitness interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. \*  $p < .05$ .

Table 4.12

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Fitness Interest for African American Undergraduates (n = 150)*

Predictor	B	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Parent Education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.111	.376	.11	.741	1.12	[0.57, 2.16]
Gender *						
Female (reference)						
Male	-.785	.148	5.85	.016	0.46	[0.24, 0.86]
Community **						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.176	.301	0.24	.623	0.84	[0.42, 1.70]
Rural	-1.287	.131	7.34	.007	0.28	[0.11, 0.71]
Class *						
Upper middle class (reference)						
Lower middle class	-.949	.144	6.55	.010	0.39	[0.19, 0.81]
Working class	-.321	.334	0.49	.485	0.73	[0.29, 1.78]
Racial Identity						
1 High race salience (reference) <sup>a</sup>						
2	-.377	.441	0.35	.558	0.68	[0.19, 2.42]
3	-.663	.325	1.10	.294	0.52	[0.15, 1.77]
4	-.245	.512	0.14	.708	0.78	[0.22, 2.82]
5 Low race salience	.154	.965	0.04	.852	1.17	[0.23, 5.89]
df	10					
LR $\chi^2$	23.08					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. <sup>a</sup>Identity includes five categories ranging from 1 (high race salience) to 5 (low race salience). \*p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

In the full model,  $LR \chi^2_{(5)} = 13.45$ ,  $p < .05$  was a better fit than the null model. The model fit for African American survey respondents, including the variables class and identity, was also a better fit than the null model ( $LR \chi^2_{(10)} = 23.08$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Gender ( $OR = .46$ ,  $p = .016$ , 95%, CI .24, 0.86) and community remained as a statistically significant predictor of fitness interest. Differences between students from metropolitan and rural areas ( $OR = .28$ ,  $p = .007$ , 95%, CI .11, .71) surfaced again as having statistical significance within the community category. Students who reported living in lower middle class communities before college were less likely to have an interest in outdoor activities when compared to students from upper middle class communities, but differences between students from upper middle class and working class communities were not evident.

### **Outdoor Interest**

The full model, ( $LR \chi^2_{(5)} = 14.67$ ,  $p < .05$ ) for predicting outdoor interest was an improvement over the null model without predictors. Race ( $OR = 1.92$ ,  $p = .003$ , 95%, CI 1.25, 2.97) and parent education ( $OR = 1.55$ ,  $p = .046$ , 95%, CI 1.01, 2.40) were the two variables in the model to emerge as significant predictors of outdoor interest. The odds of having a strong interest in outdoor activities are 1.92 times greater for White undergraduates than for African American undergraduates. The odds increased by 1.55 for students with at least one parent with a college degree. In the model fit for African American undergraduates only, the full model ( $LR \chi^2_{(10)} = 11.10$ ,  $p < .05$ ) did not result in a better model fit than the model without predictors. Class differences did not add to the ability to predict outdoor interest among African Americans. Racial identity was a significant factor when comparing students with high racial identity scores (i.e. high race salience) to students reporting scores falling at the opposite of the racial identity scale ( $OR = 7.95$ ,  $p = .018$ , 95%, CI 1.42, 44.29).

Table 4.13

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Outdoor Interest for African American and White Undergraduates (n = 304)*

Predictor	$\beta$	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Race **						
African American (reference)						
White	.657	.427	8.82	.003	1.92	[1.25, 2.97]
Parent education*						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.442	.344	4.00	.046	1.55	[1.01, 2.40]
Gender						
Female (reference)						
Male	.012	.220	0.00	.955	1.01	[0.67, 1.55]
Community						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.239	.192	0.94	.330	0.79	[0.49, 1.27]
Rural	-.088	.270	0.09	.764	0.92	[0.51, 1.63]
df	5					
LR $\chi^2$	14.67					

Note. SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is outdoor interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. \*p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table 4.14

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Outdoor Interest for African American Undergraduates (n = 150)*

Predictor	B	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Parent Education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.437	.517	1.72	.192	1.54	[0.81, 2.98]
Gender						
Female (reference)						
Male	-.174	.268	0.30	.585	0.84	[0.49, 1.57]
Community						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	.023	.356	0.01	.946	1.02	[0.52, 2.02]
Rural	-.496	.285	1.12	.289	0.61	[0.24, 1.53]
Class						
Upper middle class (reference)						
Lower middle class	-.176	.297	0.25	.619	0.84	[0.42, 1.68]
Working class	-.066	.407	0.02	.879	0.94	[0.40, 2.19]
Racial Identity*						
1 High race salience (reference) <sup>a</sup>						
2	.854	1.506	1.76	.183	2.35	[0.67, 8.25]
3	.349	.891	0.31	.578	1.41	[0.41, 4.86]
4	.416	.963	0.44	.512	1.51	[0.44, 5.26]
5 Low race salience	2.074	6.968	5.62	.018	7.95	[1.42, 44.29]
df	10					
LR $\chi^2$	11.10					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. <sup>a</sup>Identity includes five categories ranging from 1 (high race salience) to 5 (low race salience). \*p < .05.

## Sport Involvement

Gender was a significant factor in determining sport involvement when both African American and White undergraduates were included in the analysis and also remained when looking only at African American respondents to the survey.

Table 4.15

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Sport Involvement for African American and White Undergraduates (n = 304)*

Predictor	$\beta$	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Race						
African American (reference)						
White	-.371	.152	2.82	.093	0.70	[0.45, 1.06]
Parent education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.171	.264	0.59	.440	1.19	[0.77, 1.83]
Gender **						
Female (reference)						
Male	.929	.562	17.56	.000	2.53	[1.64, 3.91]
Community *						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.541	.142	4.88	.027	0.58	[0.36, 0.94]
Rural	-.721	.145	5.85	.016	0.49	[0.27, 0.87]
df	5					
LR $\chi^2$	32.66					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport involvement coded as 1 = never to less than once per week, 2 = 1-2 days per week, and 3 = 3-7 days per week. \* p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table 4.16

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Sport Involvement for African American Undergraduates (n = 150)*

Predictor	B	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Parent Education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.129	.381	0.14	.701	1.13	[0.58, 2.19]
Gender *						
Female (reference)						
Male	.818	.760	5.95	.015	2.26	[1.17, 4.37]
Community						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.220	.282	0.39	.531	0.80	[0.40, 1.59]
Rural	-.783	.213	2.82	.094	0.46	[0.18, 1.14]
Class						
Upper middle class (reference)						
Lower middle class	-.702	.182	3.64	.056	0.50	[0.24, 1.01]
Working class	-.493	.267	1.27	.259	0.61	[0.26, 1.43]
Racial Identity **						
1 High race salience (reference) <sup>a</sup>						
2	-.988	.234	2.46	.116	0.37	[0.11, 1.27]
3	-1.115	.202	3.27	.071	0.33	[0.09, 1.09]
4	-1.834	.103	8.04	.004	0.16	[0.05, 0.56]
5 Low race salience	-1.206	.237	2.31	.129	0.30	[0.06, 1.42]
df	10					
LR $\chi^2$	19.39					

Note. SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. <sup>a</sup>Identity includes five categories ranging from 1 (high race salience) to 5 (low race salience). \*p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

In the model for the African American and White undergraduates, gender ( $OR = 2.53$ ,  $p = .000$ , 95%, CI 1.64, 3.91) was a statistically significant predictor at the  $p < .001$  level, indicating that gender has a strong influence on sport involvement. Male undergraduates were 2.53 times as likely to have high levels of sport involvement. Sport involvement was categorized as either *high involvement* (3–7 days per week), *moderate involvement* (1-2 days per week), or *low involvement* (never to less than once per week).

In the full model,  $LR \chi^2_{(5)} = 32.66$ ,  $p < .001$  was a better fit than the null model with no predictor variables. In the model fit for African American students only, the full model was also a better fit than the null model ( $LR \chi^2_{(10)} = 19.39$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Gender ( $OR = 2.26$ ,  $p = .015$ , 95%, CI 1.17, 4.37) and identity ( $OR = .71$ ,  $p = .023$ , 95%, CI .70, 1.23) were statistically significant predictors of sport involvement, although identity was only significant when comparing high race salience to the next to lowest level of race salience.

### **Fitness Involvement**

None of the predictors in the model fit for fitness involvement reached a level of statistical significance although gender was approaching significance ( $OR = 1.46$ ,  $p = .089$ , 95%, CI .94, 2.27) at the  $p < .05$  level. The full model, ( $LR \chi^2_{(5)} = 6.52$ ,  $p = .258$ ) was not a better fit than the null model. The model fit for African American undergraduates also did not result in any improvement over the null model ( $LR \chi^2_{(10)} = 10.31$ ,  $p = .414$ ) for fitness involvement. As with the results of analysis for all 304 African American and White undergraduates, none of the predictors in the model resulted in statistical significance for the model fit with only African American respondents.

Table 4.17

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Fitness Involvement for African American and White Undergraduates (n = 304)*

Predictor	$\beta$	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Race						
African American (reference)						
White	-.314	.164	1.18	.161	0.73	[0.47, 1.13]
Parent education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	-.054	.213	0.08	.809	0.95	[0.61, 1.47]
Gender						
Female (reference)						
Male	.380	.327	4.49	.089	1.46	[0.94, 2.27]
Community						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.187	.207	1.35	.452	0.83	[0.51, 1.35]
Rural	.112	.332	0.04	.704	1.11	[0.63, 2.01]
df	5					
LR $\chi^2$	6.52					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is fitness involvement coded as 1 = *never to less than once per week*, 2 = *1-2 days per week*, and 3 = *3-7 days per week*.

Table 4.18

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Fitness Involvement for African American Undergraduates (n = 150)*

Predictor	B	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Parent Education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.014	.345	0.01	.966	1.01	[0.52, 1.97]
Gender						
Female (reference)						
Male	.447	.528	1.74	.187	1.56	[0.81, 3.04]
Community						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.276	.276	0.57	.448	0.75	[0.37, 1.55]
Rural	-0.009	.464	0.00	.984	0.99	[0.39, 2.48]
Class						
Upper middle class (reference)						
Lower middle class	-.608	.207	2.56	.110	0.54	[0.13, 1.95]
Working class	-.767	.215	2.72	.099	0.46	[0.86, 1.16]
Racial Identity						
1 High race salience (reference) <sup>a</sup>						
2	-.678	.349	0.98	.324	0.51	[0.13, 1.95]
3	-1.154	.209	3.02	.082	0.32	[0.85, 1.15]
4	-1.259	.193	3.43	.064	0.28	[0.75, 1.07]
5 Low race salience	-.892	.368	0.98	.321	1.41	[0.07, 2.38]
df	10					
LR $\chi^2$	10.31					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. <sup>a</sup>Identity includes five categories ranging from 1 (high race salience) to 5 (low race salience).

## Outdoor Involvement

Gender was significant in predicting levels of outdoor involvement for African American undergraduates only, as well as predicting outdoor involvement when African American and White undergraduate students were included in the analysis.

Table 4.19

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Outdoor Involvement for African American and White Undergraduates (n = 304)*

Predictor	$\beta$	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Race						
African American (reference)						
White	.229	.306	0.88	.346	1.25	[0.78, 2.02]
Parent education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	.106	.274	0.18	.665	1.11	[0.68, 1.81]
Gender **						
Female (reference)						
Male	.847	.558	12.60	.000	2.34	[1.46, 3.73]
Community *						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	-.216	.214	0.66	.416	0.81	[0.47, 1.35]
Rural	-.759	.159	4.97	.026	0.47	[0.24, 0.91]
df	5					
LR $\chi^2$	19.62					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is outdoor involvement coded as 1 = *never to less than once per week*, 2 = *1-2 days per week*, and 3 = *3-7 days per week*. \* p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table 4.20

*Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for the Effect of Demographic Predictors on Outdoor Involvement for African American Undergraduates (n = 150)*

Predictor	B	SE	Wald $\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
Parent Education						
Non-College (reference)						
College	-.092	.347	0.06	.808	0.91	[0.43, 1.92]
Gender **						
Female (reference)						
Male	.957	.959	6.76	.009	2.61	[1.26, 5.36]
Community						
Metropolitan (reference)						
Urban	.118	.434	0.09	.760	1.13	[0.53, 2.40]
Rural	-.607	.307	1.16	.282	0.54	[0.18, 1.65]
Class						
Upper middle class (reference)						
Lower middle class	-.712	.199	3.06	.080	0.49	[0.22, 1.08]
Working class	-.105	.440	0.46	.830	0.90	[0.35, 2.34]
Racial Identity						
1 High race salience (reference) <sup>a</sup>						
2	-.379	.464	0.31	.576	0.68	[0.18, 2.58]
3	-.858	.284	1.64	.201	0.42	[0.11, 1.57]
4	-.633	.362	0.86	.353	0.53	[0.14, 2.01]
5 Low race salience	-1.454	.222	2.34	.126	0.23	[0.04, 1.50]
df	10					
LR $\chi^2$	13.74					

*Note.* SE = standard error; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. The dependent variable in this analysis is sport interest coded as 1 = *no interest*, 2 = *moderate interest*, and 3 = *high interest*. <sup>a</sup>Identity includes five categories ranging from 1 (high race salience) to 5 (low race salience). \*p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

The odds ratio for gender in the model with 304 undergraduates was 2.34 ( $p = .000$ , 95%, CI 1.46, 3.73), which was statistically significant and showed that male outdoor involvement in days per week was more than double that of females. Community ( $OR = .47$ ,  $p = .026$ , 95%, .24 .91) was also a statistically significant predictor of outdoor involvement when comparing the rural and metropolitan categories. The likelihood decreased for students who reported living in rural communities before college enrollment.

