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ETHNIC MINORITY MALE CAREER TRAJECTORY TO THE NCAA DIVISION I
FOOTBALL BOWL SUBDIVISION DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS POSITION:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Delaware State University in
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Henry Ray and Willene Hairston Moore, who have emphasized the importance of seeking education to better themselves personally and professionally. As part of my dedication, I cannot forget my mother's parents, Elbert and Zada Hairston, who instilled in their children the drive to pursue higher education and their belief to strive for excellence. Last, but not least, I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Vanessa Meeks Hairston, for providing me the support to endure this process which was truly a long journey, and to my two wonderful children, Patrick, Jr. and Faith.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study was designed to investigate the factors that influence ethnic minority males' career trajectory to the position of athletic director at a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS). Ten ethnic minority males that held the rank of an athletic director participated in the study. Semi-structured interviews were utilized to answer the two central research questions:

1. To what extent are there common factors among the career paths of current ethnic minority male athletic directors within the Division I FBS Level?
2. Why is there a limited number of ethnic minority males that have ascended to the position of athletic director within the Division I FBS Level?

The primary sources of data collection were face-to-face, in-depth interviews and a questionnaire. Three major themes emerged:

1. key career advancement factors;
2. racial stereotyping; and
3. denied access to career enhancing positions.

This research is important given the underrepresentation of ethnic minority males in the position of athletic director. The findings describe the barriers and identify obstacles for ethnic minority males. Understanding of the factors and barriers that impact career trajectories is very important to building diversity and facilitating the inclusion of ethnic minority males as viable candidates for the position. Analysis of responses to questionnaires identified career-enhancing preparation tactics. Among those tactics are:

1. Identify a recognizable champion;
2. Obtain experience in development and budget management;
3. Build relationships with individuals who can guide, correct, and affirm;

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Fostering coaching and administrative opportunities for ethnic minorities in sports at all levels has been an ongoing national topic of discussion. The lack of ethnic minorities in head coaching positions within the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) membership is a topic mostly addressed by the media (Lapchick, Hoff, & Kaiser, 2011). However, the NCAA has undertaken a broader investigation of the lack of ethnic minorities in decision-making and/or leadership positions in all aspects of its business operations. Issues of racism and access discrimination are very significant in our society. The racial inequities in leadership positions (e.g., upper management) can be seen in higher education, especially in the realm of intercollegiate athletics (NCAA, 2011).

Lewis (2007) indicated that a similar plight with African-American male administrators who have employment at mainstream institutions of higher education, excluding Historically Black Colleges and Universities, also are presented with barriers relative to career trajectory. His study states that African-American males within higher education are not supported and have been placed into positions that have a high failure rate. Harvey's (1999) study indicated that a large number of African-American male administrators are placed into jobs in the student services areas. These areas include student and/or minority affairs, academic and/or financial affairs areas. The jobs that provide upward advancement within higher education are positions that involve academic and financial management.

History of the Identified Problem

In 1987, the NCAA Administrative Committee acted on an agenda item of concern it received from the NCAA Committee on Review and Planning (CRP). The agenda item cited a

growing concern of limited diversity within NCAA membership, and it addressed the lack of opportunities for ethnic minorities within college athletics, especially African Americans in college athletics in the areas of coaching, administration, officiating and the NCAA committee structure and conferences (Lilly, 1987).

To further investigate the national concern of lack of diversity within the NCAA's membership, the CRP made a recommendation to the NCAA Administrative Committee to establish an ad hoc committee known as the Special NCAA Council Subcommittee. This subcommittee's charge was to examine why there was a lack of ethnic minorities in leadership positions within the NCAA membership, and to find ways to develop ethnic minority talent for future considerations for head coaching and administration positions (Lilly, 1987).

In 1991, through the subcommittee's work efforts and legislative process, the NCAA established a new standing committee called the Minority Opportunities Interest Committee (MOIC) by adopting official legislation (NCAA, 1990). MOIC would continue the NCAA Council Subcommittee's work and mission of creating opportunities for ethnic minorities. MOIC continued the work of the subcommittee by creating professional development programs that would identify and encourage minorities to advance in athletic administration and coaching positions (NCAA, 1990).

A study conducted by Cunningham and Sagas (2005) found that diverse athletic departments are better able to retain employees who are more productive, while maintaining more favorable employee attitudes than those departments with poor diversity management strategies.

In 2005, under the direction of former NCAA president Myles Brand, the NCAA National Office created the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. The purpose of this office was to assist the advancement of minorities and women in intercollegiate athletics by taking a leading

role to develop and implement strategies, policies and programs that promoted diversity and inclusion throughout the membership. Brand (2007) declared his concern about the NCAA membership diversity efforts:

I have said on many occasions since my tenure as NCAA president began in January 2003 that intercollegiate athletics has an unflattering record of hiring women and people of color for leadership positions, particularly athletics directors and head coaches of high-profile sports (p. 4).

During the first and second rounds of the 2005 Men's NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, the NCAA purchased a two-page ad in the New York Times stating the following, "The NCAA membership needs to be more representative of the student body, from coaches and athletic directors on down" (Suggs, 2005).

The NCAA National Office has developed leadership programs (e.g., NCAA Leadership Institute for Ethnic Minority Males and Females, the Fellows Program and other mentoring programs) to help develop skill sets for ethnic minorities to help increase applicant pools for jobs (B. Franklin, personal communication, April 16, 2011). Also, the office helps prepare ethnic minorities through diversity management training and other diversity initiatives.