The full model for outdoor involvement was a better fit ( $LR \chi^2_{(5)} = 19.62$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than the model without predictors. Gender,  $OR = 2.61$ ,  $p = .009$ , 95% CI [1.26, 5.36] was statistically significant for the model fit for the African American undergraduates who completed questionnaires. Adding class and identity to the model for African American undergraduates did not result in improvement over the null model ( $LR \chi^2_{(10)} = 13.74$ ,  $p = .185$ ).

### **Mean Differences by Region of the United States**

I calculated mean interest and involvement scores by region of the United States to determine if access to recreational opportunities within certain geographic areas influenced opportunities to be more involved in the categories of recreation examined in this study. The Mountain region and Pacific region were collapsed into a West region due to the low number of respondents in each region, and the geographic proximity of the states within these regions. Differences in interest and involvement across the five geographical regions were insignificant in each of the three recreational interest categories. Sport interest,  $p = .91$ ,  $\chi^2 = 1.04$ ; fitness interest,  $p = .38$ ,  $\chi^2 = 4.21$ ; outdoor interest,  $p = .19$ ,  $\chi^2 = 6.08$ , and the three recreational involvement categories (sport involvement,  $p = .41$ ,  $\chi^2 = 3.97$ ); fitness

involvement,  $p = .41$ ,  $\chi^2 = 3.96$ , outdoor involvement,  $p = .96$ ,  $\chi^2 = .61$ . Mean scores for each region are reported in Table 4.15.

Table 4.21  
*Mean Differences in Interest and Involvement in Recreational Activities by Region of the United States*

Region	Means					
	Sport Interest	Fitness Interest	Outdoor Interest	Sport Involvement	Fitness Involvement	Outdoor Involvement
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Atlantic (n = 81)	1.80 (.93)	2.49 (1.01)	2.20 (1.02)	3.12 (1.55)	3.33 (1.43)	2.28 (1.36)
South (n = 59)	1.71 (.94)	2.56 (1.00)	2.41 (1.13)	2.97 (1.38)	3.58 (1.32)	2.32 (1.31)
West (n = 59)	1.81 (.82)	2.29 (.89)	2.20 (.94)	2.88 (1.29)	3.32 (1.27)	2.29 (1.18)
Midwest (n = 68)	1.67 (.81)	2.22 (.82)	2.08 (.97)	2.76 (1.31)	3.41 (1.25)	2.32 (1.19)
Northeast (n = 37)	1.68 (.77)	2.35 (.87)	2.42 (.92)	2.54 (1.03)	3.59 (1.03)	2.41 (1.04)

*Note.* Regions based on geographic divisions from the United States Census Bureau. \*  $p > .05$ . \*\*  $p > .01$ .

### Results of Interviews

Five themes emerged from the analysis of face-to-face interviews: 1) easing the transition to college; 2) developing friendships and peer networks; 3) diversity in recreational interest; 4) parent and community influences; and 5) recognition of racial stereotypes in recreation and sport. A belief that there are existing racial stereotypes in recreation and leisure was evident among all of the students, along with a shared perception that recreational sport activities provide a diversion from academics. The most frequently mentioned benefit, however, was that campus recreation provided a “bonding experience” and important social benefits. Informal recreation, intramural and club sports, drop-in fitness classes were all

viewed by students as a way to connect with African American peers on campus, an also as a way to meet students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Nearly all of the students believed that campus recreational programs provided students with an opportunity to maintain involvement in sport activities that they enjoyed during their formative years, and for many students, recreational opportunities available through CRFs and intramural programs helped maintain what a “sport” or “athletic” identity that was important to their *overall* identity and self-esteem.

One of the key findings was that many African American students had more of an interest in outdoor recreation than what might be inferred from previous literature in the field of recreation. Interviews also suggest that lack of knowledge and limited exposure to certain activities may be potentially limiting factors to outdoor recreational involvement for students, as many of the students discussed having greater levels of comfort with activities introduced by parents and family members. While some were eager to try new activities offered through campus recreation, others were hesitant because of lack of understanding about the “culture” of the sport or recreational activity, coupled with concerns about being one of the few or only African Americans trying a new activity.

### **Background Information on Interview Participants**

To maintain anonymity, pseudonyms were created for each interview participant. The names created match the order in which the individual completed the interview. The participant’s year in school is also listed, along with a brief description of their hometown or home community.

Table 4.22

*Description of the Demographic Background of Interview Participants*

Name	Gender	Size and Description of Hometown	Year in School
1. Aaron	male	large, metropolitan city; in-state	senior
2. Breanna	female	small, urban city; in-state	senior
3. Cory	male	rural small town, in-state	senior
4. Daphne	female	suburban area of small, urban city; out-of-state	senior
5. Erica	female	medium sized, urban city; in-state	senior
6. Faith	female	small working-class town; in-state	senior
7. Grant	male	medium sized, urban city; in-state	sophomore
8. Harmony	female	large, metropolitan city; in-state	sophomore
9. Inez	female	small, rural town; in-state	sophomore
10. Justin	male	outskirts of large, metropolitan city; in-state	junior
11. Kendra	female	suburban area of metropolitan city; out-of-state	sophomore
12. Lacy	female	large, metropolitan city; out-of-state	sophomore
13. Marcus	male	large, metropolitan city; in-state	junior
14. Nathaniel	male	medium sized, urban city; out-of-state	junior
15. Oliver	male	medium sized, rural town; in-state	senior
16. Prentice	male	medium sized, suburban area; out-of-state	senior

### **Themes that Emerged From Interviews**

#### **Easing the Transition to College**

Adjusting to the social and academic demands of college can be a challenge for any student; for racial and ethnic minorities at historically White colleges and universities, being one of the “few” on a campus with thousands of students and in many cases, only a small number of minority faculty, can make the transition even more difficult. Though most of the students interviewed in this study navigated their first year successfully, for a few it was not

easy. Aaron, for one, thought about transferring. Harmony admitted to being homesick. These students did not single out issues related to race as the reason for being unhappy, and Aaron, cited academic adjustment and finding students with similar interests as reasons for some early disillusionment with the first year transition. Other students talked openly about the lack of African American students in many of their classes. “It’s kind of hard not to notice” said Daphne, when asked about the experience of being the only African American female in most of her classes. She, like Kendra and Lacy admitted to seeking out opportunities to connect with other African American students, despite the fact that she, and they also, had graduated from a predominantly White high school and felt comfortable interacting with students from different racial backgrounds.

Aaron discussed the importance of finding the right students to connect with in the first year of college.

It can be a transition, especially if you don’t find that group. . . Freshman year I was living in the honors dorm and I was just miserable. I didn’t really vibe with a lot of the other merit scholars and they were all hanging out together, so I just hung out with my roommate. And we played a lot of racquetball.

Eventually he made the adjustment to the university and its environment, and found a group of friends who had interests similar to his own; one of those interests was an enjoyment of soccer and other team sports. “This year, I did intramural soccer and basketball,” Aaron recalled, “I guess last year, I played a lot of racquetball and I guess the year before too.” He admitted to being a competitive person who takes sports very seriously, and at first he wasn’t sure if intramurals would provide the level of competition that he was

used to, but eventually he came around. “I wanted to win. I wanted the T-shirt. I kept hearing about this T-shirt so I mean if there’s a prize at the end let’s get it.”

Breanna was another “competitive” student looking for an opportunity to stay involved with sport at a high level. When describing what campus recreation meant to her she had this to say:

I think there’s huge value in it. Just for people like me who come to college and want to get something else out of college besides just a college degree and going to class. . . . It’s a way to release stress and have something to do outside of just studying or going out and doing whatever. And you have a chance to continue playing a sport and being active. . . it’s one of the reasons I chose to come here. I knew if I came here I wouldn’t really have the chance to play a varsity sport, so if I could play at another level in college that would be really cool.

Like Breanna, Harmony was looking for a way to stay involved in sports, but also needed campus rec experiences to help fill a void.

Since I played all throughout high school and in middle school I wanted to stay around basketball. My freshman year I actually kind of struggled and I was like ‘what is missing?’ I was like maybe I’m homesick. . . . well the only thing that’s missing is basketball.

She tried out for the club team and made it, but after realizing that it was more of a time commitment than she first anticipated, she turned to women’s and co-rec intramurals instead.

Nathaniel also used campus recreation to help with the transition to college. Recreational sport opportunities were especially important to him because his involvement helped him adjust to a new geographical setting; he was not only attending college for the first time, but he was attending a college that was nearly three-thousand miles away from his hometown on the West Coast. Although he believed that his ability to get along with different types of people, and growing up in a diverse area would help him ease into college life, he was still looking for a way to meet others and assimilate into his new environment. Informal recreation served that purpose well since he had spent most of his youth playing sports like football and basketball. As he recalled, his roommate “just happened to love sports” so they immediately made a connection. He also mentioned that his roommates introduced him to disc golf, which was a completely new activity to him.

When I asked him about his experience with intramurals he said “it’s been a blast, and it’s different from pick-up games because of the competition.” He still works out with weights when he has time, and has made it a priority to keep going to the rec center despite the fact that he now lives off campus.

Of course playing a sport competitively is not the primary motivating factor for everyone. Kendra simply missed the camaraderie of being on a team and being part of a group, so playing club and intramurals was a way to enjoy her favorite sport and hang out with her roommates and best friends. Beyond the intramurals, she also found other ways to stay active such as signing-up for drop-in fitness classes like yoga and cardio-dance. “I’m very schedule-oriented,” she said, and also noted that “working out with friends made the experience more enjoyable.”

Lacy, was interested in several types of activities such as basketball, volleyball, and various types of drop-in exercises classes, and like Kendra, she also seemed to enjoy the social benefits of informal and intramural activities. She believed that the value of intramural activities was having a way to feel connected to the university and having a chance to get “your piece of the glory.”

Unlike some of the other students, however, Justin, did not focus on intramural sport involvement, but instead discussed how much he enjoyed just working out and staying fit, and how important it was to him when he first came to the university. “I just started flipping tires that they have out there. . .” he then went on to say, “I’ll get a workout in or I may just use the indoor track. Maybe do a mile and then jump into like a thirty minute workout.”

As one would expect, several students stated that lack of time could be a deterrent to keeping up with workouts and getting to the gym, but most found a way to maintain some sort of involvement in fitness or sport activities. The following quote from Daphne is indicative of the feelings of many of the students who interviewed:

My freshman year I used to come to the gym about three times a week, and I also was doing club volleyball. I did that for two years—my freshman and sophomore year, but I had to quit unfortunately because I was getting too busy. However, I was still doing intramural sports like basketball.

When I asked Daphne to describe the value of campus recreation for college students, she said “It’s huge. Not only does it help you get into shape, but also you can meet friends too.”

Erica described it as “a social thing.”

I'm a people watcher, and you see people that meet each other or they're working out and they run into a longtime friend, and they're like 'oh let's get together.' So it's a social aspect and it's healthier. You know it's positive. Not just going out to drink and partying. I think that if you're into basketball, or intramural sports like soccer or flag football, those really do help you meet people.

All of the students who took part in interviews were actively involved in recreational sport during their childhood, and more than half indicated that they participated in a sport in high school. This played a significant role in the desire of many to find ways to be physically active in college. Even for students who didn't compete in high school athletics, family involvement in recreational activities such as camping, hiking, and running seemed to fuel the need to get involved in campus recreation.

“That nostalgia of high school sports. . .,” said Nathaniel, “it's fun to have that coming into your freshman year. And it's a nice facility here.”

Like Nathaniel, Oliver was one of several students who wanted to maintain involvement in competitive sport at some level, and this was the main reason that he joined intramural flag football, basketball, and volleyball teams. At first he gravitated towards the sport activities that were more familiar to him, but after a few semesters he developed an interest in several other sport activities offered through the intramural program. As he put it, “intramural sports were just “another way to venture off to do things you never thought you would do.” Basketball was the sport that he played the most growing up, but as a very young child he also had a love for soccer. Once he became involved in basketball, however, soccer became somewhat of an afterthought. Through university recreation, however, he was able to get involved in the sport once again, along with several other “non-traditional” activities

like wallyball and intramural water sport activities. Although several of the students who participated in interviews felt that campus recreation provided a way to bond with same race peers, Oliver, like Justin, viewed it as a way to meet students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds because the common interest in sport and comfort for people in those spaces provides a starting point for a conversation and potential friendship. As Oliver stated, ‘you would think that it’s hard to meet people at the gym, but it’s like ‘hey my name is whatever’ and you just introduce yourself, and after that you’re just talking to one another, so that’s how friendships build.’ Oliver is actually a great example of how these types of friendships “build” since his longtime roommate is actually someone he met during a pickup basketball game in their freshman year. He does admit, however, that it can also be a place where Black students can seek out other African American students who might also have common interests. As he describes it, the gym can be “another safe place” and another place to hang out with other African American friends other than at off-campus parties. Of course, like most other students, he also viewed workout out and playing sports as a way to relieve stress.

Ironically, however, competing in high school sports had the opposite effect for Aaron when he first came to campus. Though he played racquetball quite frequently, and eventually became involved in intramurals, he wasn’t sure if the recreational sport opportunities at the university would provide the level of competitiveness that he grown accustomed to as a varsity athlete at a large high school in the state.

Breanna, in contrast, actually chose to attend the university in large part because of the sport and recreational opportunities it provided. She also admitted that many of her friends share her interest in working out and playing sports.

My friends do work out—not all of them play sports any more. At the collegiate level there's only so many opportunities I guess. A lot of them do play in the intramural leagues though. That's another league, I guess if you're not talking about varsity or club. And a lot of my friends do workout if they don't play a sport, so I have a lot of similar friends who played sports in high school and then transitioned to college and tried to find a way to keep it up.

As expected, one of the most valuable attributes of recreational sport for these students was the diversion from the academic demands of college life. Most of the students felt that the opportunity to go to the recreation center to work out, attend a drop-in fitness class, or participate in a sport or fitness activity added unmeasurable value to their mental and physical health.

Perhaps the individuals who used CRFs the most were Grant and Marcus. They both reported coming to the recreational center on multiple days for multiple types of fitness, sport, *and* outdoor activities. Each of them said that they tried to get to the recreation center about five days a week.

As Grant said, “I swim, I lift a lot of weights, I've used the rec facilities for cardio and that kind of stuff like running, ab workouts, and stuff. I think I've used pretty much every room in the gym except for the rock wall, which I really want to use.

Marcus was the same way. Working out with weights was his favorite activity, but he has also tried to branch out to take advantage of classes offered through campus recreation's drop-in fitness programs, and even through the university's physical education classes.

Maybe one of the greatest benefits of campus recreation is that it offers a social alternative that provides health benefits at the same time. This was also mentioned by many of the students. Erica, for example, said that she enjoys drop-in classes like Zumba, cardio dance, and kickboxing, and that she has also tried ultimate frisbee.

When discussing the benefits of campus recreation Harmony was also very positive about the existence of recreational facilities on a college campus.

It's made an impact. It's just been a way to escape. It's been a stress reliever and I always know that after I leave the gym I'm going to feel better. It's always positive energy at the gym, and I can definitely say that no one ever leaves the gym in a bad mood. You might come in a bad mood, but five minutes, ten minutes into the workout you're feeling fine.

Finally, although most of the students interviewed did not make reference to stress or anxiety related to discriminatory behavior from other students on campus, Grant did share a story about the way he was perceived by one of his White classmates who found out that Grant's high school was one of the top academic schools in the state.

I was talking to this guy and I had my keys on the table and my keys were the senior gift that I got from my high school. . . I picked up the keys and the guy said. . . You went to that school? And I said yeah. And he was like oh! And it was so funny because the way his face changed when he knew that. I knew he had a certain view of me and as soon as I said that I went there, his perception of me completely changed.

## **Developing Friendships and Establishing Peer Networks**

All interview participants were asked if they believed campus recreation programs offered added value for African American undergraduates at historically White institutions. All but five participants (Aaron, Erica, Faith, Justin, and Kendra) believed that campus recreation was especially beneficial for African American students. Two of the five students who did not agree with this sentiment were unsure if it offered *added* value, but they were leaning toward saying that it does. The remaining three insisted that the benefits were the same for all students and that the experiences for racial minorities were unlikely to be much different from the experiences of other students in general.

The eleven students who felt that CRFs provided African Americans with added benefits, believed that it provided an opportunity to meet students with similar interests, and in particular, *students of the same race* who might have similar interests. This was especially important, as many of them explained, because there are so few African American students in their classes and degree programs. “It definitely matters,” insisted Daphne. “At the multicultural center. . . you meet a couple of people who are very similar to you in race, but coming to the gym, just even playing against other people, you kind of bond with them whether it’s competitive or not, and then you just see them around campus.”

To several students, campus recreational facilities, and certain spaces within the recreational facilities provide a place, not only to meet others, but also to network with other African Americans students. For example, when addressing the popularity of basketball with many of his on-campus peers, Grant suggested that the basketball courts are more than just a place to play a sport:

I mean it's a sport that a lot of Black people play, so they come to the court, and you may come with a couple of guys or you may come with a whole team or whatever, so you know if they come with a couple of guys and another couple of guys are waiting over there they may say 'hey next game,' and you see that all the time and they integrate that way. And you know they'll form a friendship. You know I see this all the time. They'll form a friendship just from this, they'll say 'oh let's meet up next Friday at four o'clock and let's play pick up some more,' and then that friendship will turn on the basketball court and then they'll hang outside of the court or gym. A lot of people do that.

Other students had similar views. "You can meet a lot of new people in the gym," explained Inez, when discussing the value of intramural sports generally. Harmony, like Daphne and Inez, described intramural recreation as "a good way to meet others with similar interests. . . . You might make a new friendship there," she explained. She did feel, however, that in certain sports it is less likely that you will meet other African American students. "If you go to an intramural soccer league, we [African Americans] are few and far in between," she said.

Cory, a senior, born and raised in a community that he described as a "small, country town," discussed how one of his favorite activities during his freshman year was to play basketball at the campus gym. "I'd try to go two or three times a week." he remembered, "My exercise was to play basketball with my friends." He also believed that one of the benefits of having recreational sport programs on campus was the convenience and proximity of the facilities. "If they weren't here, think about how many people would have to find

something off campus to stay active. They might not have the resources, the transportation, or the money.”

For many other students, campus recreational facilities provided a place where students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds could have a chance to interact. This was important to students like Erica, Inez, and Justin. They each discussed the value in getting to know people from different backgrounds, and they each believed this to be part of the value of attending a PWI. In fact, Justin’s viewpoint was that CRFs can be a place where people who share common interests might actually break down barriers related to race and get to know one other and communicate better. Erica, who described her closest group of friends as being racially diverse, discussed the importance of meeting new people without any specific reference to race.

I had a friend who I was an acquaintance with and I didn’t really know her, and I saw that she didn’t work out a lot and I kind of reached out to her and was like oh ‘let’s work out together,’ and I think we became stronger friends because of that.

She also emphasized the importance of meeting others and how it adds to the overall college experience.

I think the gyms do help that a lot. I think that if you’re into basketball, or intramural sports like soccer or flag football, those really do help you meet people. And then if you know someone who’s on a team they’re probably going to have some friends too.

Whether the social value and significance of CRFs is in meeting students from similar backgrounds and with similar interests, or in connecting with students from a different racial or ethnic group, the belief in the value CRFs and the social benefits they offer became evident to me as I talked with each of these students. In addition to meeting new people,

however, the social value of CRFs for this group also seemed to include having a chance to bond with close friends. Daphne and Kendra, for instance, both shared examples of playing volleyball with roommates and going to the recreation center during out of class time. This provided them with an opportunity to do something that they enjoyed while also serving to build stronger friendships. In the same vein, Grant and Nathaniel discussed how campus organizations such as fraternities and the National Society of Black Engineers, would form intramural sports teams for their members as a way for students to get to know one another informally.

### **Diversity in Recreational Interests**

Recreation literature clearly indicates that African Americans' participation rates in outdoor leisure lag behind participation rates in other aspects of leisure. It was therefore, remarkable that nearly all of the students seemed to have a sincere interest in multiple types of outdoor recreation activities such as skiing, hiking, and canoeing. Some of this interest stemmed from involvement in these activities with parents and other family members, while others had participated in outdoor activities with church youth groups and civic organizations in their home community, or with various on-campus organizations. Erica, for example, told me that she's "fished before," and that her "mom has actually kayaked before and said it's really fun." She would also like to try kayaking and whitewater rafting as well. Grant talked extensively about his love of canoeing and any type of water sport. When I asked him what activities he'll try to stay involved in after graduating, he replied by saying "definitely water activities. He went on to say, "Whether it's swimming or kayaking, it doesn't matter, because I just love the water. It feels like you're just free. It's like a weightlessness kind of thing when you're in it. I don't know, it's just really beautiful."

In addition to water sports, he also has an interest in rock climbing. “I did that once,” he said, “and it was really fun. I did it at a local rock club.”

A few students mentioned that their parents enjoyed activities like camping, hiking, and taking the family to the beach. Daphne’s father, for example, used to be a Boy Scout leader. “I would actually go with them on a lot of trips even though I was the only female,” she explained. “And my mom would come too. And we’re actually trying to plan a hiking trip soon.”

Erica’s dad had also tried a few activities in the “rugged” outdoors. “My dad, he occasionally likes to go camping and hiking and stuff,” she said. Her mother on the other hand was not the outdoor adventure type, but had an interest in the beach:

My mom is from Trinidad. So she’s always liked the beach and going to it, but she said that when she came to America she wanted to see how White Americans do the beach. They have a certain kind of way, a certain kind of method of doing it—they do. She said she watched them and how they did it and she said ‘I want to do that too.’ So when I was growing up she just wanted to go to the beach like the way [they do it in America] with the umbrellas and the chairs and the beach towels and the food.

Many students admitted that outdoor activities were not really something that they had been involved in all that much in spite of having an interest in certain types of outdoor activities. Many cited their lack of knowledge or familiarity with these types of activities and talked at length about not want to be in an environment where everyone else already knew what they were doing and they would sort of be the outsider.

“I’ve always wanted to try hiking, and walk the greenway around the city,” Breanna shared, “but I never had a chance to get into it.” When asked what was preventing her from “getting into it,” she replied:

Honestly, I just didn’t know that much about outdoor recreation in general. It’s not something that’s in my comfort zone. It’s not something that I would do. If it was something softball related that I saw a flyer for I would try it but it’s not in my repertoire of outdoor sporting so I wouldn’t immediately try to go find more [info] about it, or go on the internet and search for it.

She followed up by saying, “If you’ve never done it before it’s hard to get into I guess,” and she also believed that the possibility of being the only minority would make it even more uncomfortable. “It’s definitely not an ideal situation to be the “only” person I guess that like looks like *you*.” She also added this:

If I was going on a hike with university recreation, like if I was in the back, or having a tough time, I might think ‘you know, maybe I should stop.’ I guess the competitiveness and wanting to be good at it just comes natural to me, so if I wasn’t I’d feel like ‘wow I need to do well at this.’

This was almost identical to Daphne’s thoughts when asked about the same subject:

If you feel like people are judging you, you want to be able to represent your group and do things well, and that’s probably across the board—but maybe a little bit more so if you’re a minority or anyone in a group where you think people are going to notice you.

As Kendra explained, in many *sport* activities there are lots of Blacks around, but this is not always the case with some of the outdoor adventure types of sports. When asked what it

would take to try a new type of recreational sport where few African Americans are likely to be present, she said that “it might be more interesting or fun when you can take a friend and you do not have to be the *only one*.”

Not unlike Breanna and Daphne, Harmony insisted that “people will not want do a sport that makes them look bad if they don’t know what they’re doing or cannot do it well.”

She believes, however, that there are activities that African Americans don’t seem to participate in, but would probably enjoy if they would just give it a try.

I’ve been kayaking, and did a high ropes course which was pretty fun, but it was hard. I’ve done zip lining and stuff like that. . . . You don’t see “everyday” African Americans or minorities in general doing those kind of sports. I think that people don’t do it because they don’t realize how fun it is, but I think that people would probably do the whitewater thing, but they don’t because it’s not affiliated with us.

Harmony also had this to add about African Americans and learning how to swim. “I’m not generalizing African Americans, but a lot of us can’t swim, so we’re not going to do whitewater rafting, we’re not going to kayak, we’re not going to do these things.” She noted that quite a few of her friends—both Black and White—seemed surprised when she told them that she was a lifeguard; her African American peers in particular made comments like “we don’t swim,” or “I’m not gonna get my hair wet,” which seemed to be somewhat frustrating to Harmony, although she understands that it’s sometimes difficult to get people to change their way of thinking. She went on to say that “it’s sad but true, but a lot of Black people are like ‘we don’t get in the water. . .’ and a lot of African Americans die because they don’t know how to survive in water.”

Prentice shared Harmony's concerns about African Americans and the importance of knowing how to swim. Although he brought up the issue voluntarily, I asked him what he thought might be preventing many African Americans from learning this important skill. "If your parents don't see it as important then you're not going to see it as important," he explained, "and once you reach a certain age, it gets kind of awkward."

Since he grew up in a community near the beach, and said that he often went there with friends when he was growing up, I also asked if the beaches in his home community were racially segregated in any way; with very little hesitation he explained to me that it was kind of an "unspoken thing" that Blacks went to one location and Whites went to another. The racial history of the state and community may have been a contributing factor, but we didn't discuss the issue any further. Going to the beach, however, was just another way to hang with friends during free time.

I also asked Prentice if he felt that campus recreation administrators could help find ways to introduce new activities to students, especially for groups that are underrepresented in certain activities. Like a few other students that I interviewed, he believed that collaborating with other campus organizations to offer clinics, group instructional classes, or active team building opportunities would be a great way to move towards this goal. As an example, he recalled the time that he tried snowboarding when he went on a skiing trip with members of a minority engineering club on campus. The sponsor of the club organized the trip at no cost for students, and Prentice was quick to take advantage. "I had always wanted to try snowboarding," he said, "so when they e-mailed and said that it was free I jumped on the opportunity right away." Prentice ended up enjoying it so much that he went snowboarding another time on his own.