Former NCAA President Myles Brand established the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to reinforce the association's diversity awareness campaign and place accountability on the membership. Brooks and Althouse (2000) believed the NCAA is taking proactive steps to identify and establish policies and guidelines to deal with the issue of under representation of minorities in leadership positions such as head coaching and senior-level administration positions.

Charlotte Westerhaus, former NCAA Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, expressed her ideology relative to the NCAA's diversity efforts in her statement (Brown, 2010):

“The NCAA must do everything it can to identify, foster and support the number of people of color and women mid-level athletics administrators and coaches in a manner that will promote them into senior leadership and head coaching roles within intercollegiate athletics” (p. 1).

However, the NCAA is still addressing the issue. A 2008-09 NCAA Race and Gender Demographics Report supported by the MOIC and the Committee on Women’s Athletics showed there had been little progress from the 1995-96 baseline report (Brown, 2010).

The report showed a slight growth in African-American administrators who have decision-making status. The data show that African Americans are most prevalent as academic counselors, administrative assistants and strength coaches. Racial minorities are over-represented in academic life skills, but underrepresented in other administrative staff and senior level positions (McDowell, Cunningham & Singer, 2009). African Americans are often funneled into positions such as compliance coordinators and academic advisors that can be dead-end jobs that do not usually favor upward mobility (Shoji, 2004).

The 2009-10 NCAA Race and Gender Demographics Report showed a 1.3% increase in Division I black administrators, excluding the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), who served as athletic director (NCAA, 2011). The percentage went from 10.1% to 13.2%. Today’s personnel data within the NCAA membership tell the story of the lack of opportunities for ethnic minorities at the athletic director position. For the 2010-11 academic year there were 335 NCAA member institutions that were classified in the Division I membership. According to the NCAA (2011), Division I had three subdivisions, and the subdivisions were the following:

1. Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) (120 members who used the postseason bowl system rather than a playoff to determine a national champion);

2. Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) (118 members who used a playoff system to determine a champion); and
3. Division I (97 members who did not sponsor football).

During the 2008-09 academic year there were 16 ethnic minority (i.e., 11 African-American, four Latino, and one Native American) athletic directors at the 120 FBS institutions. The remaining 104 (86.7 percent) FBS institutions had white athletic directors (Lapchick, Little, Lerner & Matthew, 2008). For the 2010-11 academic year there was a total of 14 ethnic minority (i.e., nine African-American, four Latino and one Native American) athletic directors at the 120 FBS institutions, and the athletic directors from the remaining 106 (88.3%) FBS institutions were white (Lapchick et al., 2011).

Only three ethnic minorities have the title of athletic director at predominately white institutions. According to Quarterman (1992), prior to 1972 there were no ethnic minority male athletic directors at predominantly white NCAA member institutions. In Division I institutions there were nine ethnic minority athletic directors out of 97 positions (Lapchick et al., 2011).

Leadership-Member Exchange Theory and the Critical Race Theory served as the theoretical frameworks used to frame, support, and undergird this qualitative research study. In addition to these theories, the researcher investigated the importance of a mentor/sponsor relationship in career development to help ethnic minority males reach the athletic director position. These two theories are further discussed in Chapter II.

Background of the Problem

There is a lack of ethnic minorities in intercollegiate athletic departments who hold senior positions, such as athletic director. There are perceived barriers for ethnic minority males that prevent them from reaching the athletic director positions. If there were no barriers to prevent minorities and women from obtaining athletic director positions, no action would be needed from

the NCAA. However, due to the national problem, the NCAA National Office created the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to help lead the Association in the development and implementation of strategies, policies and programs that promote diversity and inclusion throughout intercollegiate athletics departments. The office advocates for a future without barriers and an atmosphere of equity within its member institutions.

Racial minorities are over-represented in academic life skills but underrepresented in other administrative staff and senior level positions (McDowell, 2009; Brown, 2010). Not having the opportunity to advance through the glass ceiling causes a lot of frustration for the underrepresented groups such as minorities and women.

The struggles can be seen in women's plights of career mobility within intercollegiate positions. The 2008-09 NCAA Race and Gender Demographics Report indicated that female and minority hiring from the NCAA membership has been slow and only minimal gains in leadership positions have been made within a 15-year period (Brown, 2010). For the 2010-11 academic year there were only five women who held the athletic director position in the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision member institutions (Sander, 2011). Benton (1999) identified a common belief that gender and race were significant factors in the levels of success of four black female college athletic administrators who participated in her research. The 2008-09 NCAA Perceived Barriers report relative to women identified common barriers that deter women from pursuing careers in athletic administration. The barriers were the following:

1. A lack of initiative for involvement in athletics;
2. Stress;
3. Lack of advancement and opportunity;
4. Low pay;
5. Gender discrimination; and

6. Hiring perceptions.

A study of female athletic administrators indicated that hiring a female to oversee a department of athletic operations may be perceived as a risk; smaller schools at the Division II and III levels may be more willing to take the risk since they have less at stake (Fuchs, 2003). Limited investigations to determine the characteristics of ethnic minority males who are athletic directors at predominantly white colleges and universities have been conducted (Quarterman, 1992). Since then a few studies (Burney, 2010; Fuchs, 2003; Sweeny, 1996; Fitzgerald, Sagaria & Nelson, 1994) have tried to determine what variables help women and men obtain the athletic director positions. Other studies, such as Shoji (2004), tried to identify career patterns in ethnic minority athletic administrators.

Theoretical Conceptual Framework

Two conceptual and theoretical frameworks were used to frame, support and undergird this qualitative research study. The frameworks were the Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) and Critical Race Theory.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Graen's (1976) Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory is based upon a reciprocal relationship between leaders and the communication between leaders and subordinates. The LMX theory holds a unique position among the leadership theories because of its focus on the dyadic relationship between the leader and follower. LMX theory was originally referred to as Vertical Dyad Linkage theory (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). The primary focus of the LMX theory emphasizes the dyadic (i.e., one-on-one) relationships between leaders and individual subordinates. The theory creates an in-group and out-group. "When leaders and followers have good exchanges, they feel better, accomplish more and the organization prospers" (Northouse, 2001, n.p.). Leaders exchange personal and positional resources (inside

information, influence in decision-making, task assignment, job latitude, support, and attention) in return for member support (Babou, 2008). As a result of a high LMX relationship mutual trust, confidence, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, common bonds, open communication, independence, respect, rewards and recognition are increased (Babou, 2008). In direct contrast, members characterized as out-group experience limited reciprocal trust and few rewards from their leaders (Babou, 2008). According to LMX theory, in most leadership situations the leader does not treat all followers the same. Leaders and followers develop dyadic relationships and leaders treat individual followers differently, resulting in two groups of followers -- an in-group and an out-group. Members of the in-group receive more information, influence, confidence, and concern from their leaders than do out-group members. Additionally, they are more dependable, more highly involved, and more communicative than out-group members (Dansereau et al., 1975). The LMX theory of leadership focuses on the two-way relationship between supervisors and subordinates (Deluga, 1998). According to the LMX theory, in most leadership situations not every follower is treated the same by the leader. Researchers found that high-quality leader-member exchanges produced less employee turnover, more positive performance evaluations, higher frequency of promotions, greater organizational commitment, more desirable work assignments, better job attitudes, more attention and support from the leader, greater participation, and faster career progress over 25 years (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The LMX theory contributes to the existing field of study by examining the performance appraisal process encountered by ethnic minority males who hold the title of athletic director as it relates to their career development and advancement.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) began as a movement in the law as an activist dimension that tried to ascertain how a society organizes itself along racial lines and hierarchies, but transforms

itself for the better (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). CRT is a form of legal scholarship which evolved when the advances of the civil rights movement of the 1960s had idled and its progress was starting to regress. It was a response to help to prevent the stalling of the traditional civil rights movement and the litigation in the United States of America in the areas such as affirmative action. CRT has emancipator efforts that call for freedom and equality (Taylor, Gillborn and Ladson-Billings (2009). CRT has a long tradition of resistance to the unequal and unjust distribution of power and resources along political, economic, racial, and gender lines in America.

Consciously and unconsciously, race matters within the United States. Unconscious racism continues to permeate our culture and influences our decision-making. Racism is deeply ingrained in our culture.

Ethnic minorities that have had a bad encounter or experience with a white person immediately think that, due to their ethnicity, they were treated wrong. When this occurs, they display behavior that social scientists call "microaggression". Delgado defines microaggression as the stunning small encounter with racism, usually unnoticed by members of the majority race (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). Where does this assumption come from? Consciously and unconsciously, race matters within the United States. Unconscious racism continues to permeate our culture and influences our decision-making. Racism is deeply ingrained in our culture.

The CRT Movement is a collection of scholars and activists who want to research and transform the relationship among race, racism and power. Approaches utilized in CRT research are storytelling, counter-storytelling, and analysis of narrative. CRT writers believe racism still exists, and racism provides a barrier (e.g., holder of high-echelon jobs) for minorities. CRT studies' findings have indicated that job-seeking minorities are much more apt than similarly

qualified whites tend to be rejected often for vague or spurious reasons (Delgado, 2001). White individuals hold higher-echelon jobs (e.g., athletic directors and university presidents).

One of the major topics under investigation by CRT is whether white privilege exists and, if so, what are its components. Delgado and Stefancic, (1997) have defined White Privilege as a system of opportunities and benefits conferred upon people simply because they are White. White privilege is often times invisible in its norm (McIntosh, 1989). Bell (1980) stated that if blacks achieve racial equality in society it will only be achieved when it converges with the interest of whites. He also states this ideology is known as “interest convergence”.

Delgado (1995) claims that suppressed out-groups (e.g., minorities) whose marginality defines boundaries of the mainstream find minority group stories attractive because these stories create their own bonds, shared understanding, and meaning. The majority/out-group creates its own stories, which circulate within the group as a kind of counter-reality. However, the dominant group (whites) or the in-group creates its own stories to remind itself of its identity in relation to the out-group. CRT provides a means for ethnic minorities of color to communicate experiences and realities through narratives and storytelling and, consequently, a means to examine racial issues within the context of the workplace (Bryd, 2009).

Need for the Study

There is no question that a major concern in the arena of intercollegiate athletics is a lack of ethnic minority males who hold the title of athletic director. The demographics relative to the inequities within intercollegiate athletics administration are exposed in reliable reports such as the Race and Gender Demographics Report, the Gender Equity in College Coaching and Administration: Perceived Barriers Report (NCAA, 2009), and The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) Racial and Gender Report Card: College Sport (Lapchick et al., 2011). All of these reports expose the hiring inequities within intercollegiate athletics.

There is a need for change within the hiring practices of the NCAA membership, and the inequities need to be addressed. There has been a call for a historic breakthrough of the glass ceiling in terms of ethnic minorities involved in the highest levels of intercollegiate athletics. Studies conducted by Burney (2011) and Benton (1999) have identified barriers for women.