Grant felt like a lot of students, both Black and White, may not know how to really get involved in some of the outdoor adventure types of sports, where to get the right kind of equipment, or even where to go once you get what you need. “So you may know where to get the stuff or you may not, but you have to know where to go even to kayak or canoe or bike.” He also believed that the outdoor recreation department on his campus needs to be given more attention and needs to be promoted differently because it seemed like a lot of people didn’t even know that such a department even exists.

I feel like outdoor adventure definitely, they should get some more love, because people don’t even know about them. Same with the rock wall. . . . When people think of a gym they think gym, track, weights, but it’s things like outdoor adventure and the rock wall—those are the kinds of things they don’t have at a regular gym. Grant has rented kayaks and canoes from the university’s outdoor recreation department and believes that other African American students might take advantage if they knew the service was available:

I think a lot of people would be interested in that but I think a lot of people might not know about it. The students that I’ve talked to are like ‘oh we have that?’ So maybe the need to find a way to promote that.

Prentice was familiar with the outdoor adventure program at the university, but had never checked out any outdoor equipment from this department. He had, however, gone kayaking on a couple of occasions at one of the lakes near the university. “One time I went with my sister,” he said, “and the other was with a group of friends from here at school. I tried to drag my mother out to the lake one time when I was back home, but she wasn’t having any parts of it.”

When talking to each of the students, I asked each of them to name activities that they believed to be stereotyped by race, and if they would feel uncomfortable in any of those activities.

Aaron, Kendra, and Marcus all indicated that they would not be intimidated in any activity or any type of setting. Most were unsure and didn't have a definitive answer in either direction, but the fact that many of these students were accustomed to interacting with people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds seemed to influence their perspective on the issue. "I would feel comfortable," said Grant, "but that's only because I'm used to being the only Black person." For most African Americans he thinks that participating in a sport like hockey, where there are so few Blacks overall, would be difficult:

You know if you're in an arena where people of your race aren't used to being in that arena. . . that can be intimidating in its own right. It's like what you experience in engineering. . . how can you think you can succeed in something when you don't see anyone that looks like you succeeding in it.

I also asked students if seeing African Americans have success in sports like tennis, golf, or swimming makes any kind of difference. All agreed that it has a major impact. Justin and Lacy, for example, discussed how seeing African American athletes have success in tennis and in the summer Olympics could have a profound impact on younger generations. As Lacy explained, "if you have that one person that shows that 'I can be successful in this' it's like 'oh yeah, I can too.'"

I also asked students how they would promote recreational programs and services. "I'd probably use the university e-mails, to all of the freshman, or definitely during orientation," said Grant.

Lacy believed that the department would need to convince minority students that they aren't just trying to be politically correct. One of the statements that she made was that "they have pictures of 'diversity' in marketing and advertising, but how about some real footage of Blacks actually participating in some of these activities."

I also asked the students how they would get more African Americans or *any* underrepresented group into certain activities in which they were unfamiliar. The common theme among students seemed to be emphasizing the social aspects of the activity, fun and enjoyment, and non-competitiveness. Marcus, for one, made reference to some of the "silly" and unique activities that seemed to be non-traditional and creative and that weren't necessarily about being ultra-competitive. Erica suggested having clinics or occasional events where people could just try out the activity for fun. That, she believed, would be the way to go; something that wouldn't require a commitment, but just an introductory event where maybe they had free food and prizes at some of the on-campus events offered at the start of the semester or maybe around some kind of sports event on campus. She recalled a similar experience at her high school where students offered a one day clinic to introduce students to the lacrosse, and she noted that she got into playing the sport that way. In a similar fashion, Lacy thought back to a skiing trip with a youth civic organization that she belonged to in high school. She believed that fun and non-competitive activities that could be done in a group would be successful because people "enjoy trying new activities when they can share the experience with friends." Emphasizing fun and the social benefits of different recreational aspects, at least according to this group of students, seemed to be the preferred approach to introducing new activities.

## **Parent and Community Influences**

Each student credited their parents, and especially dads, for their early involvement in recreational sport activities. Kendra's dad, for example, was the coach of just about every team that she played on as she was growing up. Daphne was involved in basketball, track, and dance and both of her parents were also very involved in sport activities:

My dad played football in high school. My mom is really big into racquetball. She used to play in college and after college before I was born. They encouraged it, they never really totally pushed me toward sports I just gradually gravitated towards it because it was related to dance and I like to stay fit. And they just encouraged being healthy.

Kendra noted that her father was in the military, and although he is now retired, he still works out on a regular basis. This proved to be a common theme among the students who interviewed as Cory, Inez, Faith, and Erica also mentioned that either their mother or father had previously been in the military.

As I talked with students I was impressed with how much of an impact that early involvement in recreational sport seemed to influence their current participation in recreational activities and the importance that they placed on recreation in general.

Breanna, for example, shared a great story about playing disc golf on the weekends with her grandfather, and Inez discussed the importance of exercise and outdoor activities as a family bonding experience:

My brother is in the army, so right about now he's at basic training, but he once ran a thirteen mile run with my dad. My oldest brother just started running like two miles a

day. We like to do things as a family. When they ran the thirteen mile, I would wake up at three o' clock in the morning and just go for a run with them.

Nearly all of the students, in fact, had fond memories of recreational sport involvement with family members. Cory remembered playing outside in the yard with his sister and cousins. Aaron told me about his father who played soccer in college, and how his father taught him to play soccer and racquetball when Aaron was at a very young age. Not surprisingly, Aaron eventually became involved with intramural soccer when he came college, and spent much of his time playing racquetball to get a break from his studies.

Like many of the other students, Erica said that her dad was the parent who really introduced her recreational to sport activities. She said that “he works out twice a day at age fifty and he’s a referee for basketball. He also does many half marathons, and did one marathon.”

Grant still remembers the day when his dad suddenly came and said that they were going to go outside and play baseball:

When I was like little, my dad, he had like a T-ball and we used to do that outside when we still lived in Florida, and that’s when I was like two years old. And then you know, you get busy, and he just woke up one day and he was like ‘you’re like twelve and we haven’t done anything in ten years,’ so he bought a bunch of gloves and stuff so I got back into it.

Watching sports on television also emerged as a socializing agent for participants in this study. “I really got into sports watching it on TV with my dad,” said Grant. Breanna said that her mom didn’t really play sports, but she still considers sport to be a family experience in her household:

My mom didn't really play sports, but I guess we're still like a sports type of family because we always watch the NBA playoffs together, and watch the Super Bowl or whatever. My fondest memory of sport is our first NBA game that we went to. It was against the Lakers when I was eight years old.

Breanna added this when I asked which parent introduced her to recreational sport:

I'd say it's probably my dad, just because he always played sports as well. He played football and basketball. . . . He was always my coach as well. Whenever we were first starting out in T-Ball he took on the role of coach and never really stopped.

The early connection to recreational sport activities seemed to be an important part of each student's overall identity, and it carried over into college. The presence of recreational facilities proved to be a "comfort zone" for many of the students—a place they could turn to when college life was becoming stressful or just as a way for them to integrate into the campus community. Daphne, in fact, says that her mother still calls her on a regular basis to make sure that she is still exercising and staying active.

The group of students who gave interviews for this study were purposefully selected because of their involvement or interest in campus recreational activities, therefore it was no surprise that most felt comfortable in recreational spaces on the campus. This is another outcome of early involvement in sport and recreation. In fact, it also shows how part of their identity it also defined by their interest and involvement in recreational activities. Several students--and especially female students—stated that the weight room and cardiovascular fitness areas were places that could be intimidating to many students. I found this interesting because the fitness and cardio areas are probably the central feature of just about every

campus recreation center in the nation. As Grant put it, however, “the gym” might be a place where students feel insecure, because many of the exercises could be unfamiliar, and it always appears as if everyone already knows what they are doing.”

Grant was not the only student who fostered this belief. Cory offered the following:

If you’re not seen as fit, and you walk into an area where you see other people who are super fit, you kind of shy away from that. You don’t to put yourself in that position where you feel like you’re being judged. You can’t focus on what *you* want to do because everyone else around you is in better shape or it’s perceived that way, even though in actuality that might not even be the case.

Returning momentarily to Grant, his views on the subject were similar. “It’s intimidating. They think the gym is like a bunch of beefheads and cardio buffs that can run for ages, when really like half of us are just trying to get it together.”

He continued by saying this:

I lived in the dorm across from the recreation center and it was a two minute walk to the gym; if you live all the way across campus that could be a deterrent. . . if you’re not serious about the gym, it only takes that professor saying, ‘okay this assignment is due at 11:59 at night to say, ‘oh can’t go to the gym today,’ so that can be an excuse.

As I mentioned previously, a few of the female students stated that race was never a daunting factor, but the presence of “guys” in the weight room presented a problem.

“I never felt out of place, said Daphne, when referring to race, but “as a female, yes, more so because lifting weights around guys is always intimidating because they always think you’re not doing anything correctly.”

Along those same lines, Harmony admitted that she prefers playing sports with other females rather than with men because of similar concerns in pick-up and intramurals.

“Playing with guys on a co-rec team, especially guys who are good—it usually just ends up that you’re passing the ball and they’re driving. Not saying that girls aren’t as good at basketball, but you play differently.”

The thoughts shared by these two students seemed to explain, to some degree, the differences in sport and fitness participation found in the survey data that was also a part of this study. Cardiovascular exercises were more popular with females, while team sports and weight training were more popular with the men.

Breanna, providing a slightly different perspective on the issue, believed that the simple phrase, “the gym” can be intimidating for some people.

I feel like it has a negative connotation. I’m just the type of person who likes to play a sport you know, like throw with someone, or play disc golf, or actually physically do something rather than just working out. I try to work out now that I’m not playing a sport any more, but it’s just easier to just be active rather than to go to the gym

### **Recognition of Racial Stereotypes in Recreation and Sport**

In an era where some people think that race is no longer an important factor in our society, racial stereotypes in recreational sport were something that each student strongly believed to carry significance when it comes to the types of recreational sport activities that

people select. I asked all of the participants if they believed that recreational sport activities were stereotyped by race. They all agreed overwhelmingly. When asked why such racial stereotypes exist nearly everyone immediately replied that it was the way that African Americans are represented in the media. In fact, the many students who responded in this way did not hesitate at all before giving a response. Inez' comments provide a great example of what student's mean when referring to media representation as it relates to race:

If you see people playing basketball on TV, they're mostly African American, so anybody who's White may say okay that's definitely not our sport. If you look at a catalogue you see White guys in like army fatigue kind of clothing, holding fish, holding rifles and stuff like that, but it also depends on where you're from, and how you were raised. Since I live in the country I know how to scale a fish and how to hook a fish up. And my brother knows how to kill deer and skin deer.

I followed up by asking students if stereotypes have influenced their involvement in certain recreational sport activities. Some stated that it didn't really have an impact, because their parents taught them not to limit themselves to what others say you can do, while other students admitted that some activities were less appealing if there are very few African Americans involved.

Cory and Justin, for instance, both preferred football because that's the sport they grew up playing. Nathaniel also stuck primarily with football, as well as basketball, and admitted that he might not choose a sport like lacrosse because he might be "ridiculed by his friends." As he put it, "seeing people that look like you playing a certain sport helps," and also said that "if you don't see people who look like you then you won't do it. . . if you see people like you excelling in what they do, you're more likely to do the activity."

Inez discussed the fact that her uncles enjoyed hunting and fishing, and she acknowledged that many people view this as being “country.” Justin and Lacy, both from large, metropolitan areas, also stated that their friends would refer to them as “country” if they ever admitted having an interest in hunting for fishing. For both of them, this seemed to be a deterrent for participating in these activities. Along those same lines, Erica, who played several sports during her youth, asserted that when it comes to certain activities, other African Americans peers might question involvement in activities viewed as a “White sport.”

Daphne agreed that there can be “sanctioning” from African American peers, but it was never a deterrent to participation in activities that she wanted to try. She did admit that *both* Blacks and Whites can add to feelings of insecurity by their reactions or the way they may judge people who choose certain recreational sport activities. She explained with a story. “I did take golfing lessons for like two years and then I was like I don’t think this is for me. Actually every now and then I like to go to the driving range but it’s not like my first choice.” When recounting her experiences at the driving range she said that she sometimes thought to herself “Oh goodness, let me watch what I do because this is a predominantly White sport. I mean it’s just simple things like that. . . it just depends on the environment.”

As it turned out, Daphne and Kendra both played volleyball competitively throughout high school and both confessed to loving the sport. Noting that it is not a sport predominated by African Americans, they each stated that they were never intimidated, or had a negative experience being one of the few African Americans, however, it wasn’t something that went unnoticed. “Yeah I was the only African American on my team. And it’s been that way through volleyball the whole time I’ve been playing,” said Daphne. She also added that she believed that African Americans really need to branch out:

I just feel like as a student, we need to be more experimental with the things we try. My nephew, he's currently graduating from high school. And I remember us talking about how he should try a different sport other than basketball because he could be successful [in other sports], and so many African Americans are successful in basketball. . . . He just wasn't interested, and my brother was pushing basketball more than anything and that probably encouraged him too, but it's also kind of what his friends were doing so he wanted to go that route instead.

Grant described how his friends don't understand why he watches baseball and golf, and acknowledged that he's had friends, both Black and White, who asked him why he watches these sports.

The people that are playing in the major leagues are just good, but even to get to the double-A level, I mean these people have been playing since they were like five you know. Some sports you just have to have the mechanics down. To be trained to hit a 95 mile per hour fastball; to see a curveball and where it's going to land, and then you still strike out. I mean you can't just step out there. Everyone looks at me funny when I say that I watch golf, or when I say I watch baseball. I love to watch hockey. . . .I'm like ya'all don't understand.

Most of the students considered lacrosse, baseball, soccer, and golf, as sports that were least popular with African Americans. Ironically, though, Aaron thought of soccer as a sport that both Blacks and Whites like to play, Harmony's was just the opposite. What I found most entertaining about this is that the two were from the same metropolitan area, but different communities within the area. The different surroundings and some of their personal experiences gave each of them different perspectives on the sport.

“My high school had a soccer team,” explained Harmony, “but playing soccer is automatically associated with acting a certain way. . . .” That *way* she said was that “you’re not a true African American if you play soccer.” Although she went on to say that “it shouldn’t be like that because it’s just a sport like any other sport.”

Coming from the opposite end of the spectrum, Aaron said he doesn’t believe that there is such a thing as a Black or White sport and: “there are also sports like soccer where you don’t really need equipment, all you need is a couple of socks rolled up and you can learn how to play.” As he went on to say, “You can’t do that with lacrosse. You can do that with baseball a little bit, but not stuff like lacrosse, or polo, or diving; even rugby is not something we don’t see a lot until you get to the college level.”

The influence from others in the community, the community you grow up in, and its influence on perspectives were what Aaron believed determined who becomes involved in what activities. In his mind, recreational sport involvement has less to do with race and more to do with your surroundings. In fact, he also added the following perspective. “When you go to certain areas and see a court on every block or a hoop every other street, but it’s twenty five minutes to the library, I think that’s kind of a telling sign that shows who’s placing importance on what.”

Cory admitted to sticking with activities that he’s comfortable with, he did have an interest in rock climbing, and during his time in college he has adopted the belief that people should have a broader view of sport and trying new things. “If you don’t broaden your horizons and open up yourself to different experiences: one, it’s kind of hard to grow as a person,” he said.

Finally, I asked students to describe any discrimination that they might have experienced either in a campus recreation setting or at the university in general, and for the most part, they really hadn't experienced anything overtly discriminatory or negative—just the usual “microaggressions” that might be expected in the type of setting. In fact, they all seemed to have had an understanding of the type of environment they were coming into before they arrived on campus.

“Yeah it happens here, for sure,” Aaron replied, when referring to comments or minor incidents related to race, “even with the merit scholars it happens. . . but again, it's not something that's new, it's something that I've dealt with. . .” He later added, “I could be wrong, but I don't think that anybody comes to this university thinking that it's going to be like the experience at a majority Black high school.”

Prentice echoed a similar sentiment but he did have this to say: “There are students here who have never been around people who are different. Some of them change and learn that some of the preconceived notions they have are not true. Others still don't change.” Overall, the experience on the campus has been positive and one of the benefits of attending a university like this that it is similar to what will be experienced in the “outside world” after graduation.

When Daphne was asked about attending a PWI and adjustment as a minority student, she took a reserved but positive tone. “It's not really a big deal, *I am* pretty involved in the Black community here, I know a lot of people, and we always recognize that we go to a PWI.

Inez sometimes wonders what it would be like if she had gone to an HBCU, but she is glad that she made the decision to go to her university. She admitted though, that some of the African Americans in her hometown questioned her decision to attend a PWI. They say

things like ‘you think you’re better than us,’ she said, but she really just chose the school that seemed to be the best choice for her, and it really had nothing to do with race.

I asked the students who had extensive involvement with intramurals if race was ever an underlying factor when teams with different racial composition played against one another. Harmony strongly believed that one of the teams of “all-White” players that played against her “all-Black” female basketball team seemed to be intimidated during one of the intramural basketball games, although she wasn’t sure why they would feel that way. She was more encouraging when recalling her experience in flag football and did not think there was any racial tension or discontent between teams. “No, and if that was the case, it wasn’t taken that way. . . we’re playing a competitive sport, competitive nature is going to come out whether or not the person you’re playing is blue, green, purple, whatever.” She also said “I think people don’t realize how much you can bond off of just a common interest. We’re out there to play a sport we’re out there just trying to just enjoy ourselves so no one’s thinking about that kind of stuff.” She later added that she “went to a predominantly black high school,” and that when she played basketball there were never any racial conflicts between teams, “but of course parents and spectators” sometimes became involved in “that kind of stuff.”

Finally, in one of the more entertaining interviews that I conducted, Inez shared a story about downhill skiing with her dad, remembering when she tagged along with him on a business trip to Colorado. I asked her if she felt intimidated in an environment where it was unlikely that there would be many African Americans, and this was her response. “You know I wasn’t really looking [for other Black skiers] because I was trying to figure out how to ski down the hill.” She continued by saying, “I didn’t think anyone was going to bother

us, but if I had seen any other Black people at the ski resort I probably would have wondered what they were doing there.”

### **Summary**

The perceptions of campus recreation and its importance appear to be mostly positive among African American students at historically White institutions as with most undergraduate students in general. Certain elements of the campus recreation experience, however, may offer even greater value for students of color looking to bond or “connect” with same race peers in a social and academic environment where opportunities to interact with other African American students can sometimes be limited. Recreational programs and services offered opportunities to transition to the university by providing sport and recreational programs that were familiar to students and providing a place for students to find alternatives to the academic demands of studying. The interests and involvement and involvement in recreational activities appear to be more diverse than what previous literature suggests, however, although barriers to participation in certain outdoor recreation still seem to be prevalent among many African American students

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of factors that influence recreational sport interest and involvement of African American undergraduates attending historically White colleges and universities, and to learn more about their perceptions of campus recreational programs and services. In this chapter, I will discuss the findings of face-to-face interviews with African American undergraduate students and two nationally representative surveys administered to students attending four-year, degree-granting colleges and universities. As part of this chapter, I will also discuss the importance and implications of findings, and make suggestions for future research and practice.

### Summary of Findings

Survey results indicated that African American undergraduates' perceptions of campus recreation and its importance, along with the overall benefits gained from campus recreation participation do not differ greatly from the perceptions of their White student peers. The majority of the students I interviewed believed that campus recreation provided a great way to meet other African American students, which was an especially significant benefit since many perceived opportunities to interact with African American students to be lacking in other social and academic spaces on campus.

In response to the open-ended survey item, *please describe how the recreational programs and services at your university have added to your college experience*, African American undergraduates completing the RLIS listed several of the same benefits reported in previous studies (e.g. relieving stress, bonding with friends, maintaining involvement in competitive sports, etc.) as being favorable to the overall campus experience. Likewise, students participating in interviews supported the belief that campus recreation contributes to

positive physiological and psychological health, along with providing greater opportunities for social interaction.

Survey results, however provided a somewhat perplexing perception of recreational interest and involvement when comparing African American and White undergraduates. Fitness and sport interest did not differ greatly between the two racial groups, but outdoor interest differed at a statistically significant level. Based on this finding, I expected to see a notable difference in outdoor *involvement* as well, but the reported differences in this category did not that impressive. It is possible that measuring interest by aggregating reported interest scores in twenty-seven specific activities while measuring involvement on self-reported outdoor participation in days per week played a role in this statistical outcome, but it should still be noted that outdoor involvement for White undergraduates was higher than that of African American peers. Sport interest and sport involvement, in contrast, was higher for African Americans, and fitness interest and fitness involvement was nearly identical among African Americans and Whites. The findings related to sport interest and involvement are consistent with previous studies (e.g. Floyd et al., 1994; Harrison et al., 2002; Philipp, 1999) and this continued research trend in sport interest and participation among African Americans may indicate that sport activities are viewed as more acceptable forms of recreation in comparison to activities such as hiking, camping, and skiing. In the same vein, lower levels of interest in outdoor leisure and recreation activities match the findings of research studies by Erickson et al. (2009), Harrison (2013), Martin (2004), and Washburne (1980).

Turning to differences in gender, outdoor interest among African American and White females was not statistically different. Statistically significant differences between

African American and White males, however, were observed. The overall differences in outdoor interest, therefore, may be driven by low levels of interest by African American males in comparison to other groups. Even this observation is somewhat misleading, though, since African American males reported the highest level of interest among all subgroups in snowboarding, (categorized as outdoor in this study), and fairly high scores in camping ( $\bar{x} = 2.36$ ) and ( $\bar{x} = 2.26$ ) hiking when compared to other sport, outdoor, and fitness activities. Furthermore, African American survey respondents had mean interest scores of  $\bar{x} = 2.0$  or higher in 19 of 27 recreational activities surveyed including six out of eight activities categorized as outdoor. Additional research on this topic could help to determine if similar levels of interest exist with non-college populations of African Americans. Again, however, interest and involvement in outdoor activities was much lower for African American undergraduates when compared to their White undergraduate peers.

Looking at sport interest and involvement, both regression results and Kruskal-Wallis comparisons showed that gender was an influential factor in sport interest *and* sport involvement. Males of both race groups reported higher levels of interest and involvement when compared to females, which strongly suggests that constraints exist in the area of outdoor recreation participation among college female undergraduates. Gender differences in outdoor recreation, and concerns with safety in outdoor recreational environments have been examined by scholars such as Culp (1998), Henderson and Bialeschki (1993), Krenichyn (2006), and Wesely and Gaarder (2004). The intersection of gender and race has not been examined as often, although it has been addressed by scholars such as Lee et al. (2001) and Shores et al. (2007) who have examined race and gender within the framework of Multiple Hierarchy Stratification Theory.

Finally, shifting the focus briefly to gender and sport, it is interesting to note that White undergraduate females had lower scores on sport interest and sport involvement, although sport interest differences did not reach statistical significance. Additionally, African American females had higher mean scores in fitness interest and fitness involvement, leaving on the outdoor interest and outdoor involvement scores as higher among White undergraduate females, and neither of these scores reaching statistically significant levels. While the general scope of this study was not centered on motivational behaviors related to fitness involvement, and it was not aimed at understanding gender-related factors in sport and fitness participation, it should be pointed out that psychological barriers related to race, gender, and sport involvement may exist within a leisure context. Similar to what has been discussed for African Americans in terms of racialized images in recreation, it is possible that media images, or other factors related to gender, race, and sport socialization may exist that contribute to differences in sport and fitness participation among African American and White females undergraduate students and African American White females in general.

### **Research Questions and Findings in the Present Study**

**RQ1: To what extent can campus recreational programs and services help African American undergraduates feel more socially integrated at historically White colleges and universities?** A notable finding in this study was that many students viewed campus recreational activities, such as pick-up basketball games, drop-in recreational fitness classes, and intramural sports as a way to form cross-racial friendships, while others discussed the importance of CRFs as a place to connect with same-race peers. Several students discussed the lack of students of color in academic classes and how CRFs provided

a place to seek out other African Americans, and in particular, African Americans who might also share an interest in sport and recreation. For other students, CRFs simply provided a safe and comfortable environment where they could “hang out” with other African American students and strengthen existing friendships. All of the students I interviewed perceived the campus recreational environment as a welcoming location, and none of the students reported issues with perceived discrimination or negative treatment related to race. Most of the students also reported feeling comfortable in the campus recreational environment since they had been actively involved in some type of sport or recreational activity throughout their childhood. Most of the students who emphasized campus recreation’s contribution to bonding with other African American students also believed that a benefit to visiting CRFs was meeting students from diverse backgrounds. There was close to an even split between students who believed that the *most* important benefit was meeting students from diverse backgrounds and those who believed that the greatest value was meeting other students of the same race.

Another perceived benefit was that recreation helped students maintain involvement with sport and recreational interests that they developed in the years before coming to college. This included participation in sport activities in which they competed in as high school athletes, and recreational activities that they enjoyed with family members during their youth. The availability of these activities, especially in the first year on campus, helped students find activities that helped them feel more comfortable in a new environment. Multiple students reported having roommates or close friends who they met in their first year of college through open recreation or intramural sports. Others reported that their roommates used a shared interest in sport to bond in the first semester. Studies show that involvement in

social activities is one of the most important factors in developing a sense of belonging on campus (Kuh et al., 2008; Tinto, 2012). The responses given by students in interviewed supported this research. What may be just as important, however, is that campus recreation also provided a way for students to develop *new* recreational interests, and provided opportunities to participate in activities that may have been unavailable or inaccessible before college. Involvement in new types of activities also led to a broader network for friends (Lin, 1999) and exposure to students with a different set of leisure interests which also highlights a potential connection between use of CRFs and establishing friendships with diverse peers.

**RQ 2: Are African American college students' recreational sport interests similar to those of their White student peers?** The second research question in this study centered on African American college students' recreational sport interests, and similarities to those of their White undergraduate peers? Survey results revealed that overall levels of interest and involvement scores in *fitness* activities were comparable between African American and White undergraduate students, though a mixed finding existed for interest in *sport* activities.