Keith A. Floyd, the current Executive Director of the Black Coaches Association (BCA), acknowledged that legal action might be needed in order to make progress in eradicating social injustice in the intercollegiate current hiring practices by filing a Title VII case against NCAA member institutions. The crux of the matter is to find solutions to help limit the bypass rationales used on ethnic minority male head coaches and athletic director candidates by institutions and search firms. andre' cummings' , who does not capitalize his name , wrote "A Troubling History but a Bright Future," an article that discussed the struggles of ethnic minorities within the U.S. to have equal access to the powerful decision-making positions in sports, including head coaches positions and front office opportunities (cummings et al., 2010). He also believes that there are times where only changes can be made through legal action to help change the hiring practices of institutions. Brown (2010) mentions in his report relative to the NCAA Race and Gender Demographics Report for 2008-09 that only minimal gains in the efforts to increase leadership opportunities for ethnic minorities and women have been realized. The report findings indicate that ethnic minorities primarily occupy positions such as academic advisors, administrative assistants, and strength and conditioning coaches. According to Burney (2010), it is very important for women who pursue the athletic director positions to take advantage of educational and professional development opportunities. It is also important for them to obtain a mentor within the business. This plight of ethnic minority males ascending to the athletic director position can be viewed through the same lens.

Significance of the Study

Racial minorities are over-represented in academic life skills positions but underrepresented in other administrative staff and senior level positions (McDowell, 2009; Brown, 2010). African Americans are often funneled into positions such as compliance coordinators and academic advisors positions that can be dead-end jobs and do not usually favor upward mobility (Shoji, 2004). This study adds to the current literature relative to career paths and trajectory and generates important baseline data about experiences and jobs antecedent to the position of athletic directors.

The NCAA's diversity programs and university sport management programs may use this research to help develop and prepare aspiring ethnic minority males who desire a career in intercollegiate athletes and want to become an athletic director.

Due to the lack of ethnic minority athletic directors, limited research has been conducted on this population. To determine if a pattern exists, it is necessary to investigate commonalties and career profiles to determine how these individuals became athletic directors.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to investigate the lack of ethnic minorities in athletic director position in NCAA Division I FBS. The study sought to identify factors that influence ethnic minority male career trajectory to the athletic director position. Also, this study identifies career-enhancing tactics that may be used to increase the number of ethnic minority males in the talent pool.

Research Questions

The two central research questions that guide this study are the following:

1. To what extent are there common factors among the career paths of current ethnic minority male athletic directors within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision

Level?

2. Why is there a limited number of ethnic minority males that have ascended to the level of athletic directors within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?

Relevance to Educational Leadership

The small number of minority males and females who hold positions of leadership in higher education institutions across the country is troubling. The lack of diversity among the leadership of higher education institutions is not reflective of the population of the United States, nor is it reflective of the population of higher education institutions. Increasing the number of minorities and women in higher education leadership is important to the ability of higher education institutions to continue to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations. In addition, failure to consider minority and female candidates for leadership positions in higher education institutions runs the risk of overlooking highly qualified individuals whose presence would be a great asset to the institution.

In order to make a difference with the hiring practices at higher education institutions, university presidents, boards of directors, and selection committees must be willing to make the changes necessary to enhance diversity since implementing change in diversity starts from the top of the leadership chain.

Therefore we ask “What is leadership?” Leadership has been defined in many ways, but Maxwell (1998) has defined true leadership as influence—nothing more, nothing less. Everything rises and falls on leadership. Leaders are perceived to be the causal agents who determine the success or failure of an organization (Soucie, 1994).

Leadership is a very important quality to have within an organization, especially when dealing with diversity and inclusion issues. Sometimes leaders must stand alone. James M. Burns (1978) defines leadership as leaders introducing followers to act for certain goals that

represent the values and the motivations (e.g., wants and needs, and the aspirations and expectations of both the leader and followers). According to Burns (1978), the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act on their own and followers' values and motivations. He also states a leader will be willing to make enemies and accept conflicts when hard decisions have to be made.

If a university has diversity and inclusion issues, the University President's Office and its internal and external constituents must take the lead in implementing a plan to address diversity issues. All organizations have leadership when actions need to take place. According to Bass (1990), leadership makes its presence felt throughout the organization and its activities. Therefore, the ideology of transformation and/or transactional leadership may be the type of leadership needed to assist diversity efforts to move forward.

Both Burns and Bass have defined transformational leadership. Burns (1978) defines it as a process through which one or more persons engage with others in such a way that the leader and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. Bass defined it in terms of how the leader can motivate his/her followers to do more than we think we can accomplish (1985). Bass explains that there are three methods in which transformational leadership can transform. They are the following:

1. By raising our level of awareness, our level of consciousness about the importance and value of designated outcomes, and ways of reaching them;
2. By getting us to transcend our own self-interest for the sake of the team, organization, or larger polity; and
3. By altering our need level on Maslow's hierarchy or expanding our portfolio of needs and wants (Bass, 1985).

Transactional leadership has been defined as one person taking the initiative in making

contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things. Transactional leadership is considered contingent reinforcement (Burns, 1978). The leader and follower agree on what the follower needs to do to be rewarded or to avoid punishment. If the follower does as agreed, the leader arranges to reward the follower, or the leader does not impose aversive reinforcement. Directly or indirectly, leaders can provide rewards for progress toward such goals or for reaching them. Or, they can impose penalties for failure, ranging from negative feedback to dismissal. Transactional leadership is contingent reinforcement (Bass, 1985). In transactional leadership the leader can be seen as the agent of reinforcement. Transactional Leadership is where leaders exchange valued outcomes for compliance (Soucie, 1994).

In conclusion, this study adds to the current leadership literature relative to career paths and trajectories of ethnic minority males. The common themes discovered can provide imperative information to university presidents, boards of governors, selection committees and search firms who are responsible to hiring athletic directors. These groups need to become aware of the issues and internal and external obstacles ethnic minority male candidates confront. In addition, individuals who aspire to be athletic directors at the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision level will be able to become knowledgeable of the career paths of other ethnic minority males and some of the barriers they faced as they pursued the athletic director's position.