The combination of race and gender surfaced as an important factor in understanding differences in recreational behavior patterns of the populations of interest in this study (see for example Shores, Scott, & Floyd, 2007; Watson & Scraton, 2013). Gender differences seemed to influence the differences in mean scores between African Americans and Whites, since mean interest scores in sport activities, and sport participation in days per week were lower for female White undergraduates in comparison to the other subgroups completing surveys (i.e. African American females, White males, and African American males).

In the *outdoor* category, African American survey participants' interest and involvement in this area of recreation were significantly different from that of White undergraduate survey respondents. White students (males and females) had higher levels of interest in *all* of the individual outdoor activities surveyed, and the mean levels of interest in four of those eight activities resulted in statistically significant differences (i.e. canoeing, hiking, kayaking, and skiing). In contrast, mean levels of interest in all seven of the *fitness* activities surveyed were nearly identical among African American and White students.

It is interesting that soccer emerged as one of the more popular sport activities among African Americans in the *Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey*, especially since three of the students I interviewed specifically stated that soccer was *not* an "African American" sport. It is also interesting, that three *other* students I interviewed listed soccer as a sport that they played in their youth, and one of those students listed it as a favorite sport.

It was also interesting that snowboarding was more popular with African American males than it was with White males, White females, and African American females completing surveys. Two of the male interview participants, in fact, discussed having a strong interest in this activity. Although outdoor interest among African American survey respondents was lower than that of White college students completing surveys, *RLIS* results indicated that African Americans' interest in camping and rock climbing, for example, was not much different from that of White undergraduates. Furthermore, at least half of the African American survey participants indicated having at least a moderate level of interest in seven of eight *outdoor* activities. Although White undergraduates still had higher levels of outdoor interest and involvement, the fact that so many African American students showed an interest in activities with traditionally low levels of representation from African

Americans generally should be encouraging to recreational sport administrators looking to increase racial diversity among the participants in outdoor recreational programs.

**RQ 3: What social and environmental factors influence levels of recreational sport interest?** The third research question in this study focused on understanding factors that influence levels of recreational sport interest. Surprisingly, perceived discrimination did not appear to be a major limitation for the students I interviewed, although many did talk candidly about the effects of race stereotypes on perceptions of recreational sport involvement. Multiple survey participants, for example, believed that being the only person of color participating in a fitness class on campus for example, or taking part in a campus recreational trip, could be somewhat intimidating, both because of being one of few African Americans and also due to a newness or lack of familiarity with certain activities. This seems to be an indication that African American students, although not intimidated by being in a predominantly White setting, are still cognizant of race. In a recreational setting where there are likely to be few other African Americans, this may influence the decision to become involved in a given activity (Erickson et al., 2009). Scholars such as Allen, Drane, Byon, and Mohn (2010) and Martin (2004) have suggested that racialized images in sport and leisure impact beliefs about the extent that African Americans and Whites should be involved in certain recreational activities (i.e. sport and outdoor adventure activities).

In the present study, however, half of the students that I interviewed seemed to have the strongest interest in recreational activities introduced by parents or family members at an earlier life stage. This shows how parent socialization (Hughes et al., 2016; White-Johnson & Ford, 2009) to leisure and recreation activities can influence recreational behaviors and interests in spite of other factors such as racial stereotypes and socialization messages from

peers and other social influences (Harrison & Bimper, 2014; Harrison et al., 2002). Still racial stereotypes may have played a role in the activities introduced by parents since parents may have felt more comfortable introducing their children to activities in which they were more likely to be accepted (Philipp, 1999) and, therefore, *less* likely to experience discrimination (Harrison et al., 2010; White-Johnson et al., 2010). It was evident from talking to students, however, that many parents emphasized the importance of trying new and different activities—even those that are not associated with the individual’s race group.

The beliefs passed from parent to child regarding race and identity help to shape ideas about the types of social behavior that appropriate for a group based on factors such as class status and race. These social behaviors include recreation and sport activities. This is significant since the activities introduced early in life are likely to be the activities that people remain interested in in later life stages (Iso-Ahola, 1986; Iso-Ahola, Jackson, & Dunn, 1994; Mobily et al., 1991). In the sociology literature, Streib (2013), found that class status origin had an impact on parenting styles, even in instances where the parents’ class status level was higher than that of their own upbringing. In the field of recreation studies, it has long been understood that leisure activities such as sport and other forms of recreation can be used to represent class status (Veblen, 1899; Wilson, 2002). Therefore, patterns observed in survey responses, and through interviews responses may be a reflection of family upbringing (Bourdieu, 1980; Wilson, 2002).

A final point related to those students who viewed campus recreation as a way to “branch out” and try new activities is that intramurals and open recreation also provide an avenue for trying “traditional” sport such as racquetball, or “non-traditional” sport activities like “pool battleship.” Campus recreational programs can also provide opportunities to try

activities such as or renting kayaks or canoes through the outdoor recreation department, which may not easily accessible for many students (of any race) before coming to college.

**RQ 4: Research Question 4: To what extent is racial identity associated with recreational sport interests and involvement among African American college students?**

Racial identity did not surface as a major factor in surveys, but interviews suggest that race salience is at least a minor factor in understanding patterns of recreational choice and sport behavior. As stated previously, sport and fitness interests did not differ significantly in terms of race. Gender, was in fact the more notable predictor of differences in sport and fitness interest and involvement. Differences in outdoor involvement, however, suggest that underlying factors related to racial identity, and how outdoor recreation is viewed in terms of race may have some sort of limiting effect. Especially when considering the fact that interest in many outdoor activities was actually quite high among African American students. Some of the students admitted to thinking about the perceptions of other African American peers, and stated that this would indeed influence their choice about whether or not to participate in a certain sport or recreational activity; other students were less concerned about racialized perceptions of recreational activities. It is possible that the latter group of interview participants had lower levels of race salience generally, although racial identity among survey participants did not result in and distinct patterns of recreational interest or involvement.

*Race*, as a general predictor in surveys, seemed to play a role in shaping recreational differences *between* African American and White undergraduate students, rather than any differences between African Americans. This seems to suggest that race “solidarity” exists among African American college student students, perhaps as an outcome of being in a

predominantly White setting, or based on other social variables discussed in the present study.

### **Significance of Findings**

#### **Race as an Influential Factor in Recreational Interest**

An important finding in this study was that more than half of the African American survey participants completing the RLIS reported having at least a moderate level of interest in activities categorized as *outdoor* (with the exception of skiing). This was surprising when considering that multiple studies have shown that African Americans have low levels of interest and involvement in outdoor pursuits such as visiting national parks and wildland recreation areas, or participating in recreational activities that occur in distant settings from metropolitan and urban areas (e.g., Erickson, 2009; Floyd, 1999; Johnson, Bowker & Cordell, 2001; Martin, 2004). This suggests, however, that psychological and social barriers may still be limiting greater levels of *involvement* since it appears that many African American undergraduate students have a desire to participate in multiple types of outdoor recreation, along with sport and fitness activities.

As stated earlier, involvement in outdoor recreation among African American students was slightly lower than that of White undergraduate peers. Part of the reason for limited access to outdoor recreation is probably an outcome of the distance from certain outdoor recreational settings, although it would seem that *all* students face similar types of constraints in terms of proximity to outdoor recreational environments.

Several students cited stereotyped images in sport and leisure as playing a role in shaping the way that people view appropriate recreation activities in terms of race. The fact that this was a prevailing belief among the majority of students I interviewed supports

assertions by scholars (e.g., Bruce, 2004; Harrison et al., 2002; Martin, 2004) that racialized images in recreation and sport influence patterns of recreational behavior. Social and psychological processes contributing to the internalization of racialized messages might be explained through an understanding of “role expectations” and “group norms,” such as those discussed by scholars like Hogg and Terry (2000), Hogg et al. (1995) and Stryker & Burke (2000). Most of the students who participated in interviews, for example, believed that it was important to see a person of the same racial or ethnic background have success in a given activity, and insisted that this spurs greater levels of interest in various recreational and sport endeavors. Previous leisure scholars have also asserted that leisure behaviors can project a certain image, and that have symbolic meaning (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Shaw, 1994; Mannell, 2007; Samdahl, 1988). It may be that students use certain activities as a form of *self-representation* (Finney, 2014; Haggard & Williams, 1992; Martin, 2004; Samdahl, 1988), or as a way of displaying a certain affiliation with a certain group. Haggard and Williams, for example, noted that, “individuals affirm the nature of their identities through a variety of mechanisms, including selection of and participation in leisure activities” (p. 1). What was interesting in this study, however, is most of the students I interviewed insisted that stereotypes related to race did not impact their personal choice of recreation and sport activities. Racial identity for these students did not show up in the sense that they selected activities to be representative of their race group, rather they attempted to use recreational activities as a way to show that they could participate in any activity of their choosing in spite of their race and any associated stereotypes.

As posited by social identity theorists (e.g., Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Stryker & Burke, 2000) multiple identities such as gender, race, and class work in concert with one

another to project a particular image, and certain aspects of identity are more salient in certain settings or when members of an individual's desired social group are present. A high level of race salience may explain the behaviors of students who avoided certain activities due to the possibility of peer sanctioning and concerns with the way that it would look to other African Americans. Those who were less concerned with the opinions of other African Americans may have perceived other aspects of their identity as being of greater significance.

Still it is notable that while most of the students I interviewed showed certain unique interests related to sport and recreation (e.g. interest and involvement in activities such as volleyball, soccer, canoeing, or snowboarding), most of the students still discussed involvement and interest in either basketball or football, as either a participant or spectator. This is significant since both of these activities are activities with high levels of interest among African Americans (Harrison & Bimper, 2014; Ogden & Hilt, 2003) and suggests that even among African Americans wishing to try activities not associated with African Americans generally, there still may be a desire to maintain connections to their own race group. Interest in these activities may also be due to the popularity of these sports generally in the United States, but again, it is possible that involvement in certain recreational activities serves as a way for African Americans to stay connected with *other* African Americans (see Lacy, 2004). As some of the students I interviewed explained, for example, basketball for many African American students, and especially male students, is viewed as a place that provides an "escape," or "safe haven" on a campus where there are very few African American students. Referring often to the fact that most other places on campus are less diverse (i.e., in class, at campus sporting events, in the student union, etc.), students explained that the basketball courts served as a place to go to just hang out and connect with

students who can relate to their on-campus experience. In this sense, *playing* the sport was secondary to the social and bonding experience that it provided. This echoes the assertion by Ogden and Hilt (2003) that basketball participation represents a form of “collective identity” among African Americans.

Finally, some of the students I interviewed discussed their lack of comfort in leisure settings where few African Americans might be present (e.g. golf courses and campus-sponsored hiking trips). This lack of comfort was related less to worries about discrimination, and more to representing their race group in an appropriate manner. In this sense, leisure constraints (Crawford et al., 1991) were evident in the insecurity and uneasiness felt by students who felt that they may have lacked familiarity with the rules and norms of a given activity. Appropriateness of activities and feelings of “comfort” in given recreational environments were discussed by Philipp (1999), who asserted that comfort in leisure spaces may be impacted by the perception that certain leisure settings are more appropriate for one race group or another. Evidence of Phillip’s assertions surfaced in comments by students who stated that racialized spaces existed in the communities they lived in before coming to college (i.e. driving ranges, beaches, and basketball courts). This is similar to findings by Gobster (2002), West (1989), and Sharaievska et al. (2010), who found that discrimination in leisure spaces resulted in a decreased desire to visit certain recreational settings within communities.

### **The Intersection of Race and Gender**

Another important finding was that involvement in outdoor in activities was lower among females, although *interest* for females—both African American and White, was *higher* than males. It is important to note that *involvement* was measured on a slightly

different scale than interest, although this finding still suggests that psychological barriers seem to exist for females in this area of recreation. This may have an even greater impact on African American females since race has also been identified a constraint to outdoor recreation in previous literature (e.g., Johnson et al., 2001; Shores, Scott & Floyd, 2007) and in the present study.

Henderson and Bialeschki (1993) suggested that gender role stereotypes also play a role in the way that outdoor leisure involvement is perceived by female recreationists. Henderson, Hodges, and Kivel (2002) insisted that “when women make choices about how to engage in leisure, their choices are steeped in cultural ideologies about what types of behaviors are appropriate” (p. 259). This statement reflects the way that social norms and expectations for women in North American society can affect recreation participation. McNeil et al.’s study is similar to Martin’s (2004) review of racialized media images in outdoor magazines, in which he concluded that “wildland” and outdoor locations are “socially constructed as a White space” (p. 528) and it is largely due to the images presented in popular media.

Research by multiple scholars (e.g., Culp, 1998; Henderson & Bialeschki, 1993; McNeil, Harris, & Fondren, 2012; Krenichyn, 2006; Virden & Walker, 1999; Wesely & Gaarder, 2004) has also shown that fear of safety in certain outdoor environments serves as a partial explanation for gender differences in recreation activities in outdoor settings. Safety is as a key constraint variable identified by Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1991).

It should also be noted that differences were found related to *sport interest* among White female survey participants, in comparison to the other three subgroups examined (i.e. White males, African American males, and African American females), although interest in

*fitness activities* remained high for White females relative to the other three groups. Scholars have noted that many North American sports are associated with aggressive, violent behaviors that are viewed as “masculine” traits and therefore inappropriate for females. Hardin and Greer (2009), for example, found that a sample of college students at a university in the northeastern United States viewed baseball, soccer, and football as “masculine,” tennis, volleyball, and swimming as “neutral” (p. 210), and gymnastics and aerobic exercises as “feminine.” These perceptions may serve as psychological constraints on females who have an interest in certain activities. The fact that this impacted White undergraduate females more than their African American female counterparts, however, suggests that there are other socialization factors related to race and gender specifically as it relates to sport and fitness involvement.

### **Summary**

Although racial identity was not a major factor in explaining within-group differences in recreational involvement and interest among African American undergraduates in this study, *race* as a predictor played a role in understanding differences between African American and White undergraduates’ recreational interests and involvement. Also, African American students in this study demonstrated a wide variety of interest in recreational activities, including several activities that are not often viewed as having high levels of participation among African Americans generally.

Findings from surveys showed that gender should also be considered in attempts to understand recreational differences in involvement between African American and White populations. Some of the findings in this study may be unique to students attending four-year colleges and universities, and more specifically, students attending four-year, state-

supported, historically White institutions. Additional studies could help determine if these findings are generalizable to non-college populations.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

#### **Reaching Out to Other Groups on Campus**

Several of the students I interviewed were involved in other extra-curricular activities and on-campus groups such as engineering fraternities and multicultural advocacy groups. Inviting on-campus student organizations like these to participate in group fitness classes and related activities might be one way to connect recreational programs with racially and ethnically diverse student populations. The incorporation of overnight camping and hiking trips has proven successful as part of a first-year transition program and group-bonding experience for students at several colleges (Andre, Williams, Schwartz & Bullard, 2017; Bell & Chang, 2017). Similar types of team-building activities have also been instituted with many student and staff groups at ropes courses and outdoor education centers at many universities. Inviting student organizations with racially diverse populations could help to introduce students to new recreational programs and activities.

Many of the students who participated in interviews believed that the way to reach out to students of color and other students who might benefit from greater use of CRFs would be to emphasize the social aspects of campus recreational programs and services. They noted that many students, race or ethnicity aside, perceived campus recreational facilities as a place where only the “super healthy” and “super fit” are valued, and a place that can be intimidating to students with limited background in recreational sport activities. For students of color, it would be especially important to remove any additional psychological barriers that might decrease the chance of taking part in recreational programs. Students also

believed that placing an emphasis on learning new activities in a group setting, and offering intramural sport activities that centered on non-competitive aspects of the sport, or activities that are easy for anyone to learn might be one way to get a different cohort of undergraduates involved in campus recreation. This could serve as another way to reach all students, including students of color.

Thirdly, several students felt that there was a need to show greater diversity advertising and marketing promoting campus recreational programs and services. They believed that it was important to reflect the diversity of students at the university, but also noted that it is important to follow through on marketing and advertising efforts by making sincere efforts to promote diversity among staff and in welcoming diverse students in the campus recreational environment. To add to the point of emphasis related to marketing and advertising, it would be important to reflect the racial diversity of recreational interests that surfaced in the present study, rather than perpetuating the stereotypical images discussed, for example, by Finney (2014), Harrison (2013), Martin (2004), and Ogden and Warneke (2010).

### **The Importance of Diversity in Hiring and Staff Education**

Creating a diverse staff in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity can send a message to participants (and staff) about the value placed on diversity within the organization. It can also change perceptions about which populations have interest and knowledge about various aspects of recreational programs and services. Furthermore, there may be value in training student staff members in multiple areas the department as students with knowledge in the area fitness or team sport activities might benefit from learning about aquatics or outdoor adventure. Racial and ethnic diversity within different areas of the organization can also help to break down existing social barriers between those working within the department.

Broadening the knowledge base of students working in different areas of campus recreational facilities can also lead to sharing of new interests and skills among students, which may also translate to a sharing of knowledge with friends and even family members after leaving the university or during their time on campus.

In a study focused on the importance of diversity in recreational involvement, Chavez (2000) insisted that managers of recreational agencies needed to make greater efforts to create a welcoming environment for the persons of color. She emphasized the importance of reaching out to racial and ethnic groups that noted the importance of understanding the perspectives of visitors of color and how learning more about their experiences could improve the quality of programs and services offered. She also noted the importance of including persons of color in decisions related to the implementation of new programs and services, as well as the need to educate staff about the different cultural backgrounds of people visiting the recreational spaces. These same principles apply in campus recreational settings. Training professional and student staff about the significance of making all participants feel welcome, promoting ways to facilitate positive communication, and emphasizing the need to considerate of the viewpoints of individuals from different racial and ethnic backgrounds can facilitate positive interaction among staff members and student visitors to CRFs, as well as communication between employees of the department.

### **Recommendations for Research**

It would be beneficial to conduct similar studies at historically Black Colleges and Universities in the Southeast and in other regions of the United States. This would help determine if perceptions about the importance of CRFs are similar with other populations of African American college students, and students in a social setting where African Americans

are in the racial majority. Students at historically Black colleges and universities are still impacted by many of the racial stereotypes and structural barriers that exist within society, so it would be beneficial to make comparisons between the two populations. It is plausible that students attending HBCUs may have different views on racial identity, which may influence perceptions and motivation towards recreational sport participation and involvement.

It would also be useful to conduct related research with other racial and ethnic minority students at historically White colleges and universities and related studies with first generation students or any population of students previously identified as having a greater likelihood of leaving the institution. Further studies could also examine the levels of interaction between students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds in CRFs and in intramural programs. In several of the interviews, students stated that CRFs and programs facilitate positive group interaction among people from different backgrounds, but research does not exist to confirm these statements. Qualitative studies could help to determine if students interact only with their same race peers in recreational spaces and whether or not this contributes to greater levels of social interaction and communication in other non-campus settings, and if recreational involvement actually contributes to meaningful cross-cultural friendships. Finally, it might be worthwhile to explore the opinions and beliefs of recreational administrators at various institutions of higher education to gauge their knowledge and understanding of the different needs and interests of racial and ethnic minorities on their campuses, or to determine if the perceptions of the student recreational experience match the perception of students visiting CRFs.

### **Limitations of the Present Study**

In order to stay within the budget for this study, the sample size was limited to  $n=150$  African American undergraduates, and  $n=150$  White undergraduates and may not be generalizable to all campus recreational environments. This overall sample size of  $n=304$  is relatively small for a national survey. It is also important to note that *survey* participants were a randomly selected group college of students, and not necessarily students who visit campus recreational facilities on a regular basis. Most of the students who provided interviews for this study described themselves as having a middle-class background. This may have limited the variation in perspectives from students from different socioeconomic statuses. An additional limitation was that the analysis of racial identity, and its association with interest and involvement in recreation was limited to the use of one specific subscale. Students participating in this study attended universities and colleges in multiple states, but since the names of actual institutions were unknown, it was not possible to ascertain the proximity to various types of recreational opportunities and specific types of recreation and leisure resources available in outdoor settings or on campus.

### **Strengths of the Present Study**

Existing studies in this area have relied primarily on survey data (e.g. Lindsey, 2012; Lindsey & Sessoms, 2006) and have generally revolved around student experiences at single institutions. This study included a national survey sample of African American students attending historically White, four-year colleges and universities, along with interviews that allowed for a more detailed understanding of survey results (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Conducting qualitative interviews in this mixed methods study provided an opportunity to affirm or reaffirm the trends that surfaced from survey

results and helped identify potential underlying reasons for patterns of behavior related to race and recreation. Secondly, very few studies exist with African American college students at historically White institutions or African American college students generally. Therefore, this study offers perspectives from a population that has been under studied in recreational literature and provides perspectives from a population that has been identified as having a greater risk of leaving college due to feelings of disconnectedness from the overall campus environment.

### **Conclusion**

This study affirms the work of previous scholars who have stated involvement in student organizations, clubs, and other on-campus extra-curricular activities can serve as a way to improve student retention rates (Astin, 1984; Kuh et al., 2008). Campus recreation experiences allow students to connect with others, develop personal and professional interests, and feel a sense of belonging on campus (Freeman et al., 2007; Tinto, 2012). Campus recreation helped students in this mixed-methods study develop a broad network of peers, transition to the first year of college and gain the health benefits of physical activity. Campus recreational services and programs also provided African American students in this study with opportunities to expand recreational sport interests, maintain a “sport” identity, and feel more comfortable in a new social environment. Campus recreational sports administrators should not underestimate the role that they can play in helping students of color at historically White institutions have a more successful experience during their time on campus and move towards the successful completion of a four-year degree.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A - Grant Approval Letter from NIRSA



NIRSA Headquarters 4185 SW Research Way Corvallis, OR 97333-1067  
TEL 541-766-8211 FAX 541-766-8284 nirsa@nirsa.org www.nirsa.org

July 24, 2015

Dear Keith,

On behalf of NIRSA's Research and Assessment Committee, we are pleased to inform you that NIRSA has awarded a \$2000 grant to you in support of your research proposal: "*Race, Identity, and Belonging: Examining College Students' Preferences for Sport and Active Recreation.*"

The funds may be used from September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016, in accordance with the budget submitted on May 29, 2015. Please note that grant funds must be used as indicated in the proposed budget; no substantial changes in the budget or grant period may be made without prior written approval from NIRSA.

In order to accept this grant, return a countersigned copy of this letter (document attached) to NIRSA Headquarters by August 1. By accepting the grant, you also agree to present findings at the 2017 NIRSA Annual Conference and submit an article for the Recreational Sports Journal by Spring 2017. Upon completion of the project, abstract and itemized expense reports are due to NIRSA. If any publicity is derived from actions funded by this grant, we request acknowledgment that funds were received from NIRSA. Please enclose copies of any publicity when you submit the abstract.

We look forward to continuing to work toward our shared vision of inspiring healthy people and healthy communities.

Best Regards,

Kristal Fehring  
Director of Membership  
NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation  
www.nirsa.org

## Appendix B - IRB Approval

Dear Keith Howard:

Date: April 22, 2016

IRB Protocol 6294 has been assigned Exempt status

Title: Race, Identity, and Belonging: Examining College Students' Preferences for Sport and Active Recreation

The research proposal named above has received administrative review and has been approved as exempt from the policy as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (Exemption: 46.101. Exempt b.2). Provided that the only participation of the subjects is as described in the proposal narrative, this project is exempt from further review. This approval does not expire, but any changes must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

1. This committee complies with requirements found in Title 45 part 46 of The Code of Federal Regulations. For NCSU projects, the Assurance Number is: FWA00003429.
2. Any changes to the protocol and supporting documents must be submitted and approved by the IRB prior to implementation.
3. If any unanticipated problems or adverse events occur, they must be reported to the IRB office within 5 business days by completing and submitting the unanticipated problem form on the IRB website: <http://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/compliance/irb/submission-guidance/>.
4. Any unapproved departure from your approved IRB protocol results in non-compliance. Please find information regarding non-compliance here: [http://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs-docs/irb/non-compliance\\_faq\\_sheet.pdf](http://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs-docs/irb/non-compliance_faq_sheet.pdf).

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you

The IRB Team

## Appendix C - Interview Consent Form

Institutional Review Board for the Use of Human Subjects in Research

North Carolina State University

INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH

Title of Study: Race, Identity and Leisure: Examining College Students' Preferences for Sport and Active Recreation

Principal Investigator: Keith Howard  
Bocarro, Ph.D.

Faculty Sponsor: Jason N.

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### **What are some general things you should know about research studies?**

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

### **What is the purpose of this study?**

The purpose of this study is to measure college students' levels of involvement in fitness, outdoor recreation, and sport activities with a specific focus on the interests of African American undergraduates. Preferences for certain recreation and leisure activities will be examined along with perceptions of the importance of physical activity generally. In addition, the study will also examine the relationship between student's beliefs and opinions about issues topics related to race in our society and how these opinions and beliefs may help to shape beliefs about involvement in physical activity and recreation. Contributions from a racially and ethnically diverse group of students is highly valued in this survey as parts of this survey include questions about different perceptions of sport, recreation, and active leisure and how it relates to racial identity and social and environmental influences. The majority of the questions are centered on your interests and opinions about specific activities, ranging from individual sport activities to fitness and outdoor recreation.

### **What will happen if you take part in the study?**

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview with the primary investigator of this study at the African American Cultural Center on the NC State University campus. Interview sessions will be audio taped for accurate record keeping purposes unless you choose not to have interviews audiotape recorded. You will not be asked to state your name or provide any identifiable information during the recorded part of the interview. Upon immediate completion of the study the audiotapes will be destroyed and any quotes that you provide as part of the interview will be reported either anonymously or with the use of an alias.

### **Risks**

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this study. The anticipated length of time for focus group sessions or interviews is approximately 90 minutes.

### **Benefits**

There is no direct benefit to survey participants. The input that you provide will help researchers and recreation professionals to improve programs and services offered on college campuses and in similar sport and outdoor leisure settings.

### **Confidentiality**

The information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be stored securely in password-coded data file on a university computer used by the primary investigator. Data will only be accessible to the primary investigator and co-investigators in this study. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study. You will NOT be asked to write your name on any study materials so that no one can match your identity to the answers that you provide.

### **Compensation**

Upon the immediate completion of the interview or focus group session in which you participate, you will be given a \$25 *Visa* gift card. If you withdraw from the study prior to its completion, you will not be eligible for this this incentive. If you complete additional interviews or focus group sessions as part of this study, you will not be eligible for any additional incentive.