The study's findings help provide important baseline data about experiences and job progression to the athletic director. This will help potential ethnic minority male candidates know some information about the hiring practices of the NCAA's member institution at the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision level. The NCAA's diversity programs, university undergraduate and graduate sport management programs, and other organizations which promote diversity may use this research to help develop and prepare aspiring ethnic minority males who

desire a career in intercollegiate athletes and want to become athletic directors or enhance their career trajectory. Whether transformational and transactional leadership is needed to make diversity awareness necessary, leadership changes need to take place.

Research Design

This researcher used qualitative research to determine the factors that impacted career trajectories for ethnic minority male athletic directors. Qualitative studies develop from three kinds of data collections:

1. In-depth, open-ended interviews;
2. Direct observations; and
3. Written documents (Patton, 2002).

Conger (1998) asserts that the advantages of doing qualitative research on leadership include:

1. Flexibility to follow unexpected ideas during research and to explore processes effectively;
2. Sensitivity to contextual factors;
3. Ability to study symbolic dimensions and social meaning; and
4. Increased opportunities to develop empirically supported new ideas and theories; for in-depth and longitudinal explorations of leadership phenomena; and for more relevance and interest for practitioners.

Qualitative research demands that the researcher immerse himself in the research, offering both greater opportunity to observe the same subjects repeatedly over a period of time and greater “flexibility to discern and explore the influence of newly emerging factors caused by individual and environmental changes” (Conger, 1998, p. 110).

The phenomenology method was utilized by conducting interviews. Interviews yielded

direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. The phenomenology approach is derived from the disciplinary roots of philosophy, and phenomenology's central question and analysis tries to determine meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experiences of this phenomenon for this person or group of people (Patton, 2002). Phenomenology asks for the very nature of a phenomenon, for that which makes some "thing" what it is—and without which it could not be what it is (Van Manen, 1990, p. 10).

This study sought to understand factors influencing the career trajectory of ethnic minority male intercollegiate athletic directors in NCAA Division I FBS affiliated institutions, and to discover how those factors may function as a career path road map for future ethnic minority male administrators. In order to accomplish this, the study examined the experiences of ethnic minority male athletic directors, drawing insight and direction from the events influencing their ascent to leadership in intercollegiate athletics.

Study Participants

This study was concerned with identifying the factors that impact career trajectories for ethnic minority males to the position of athletic director. The accessible population consisted of ethnic minority male athletic directors employed at NCAA Division I FBS institutions that were employed during the 2008-11 academic years. Each ethnic minority male held the title of athletic director for the 2008-11 academic school year. Patton (2002) stated, "There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be used, fuel, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources." (p. 244).

The research participants were selected by using a sample technique (Creswell, 2007).

Between five and 25 individuals who all have experienced the phenomenon of becoming an athletic director were selected to participate in the study. Therefore, the identified sample pool consisting of 15 ethnic minority male athletic directors was purposely selected from the population of NCAA member institutions from the Division I FBS institutions listed from the National Association of Collegiate Director of Athletics' annual rosters of ethnic minority directors of athletics. The research participants must be available and willing to participate in the qualitative research study. Patton (2002) states that quality inquiry is rife with ambiguities; however, a small sample size provides a more open range of experiences to seek depth.

Data Collection Procedure

In the data collection process, an important step toward collecting data for the qualitative researcher is to find participants to study and to gain access to and establish rapport with participants so they will provide good data (Creswell 2007). To gather such data, one must undertake in-depth interviews with people who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest; that is, they have "lived experiences" as opposed to relating secondhand experience. According to Creswell (2009), "the actual methods of data collection, traditionally based on open-ended observations, interviews and documents, now include a vast array of materials, such as sounds, emails, scrapbooks, and other emerging forms" (p.181). Patton (2002) asserts that a qualitative research design has to be open and flexible to allow exploration of data.

This researcher sent recruitment letters to the potential research participants and then followed up with telephone calls to confirm participation and arranged interview times for those who accepted the invitation to participate. This researcher included in the recruitment letter all of the federally required Institutional Review Board (IRB) information for human subjects. Additionally, participants were asked for their consent to being audio taped and transcribed.

The primary data collection was conducted face-to-face. Face-to-face interviews have a

distinct advantage of enabling the researcher to establish rapport with participants and therefore gain their cooperation. Interviews also yield the highest response rates in survey research, and allow the researcher to clarify ambiguous answers and, when appropriate, seek follow-up information (Creswell, 2007). In this regard, in-depth interviews with purposefully selected ethnic minority male administrators, the researcher's observations (reflective data) and field notes served as an additional means of data collection for this study. All interviews were audio taped and field notes were recorded. After each interview, the audiotapes were reviewed and transcribed verbatim. All transcripts were reviewed for accuracy. During the interview, this researcher restated or summarized information and then questioned the participant to determine accuracy and authenticity, and used follow-up email and correspondence with participants to clarify any missing information (Colaizzi, 1978; Johnson, 1999).

Data Interpretation

The data were interpreted through an analysis of the "field text" and data collected from the life story interview and were reorganized into a conceptual framework, or "restorying" (Creswell, 2007). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), they suggest restorying will move simultaneously in four directions. The four directions are the following: inward (inside, self), outward (toward community), backward (in time), and forward (in time). To obtain a pattern of recognition, Patton recommends content analysis. Content analysis sometimes refers to searching text (e.g., interview transcripts) for recurring words or themes. Content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meaning (Patton, 2002).

Assumptions

1. The National Directory of College Athletics data showing the percentage and actual number of ethnic minority male intercollegiate athletic directors were accurate.

2. All participants were expected to answer all questions truthfully.

Limitations

The limitations of the study were as follows:

1. The study was limited by the quality of the depth and breadth of the responses given by participants to the research questions based on the willingness of the participants to disclose their answers.
2. The study was limited by the sample, which was limited to the subjects who fit the criteria and were willing to participate in the study.
3. The study was limited by sample size, making it difficult to generalize to all ethnic minority male athletic directors.
4. The data analysis and interpretation were subject to each of the participant's honesty, memory, and willingness to share information.

A determination of interest in the topic on the part of the non-respondents cannot be made.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to limitations on the research design that the researcher has deliberately imposed. This study was delimited to ethnic minority male athletic directors at Division I FBS institutions. Those who participated in the study were employed as athletic director during the 2008-11 academic school year. The delimitations of the proposed study included:

1. Purposive sampling will impose limitations on the ability of the researcher to generalize.
2. In order to manage data collected in the proposed study, data were collected via self-report measures.
3. This study was limited to ethnic minority male athletic directors at NCAA Division I

Football Bowl Subdivision public and private institutions.

4. This study was limited by budget and time factors involved with the collection of interviews of subjects chosen for the study.
5. This study was limited as interview themes will depend upon responses of the study subjects.
6. The ethnic minority male administrators were chosen by title (athletic director).

Anonymity

The researcher ensured that the protection of the respondents' identities was of utmost importance. A research study "guarantees anonymity when neither the researchers nor the readers of the findings can identify a given response with a given respondent" (Babbie, 2005, p. 54). Hence, the participants are referred to as ethnic minority males within the NCAA membership and the respondents have been coded and grouped.

Informed Consent

The ethical norms and values of voluntary participation and not harming respondents are formalized in the concept of informed consent. Informed consent is "a norm in which subjects base their voluntary participation in research projects on a full understanding of the possible risks involved" (Babbie, 2005, p. 64). The researcher completed the Informed Consent Form from Delaware State University. This form was given to the respondents in the research to ensure that they were in agreement to participate in the study voluntarily and they were fully aware of the potential risks. The researcher included information about the potential risks in the analysis and reporting of the data. This ensured that respondents would not have their self-image threatened if they were sophisticated enough to locate themselves in the tables and indexes of the study (Babbie, 2005).

Institutional Review Board

The researcher ensured that the Institutional Review Board of Delaware State University approved the research project prior to the initiation of the study. The primary purpose of the IRB is to assure the protection of the welfare of human subjects involved in research studies. The researcher completed the IRB application from Delaware State University's Office of Sponsored Programs. The application included seven items (subject selection, procedures, risks/benefits, confidentiality, informed consent, conflict of interest, and HIPAA compliance). The completed application was submitted to the IRB Chair in the Office of Sponsored Programs at Delaware State University. No data were collected prior to the receipt of the IRB approval for this project.

Definition of Terms

Access Discrimination: Individual or Class of People not given a very good opportunity to enter a specific profession.

Athletic Director: Person responsible for the overall operation of a college athletics department. This individual is considered to be the Chief Executive Officer of the department.

Class: Group of individuals who share a similar socio-economic status.

Color blindness: Belief that one should treat all persons equally, without regard to their race.

Critical Race Theory: Radical legal movement that seeks to transform the relationship among race, racism and power.

Ethnic minority: Frequently used interchangeably with "people of color." However, many African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Islanders and Native Americans resist the term because they believe it implies inferiority. Indeed, demographically, "people of color" represent the minority in the United States, but the majority on a global scale.

Hegemony: Domination of the ruling class and unconscious acceptance of that state of affairs by the subordinate groups.

Interest convergence: Thesis pioneered by Derrick Bell that the majority group tolerates advances for racial justice only when it suits its interests to do so.

NCAA Division I Membership: Consists of 98 member institutions. These institutions do not sponsor the sport of football.

NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS): Consists of 120 member institutions. The FBS member institutions use the postseason bowl system rather than a playoff to determine a national champion in football. FBS members must comply with higher standards for sports sponsorship (the overall program must offer 16 teams rather than the 14 required of other Division I members), football scheduling and overall financial aid. In addition, FBS members must meet minimum attendance standards in football.

NCAA Football Championship Subdivision (FCS): Consists of 118 member institutions. FCS member institutions determine their football champion through an NCAA playoff system.

Summary

The primary focus of this chapter was to introduce the topic of the disproportionately small number of ethnic minority male athletic directors employed at NCAA Division I FBS member institutions. Chapter 1 provided an overview of the background of the problem, the study's purpose, its significance, and the need for the study. It also briefly touched on the research design and the theoretical frameworks that guide the study. The subsequent chapter reviews current and relevant literature as it relates to the theoretical frameworks of the Leader-Member Exchange Theory and the Critical Race Theory. In addition, the review of the literature will examine issues surrounding ethnic minority male career advancement, mentoring, the glass ceiling effect, and factors that affect career trajectory for women and ethnic minority males.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand, given the current small number of ethnic minority male athletic directors in NCAA Division I FBS affiliated institutions, how ethnic minority males progress to the position of athletic director. This chapter explores in detail the theoretical concepts of Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) and Critical Race Theory (CRT). In addition, this chapter examines research conducted on issues with female athletic directors, and on women's professional advancement and development.