### **What if you are a NCSU student?**

Participation in this study is not a course requirement and your participation or lack thereof, will not affect your class standing or grades at NC State.

### **What if you have questions about this study?**

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Keith Howard, at keith\_howard@ncsu.edu, or 919-513-1547.

**What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator at dapaxton@ncsu.edu or by phone at 1-919-515-4514.

**Consent to Participate**

“I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.”

**Subject's signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Investigator's signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D - Interview Guide

Tell me about your community/hometown.

What sport or recreational activities were you involved in growing up?

1. Who first introduced you to these activities?
2. How important are these activities to your family?
3. What are some other leisure or cultural activities that your family is involved in?
4. Are you involved in intramural or recreational activities now/currently?
5. If so, what are the reasons/motivations for being involved in these activities?
6. Tell me what your friends/parents would think of participation in the following activities?
7. Are most of your peers in circle of friends your same race/ethnicity? Was this also true of your peer group in high school?
8. Tell me what you think other members of your race group would think about you or others of your race background participating in the following activities? [The list of the 21 sport/fitness activities from the survey will be given here].
9. Have you ever elected not to participate in an activity because of perceptions/race stereotypes of an activity? If so was this due to concerns/apprehension about what members of your own race group would think, or because of lack of comfort in a setting with few members of your own race group?
10. Do you think that it's important for Blacks to try activities (sport, leisure, etc.) that are different, or not perceived as "Black" sports or activities?
11. As a member of a sports team or when involved in a recreational/outdoor activity did you ever have an instance where discrimination or an issue race occurred with a coach, other team member, member of another team, etc.?
12. If so, how did it influence your decision to continue in the activity or desire to return to that location?

## Appendix E - Approval for use of the MIBI

Approval for use of Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity On Mon, Aug 31, 2015 at 7:45 AM, Keith Howard <kphoward@ncsu.edu> wrote:

Dr. Sellers,

I am a Ph.D. student at North Carolina State University. As part of my dissertation I will be conducting a survey of African American students on campus about their involvement in sport, recreation, and fitness activities, and perceptions of different types of sport/recreational activities.

As part of my study, I would like to use two subscales from the MIBI; a component of my research involves the relationship between identity and involvement in certain activities.

1. I would like to know if you would approve of the use of part of your scale in my survey research.
2. I would also like to know if it is appropriate to use subscales only and not the entire inventory.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience and would be happy to provide any additional details if necessary.

Sincerely,

Keith Howard

Laura Harrington <lharring@umich.edu 9/4/15

Dear Keith,

Dr. Sellers asked me to let you know that the answer to both of your questions below is "yes."

Have a good weekend!

Best, Laura

## Appendix F - Recreation and Leisure Identity Survey

### Q1 RECREATION AND LEISURE IDENTITY SURVEY

This survey was designed to measure college students' levels of involvement in campus recreation and participation in fitness, sport, and outdoor recreation. Certain questions also survey opinions about race-related topics in society. Your participation will provide campus recreation professionals with valuable input that will help improve programs and services offered in higher education settings. The average time to complete this survey is less than ten minutes. All responses are anonymous and cannot be traced directly to individuals. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey.

Q2 Knowing how students self-identify by race is an important part of this study. Please take a few seconds to provide us with this general information. You may select more than one response.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- White
- Other

If Black or African American Is Not Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Q3 Please indicate your year in school.

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Recent Graduate (earned a bachelor's degree in 2015 or 2016)
- None of the above

If None of the above Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Q30 Please select the category for your gender.

- Female
- Male

Q4 Which choice best describes the college or university that you currently attend or graduated from in 2015 or 2016?

- 4-year public Historically Black College or University (HBCU)
- 4-year private Historically Black College or University (HBCU)
- 4-year public college or university
- 4-year private college or university
- 2-year community college (public or private)

If 4-year public college or un... Is Not Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Q5 Please select your age category.

- 18-24 years old
- 25-30 years old
- Neither of the above

If Neither of the above Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Q6 Please check the box next to each facility or program that exists at your college or university.

- Campus or Student Recreation Center
- Campus Aquatic Center
- Club Sports
- Intramural Sports
- Varsity/Intercollegiate Athletics

If Campus or Student Recreation... Is Not Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Q7 Please indicate your level of interest in the following sport activities.

	Not interested	Somewhat interested	Interested	Very interested
Baseball/Softball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basketball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flag Football	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Golf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lacrosse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Racquetball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rugby	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soccer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ultimate Frisbee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volleyball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please fill in name of activity or select "not interested")	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 Please indicate your level of interest in the following fitness activities.

	Not interested	Somewhat interested	Interested	Very interested
Indoor Group Cycling/Spinning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lap Swimming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Martial Arts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Running/Jogging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Treadmills & Elliptical Trainers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weight Training & Resistance Exercises	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yoga/Pilates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please fill in name of activity or select "not interested")	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 Please indicate your level of interest in the following outdoor recreation activities.

	Not interested	Somewhat interested	Interested	Very interested
Camping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canoeing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hiking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kayaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mountain Biking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rock Climbing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skiing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snowboarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please fill in name of activity or select "not interested")	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 How important were sport activities to you prior to enrolling at your college or university?

- Not Important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important

Q11 How important were fitness activities to you prior to enrolling at your college or university?

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important

Q12 This is an attention filter. Please select somewhat important for this question.

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important

If somewhat important Is Not Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Q13 How important were outdoor recreation activities to you prior to enrolling at your college or university?

- Not important
- Somewhat important
- Important
- Very important

Q14 In a typical college semester, how often do you participate in team or individual sport activities? Do not include participation in physical education classes taken at your college or university.

- Never
- Less than once a week
- 1-2 days per week
- 3-4 days per week
- 5-6 days per week
- 7 days per week

Q15 In a typical college semester, how often do you participate in fitness activities such as using a treadmill or working out with weights? Do not include participation in physical education classes taken at your college or university.

- Never
- Less than once a week
- 1-2 days per week
- 3-4 days week
- 5-6 days per week
- 7 days per week

Q16 In a typical college semester, how often do you participate in outdoor recreation activities such as hiking, kayaking, or mountain biking? Do not include participation in physical education classes taken at your college or university.

- Never
- Less than once a week
- 1-2 days per week
- 3-4 days per week
- 5-6 days per week
- 7 days per week

Q17 Have you ever been a member of a club sports team at your college or university?

- Yes
- No

Q18 Have you ever been a member of an intramural sports team at your college or university?

- Yes
- No

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To This section of the survey measures o...

Q19 Please indicate the number of semesters that you have participated in the following intramural sport activities at your college or university.

	0	1	2	3	4+
Aquatic Sports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basketball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flag Football	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Racquetball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soccer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Softball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ultimate Frisbee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volleyball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please fill in name of activity or select "0")	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 The next section of this survey measures opinions about race-related topics in our society. . . Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Blacks and Whites have more commonalities than differences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Black people should not consider race when buying art or selecting a book to read.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people, rather than just focusing on Black issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as Black.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We are all children of a higher being, therefore, we should love people of all races.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not members of the White race.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People, regardless of their race, have strengths and limitations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important for Black people to surround their children with Black art, music, and literature.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks would be better off if they adopted Afrocentric values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q30 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Black students are better off going to schools that are controlled and organized by Blacks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Black people must organize themselves into a separate Black political force.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Whenever possible, Blacks should buy from other Black businesses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A thorough knowledge of Black history is very important for Blacks today.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks and Whites can never live in true harmony because of racial differences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
White people can never be trusted where Blacks are concerned.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Black values should not be inconsistent with human values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 Please select the state in which your university is located.

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming
- Washington D.C.
- Non U.S. College/University

Q22 During the fall and spring semesters, how many hours do you typically spend working for pay each week?

- 0
- 1 - 10
- 11 - 20
- 21 - 30
- 31 - 40
- 41+

Q23 What is the highest level of education completed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) that you lived with prior to college enrollment?

	High School Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree	Not Applicable
Mother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Father	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Guardian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q24 Which choice best describes your home community or hometown?

- Metropolitan/Urban - population over 1 million
- Metropolitan/Urban - population between 100,000-999,999
- Small Urban - population between 10,000-99,999
- Rural Fringe (small town or rural area less than 10 miles from an urban area)
- Rural Distant (small town or rural area more than 10 miles from an urban area)

Q25 Which choice is the best socioeconomic descriptor of your home community or home town?

- upper class
- upper middle class
- lower middle class
- working class - blue collar
- working class - poor

Q26 This question is important in helping campus recreation staff understand perceptions of recreational programs. Please share your opinion on whether the campus recreation amenities at your college or university meet student needs.

Q27 Please describe how the recreational programs and services at your university have added to your college experience? If you do not have experience with campus recreation, please tell us what programs or services we could offer that might generate your interest.

Q28 You've reached the end of the survey. If there are any responses that you have left unmarked, you may go back and complete them at this time. Otherwise click "next page" to complete the survey.

## Appendix G - Qualtrics Inquiry

Response to e-mail inquiry about method used by *Qualtrics* to identify survey participants. E-mail was originally sent June 24, 2016. E-mail response also received on June 24, 2016.

Hi Keith,

We recruit respondents from offers within apps. When apps ask respondents if they want to pay to get more content, we offer an 'earn' option that allows them to take a survey instead of having to pay for that content/reward. We profile all individuals on the basic demographics and use that information to allocate people to appropriate surveys.

I hope this information is helpful, and please let us know if you have any additional questions on this, or any other matter.

## Appendix H - Intramural Sport Offerings Spreadsheet

Partial section of chart used to identify intramural sport offerings at selected U.S. colleges and universities (not all rows and columns are shown).

			Floor Hockey	Ice Hockey	Tennis	Table Tennis	Aquatic Sports	Kickball	Wiffleball
<b>KSU</b>	KS	24,378							x
<b>KU</b>	KS	27,135							
<b>UK</b>	KY	28,034			x				
<b>U. of Louisville</b>	KY	21,239			x	x	x	x	
<b>LSU</b>	LA	30,225							
<b>ULL</b>	LA	16,688			x		x	x	
<b>Towson State</b>	MD	21,960							
<b>Maryland</b>	MD	37,248			x		x		x
<b>Umass-Amherst</b>	MA	28,236				x		x	
<b>Umass-Lowell</b>	MA	16,294	x	x					
<b>Michigan State</b>	MI	48,783		x			x	x	
<b>U of Michigan</b>	MI	43,426	x		x		x		
<b>St. Cloud State</b>	MN	16,922		x	x	x			
<b>Minnesota</b>	MN	51,853	x	x	x				
<b>Mississippi State</b>	MS	20,365							
<b>Mississippi</b>	MS	18,794					x		
<b>Missouri State</b>	MO	20,629	x			x			x
<b>Missouri</b>	MO	34,704					x		
<b>UNL</b>	NE	24,207	x						
<b>U. of Nevada-Reno</b>	NV	35,678							
<b>UNLV</b>	NV	27,389	x					x	
<b>UNH</b>	NH	15,267	x	x	x	x	x		
<b>NMSU</b>	NM	17,651			x	x		x	
<b>UNM</b>	NM	29,033			x				
<b>Stony Brook</b>	NY	23,946			x	x		x	

## Appendix I - Number of Survey Participants by State

Modified from the U.S. Census (Regions of the U.S), United States Census Bureau, 2015)

<b>RLIS Respondents</b>	Texas (10)	Indiana (5)
		Kansas (2)
<b>Atlantic</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	Kentucky (4)
Florida (15)	Connecticut (1)	Michigan (2)
Georgia (10)	Massachusetts (1)	Minnesota (4)
Maryland (7)	New Jersey (4)	Missouri (1)
North Carolina (4)	New York (3)	Nebraska (1)
South Carolina (4)	Rhode Island (1)	North Dakota (1)
Virginia (3)		Ohio (10)
Washington D.C. (1)	<b>Mountain</b>	Wisconsin (3)
West Virginia (1)	Colorado (4)	
	New Mexico (2)	<b>South</b>
<b>Pacific</b>	Arizona (2)	Alabama (6)
Alaska (2)	Utah (1)	Louisiana (4)
California (16)		Mississippi (2)
Oregon (4)	<b>ALPS respondents:</b>	South Carolina (2)
Washington (1)		Tennessee (3)
	<b>Atlantic</b>	Texas (10)
<b>Midwest</b>	Florida (5)	
Illinois (6)	Georgia (10)	<b>Northeast</b>
Iowa (1)	Maryland (3)	Connecticut (3)
Kansas (2)	North Carolina (2)	Massachusetts (2)
Michigan (2)	South Carolina (2)	New Hampshire (2)
Minnesota (2)	Virginia (4)	New Jersey (5)
Missouri (2)	Washington D.C. (1)	New York (6)
Nebraska (1)	West Virginia (2)	Pennsylvania (7)
Ohio (6)		
Wisconsin (1)	<b>Pacific</b>	<b>Mountain</b>
	California (12)	Arizona (6)
<b>South</b>	Washington (3)	Colorado (2)
Alabama (3)	Oregon (4)	Nevada (1)
Louisiana (6)		
Mississippi (4)	<b>Midwest</b>	
Tennessee (1)	Illinois (5)	