Theoretical Framework

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

The traditional Leadership-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) is also known as the Vertical Dyad Linkage Theory (Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1975). LMX is a theoretical perspective of power and influence. George Graen and his colleagues introduced the theory, which has been revised and refined over the years. Graen's LMX theory is based upon a reciprocal relationship between leaders and subordinates, and it is an ongoing social exchange that is established between the leader and the subordinates (1976). A positive relationship often depends on similarities between the leader and subordinate. Negative relationships are affected by unsuccessful relationship building based on differences; the same might be said of leaders who do not fit the leadership norm of predominately white originations. The primary focus of the LMX Theory emphasizes the dyadic (i.e., one-on-one) relationships between leaders and individual subordinates. The theory creates an in-group and out-group.

According to LMX Theory, in most leadership situations not every follower is treated the same by the leader. Leaders and followers develop dyadic relationships and leaders treat

individual followers differently, resulting in two groups of followers—an in-group and an out-group (Dansereau et al., 1975). Members of the in-group receive more information, influence, confidence, and concern from their leaders than do out-group members. Additionally, they are more dependable, more highly involved, and more communicative than out-group members. LMX Theory contends that supervisors differentiate between subordinates such that one subset of employees (the *in-group*) is given additional rewards, responsibilities, and trust in exchange for their loyalty and performance, while another subset of employees (the *out-group*) is treated in accordance with a more formal understanding of supervisor-subordinate relations (Minor, 2005). Liden and Graen (1980) asserted that in-group members “make contributions that go beyond their formal job duties and take on responsibility for the completion of tasks that are most critical to the success of the unit ... [and out-group members] ... perform the more routine, mundane tasks of the unit and experience a more formal exchange with the supervisor” (p. 452). Furthermore, as a reward, in-group members “received more attention, support, and sensitivity from their supervisors” (p. 452).

Graen and Cashman (1975) stated that “In-group members (high LMX relationships) received greater latitude in developing their roles, more inside information, greater influence in decision making, stronger support for their actions, and more consideration for their feelings than did out group members (p. 146). Additional benefits are increased attention, support, and sensitivity received from supervisors by in-group members (Liden & Graen, 1980). Graen’s (1976) LXM theory is a traditional leadership theory that emerged during an era when the typical image of who leads an organization was developed with the image of white men at the helm, and the LMX Theory was fixed upon the notion of leadership as race neutral (Byrd, 2009). Race neutral is the failure to recognize that organizations are not neutral settings where all leaders are the same and are subjected to the same type of historical and cultural experience (Byrd, 2009).

Due to society's perceptions and images of ethnic minority leader leadership, an ethnic minority male that takes a position of leadership will be challenged to deconstruct the stereotypical image and re-define himself within a socially-fixed image of one who leads an organization of white men and women (Parker, 2005).

Socio-culture refers to the theoretical perspective that considers race, gender, and social class in analyzing power dynamics within bureaucratic and other systems where power can be used to oppress (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Traditional theories of leadership such as LMX are based upon on an idealized notion of white middle class men as leaders, which sends messages of who is best suited to lead (Parker, 2005). To understand the sociological aspect of ethnic minority males in predominantly white institutions, social theoretical frameworks are needed to bridge the understanding. The LMX theory is a useful framework to investigate complexities surrounding the experiences of ethnic minorities in predominantly white organizations (Byrd, 2009).

LMX Theory adds to the existing research literature by examining the performance appraisal process encountered by ethnic minority males who hold the title of athletic director as it relates to career development and advancement. In LMX theory, evidence of the similarity of in-group and mentoring relationships can be seen in two different aspects of the relationships: the benefits received by in-group members/protégés, and the pattern of social influence used with in-group members/protégés. The benefits received by in-group members and mentored individuals are very similar. Graen and Cashman (1975) stated, "In-group members [high-LMX relationships] received greater latitude in developing their roles, more inside information, greater influence in decision making, stronger support for their actions, and more consideration for their feelings than did out-group members" (p. 146). Additional benefits are increased attention, support and sensitivity received from supervisors by in-group members (Liden & Graen, 1980).

A positive LMX relationship between a leader and subordinate has a great potential to produce a successful mentoring relationship. A healthy mentor relationship can be very helpful to the career advancement of ethnic minorities. Mentoring is a very important factor in career advancement. Traditionally, mentoring has been described as the activities conducted by a person (the mentor) for another person (the mentee) in order to help that other person to do a job more effectively and/or progress in his or her career. Researchers have conceptualized mentoring as the developmental assistance provided by a more senior individual within a protégé's organization—that is, a single dyadic relationship. Higgins and Kram (2001) stated mentoring behaviors, such as sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, and protection are more directly related to enhancement of the task-related aspects of work that facilitate objective career success.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a socio-culture theory rooted in legal scholarship and based on the notion of social construction and reality of race. CRT started in the late 1960s and mid 1970s, and was posited by Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman and Richard Delgado. These pioneers believed that racism should not be viewed as acts of individual prejudice that can simply be removed (Parker & Lynn, 2002). They believed racism is an endemic part of American life, deeply ingrained through historical consciousness and ideological choices about race, which in turn have directly shaped the United States legal system and the ways people think about the law, racial categories, and privilege (Harris, 1993). The need for people of color to begin to move discussions of race and racism from the realm of the experiential to the realm of the ideological was the purpose of CRT (Ladson-Billings, 2000).

When Critical Race writers began to critique Critical Legal Studies (CLS), which was a movement within the law of mostly white Marxist and postmodernist legal scholars, they

attempted to uncover the ideological underpinnings of American jurisprudence. The CRT writers believed that the obsession with deconstructing the nature, role, form, and the function of ideology in American society left no room for a discussion about unalienable human rights, which has been a concern for African Americans. The CRT writers of color argued that what was left out of the CLS writings was an honest discussion of race and the racial oppression (Crenshaw, 1988).

As a theoretical framework, CRT can be used to uncover the inequities existing in organizations and promoting social change within organizational contexts. The authors of this theory were distressed over the slow movement of racial reform in the United States when some of the 1960s civil rights movements had stalled and were headed backwards. CRT addresses the issues of racial inequality directly, and does not overlook the role that race and racism plays in the construction of the legal foundation of our society (Harris, 1993). CRT provides a means for ethnic minorities of color to communicate experiences and realities through narratives and storytelling and, consequently, examining racial issues within the context of the workplace (Bryd, 2009). The basic points of the theory are the following:

1. Racism is normal, not aberrant, in American society;
2. Culture constructs its own social reality in ways that promote its own self-interest; and
3. Interest convergence can be described when white elites will tolerate or encourage racial advances for blacks only when such advances also promote white self-interest; (Delgado, 1995).

CRT theory has six unifying themes that delineate the movement:

1. Recognizes that racism is endemic to American life;
2. Expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness and meritocracy;

3. Challenges a historicism and insists on contextual/historical analysis of the law. CRT theorist adopts a stance, which presumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantages and disadvantages;
4. Insists on recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing the law and society;
5. Is interdisciplinary and eclectic; and
6. Works towards the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression. (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado & Crenshaw, 1993, p.6).

The significance of theories for explaining and understanding the leadership experiences of ethnic minority males is necessary for providing and improving leadership opportunities for ethnic minority males as emerging leaders in intercollegiate athletic departments. A nontraditional approach of organizational leadership, CRT provides a framework to broaden the traditional theories and inform our understanding of ethnic minority male leadership in predominantly white colleges and universities. CRT also provides a framework for bringing social issues into discourse and countering the traditionally held theories of leadership (Byrd, 2009).

Approaches used in CRT are known as storytelling, counter-storytelling, and analysis of narrative. Delgado (1995) claims that suppressed out-groups (e.g., minorities) whose marginality defines boundaries of the mainstream find minority group stories attractive because these stories create their own bonds, shared understanding, and meaning. The majority/out-group creates its own stories, which circulate within the group as a kind of counter-reality. However, the dominant group (whites) or the in-group creates its own stories to remind itself of its identity in relation to the out-group. CRT provides a means for ethnic minorities of color to

communicate experiences and realities through narratives and storytelling and, consequently, a means to examine racial issues within the context of the workplace (Bryd, 2009).

The researcher used two CRT concepts to help analyze the problem of the lack of ethnic minority males in the position of Athletic Director at NCAA Division I FBS, the concepts of color blindness and interest convergence. Delgado and Stefancic (2012, p.158) define color blindness as the belief that one should treat all persons equally, without regard to their race. Interest convergence, a thesis postulated by Derrick Bell, purports that the majority group tolerates advances for racial justice only when it suits the interests of the majority (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012, p. 7) one of the tenets of the CRT is that racism is ordinary, not aberrational – “normal science,” the usual way society does business, the common, every day experience of most people of color in this country. White privilege is often times invisible in its norm (McIntosh, 1989). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) have defined White Privilege as a system of opportunities and benefits conferred upon people simply because they are White. The CRT writers acknowledged that educational institutions operate in contradictory ways because of their potential to oppress and marginalize (interest convergence) coexisting with their potential to emancipate and empower (color blindness). Using CRT in education exposes the multiple layers of oppression and discrimination that are met with different forms of resistance (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

It has taken social and legal pressures to force those in power positions to act more affirmatively when it comes to hiring practices that would include African Americans (Coakley, 2001). Shropshire (1996) stated that ethnic minorities are underrepresented in coaching and administrative positions and it is very hard to change society and the current social structure that support their positions of power. Madsuda (1991) stated that the CRT as a social justice theory

offers a libratory or transformative response to racial, gender and class oppression. Solorzano and Yosso (2002) acknowledged that social justice research agendas must lead towards the elimination of racism, sexism, and poverty, and empowering subordinated minority groups.

Issues with Ethnic Minority Male Career Advancement

There are major barriers for ethnic minorities to conquer prior to joining the club of athletic directors. This type of ideology is known as hegemony. Hegemony and racism within higher education are barriers for career advancement for ethnic minorities. Today's concept of hegemony originated from the writing of Antonio Gramsci (1971). Hegemony is a social theory in which certain social groups within a society have authority through imposition, manipulation, and consent over other groups (Morton, 2007). Morton states that hegemony is considered a form of dominance and has a consensual order. It is an opinion-molding activity rather than brute force or dominance. Consideration has to be turned to how a hegemonic social or world order that is based on values and understanding permeates the nature of that order.

According to Michelle (2003), the use of a hegemonic view helps to rework and transform some of the theories and paradigms used to investigate race and racism. It forces researchers to rethink the ways that we perceive the current racist practices as operating in an exclusive, coercive, dominating, and conspiratorial manner to maintain its position of power for a social class or distinct group. Hegemony is in the political, economic, social and cultural arenas of society as a dynamic process of negotiation between the dominant and subordinate classes (Michelle, 2003). She believes that hegemonies maintain their positions through hegemonic strategies in the guise of ideology, negotiation, and education.

According to Scales (2010), results of the study in relation to the research questions determined that to acquire and retain senior-level leadership positions, African-American women had to conform to the socially constructed meaning of senior-level leaders and leadership.

Studies (McDowell, Cunningham, & Singer, 2009; Shoji, 2004) have shown that minorities are placed into compliance and academic advisor positions. These positions seem to be helpful to the survival of programs and services for minority students, but they lack real decision-making power and influence over significant changes within the department. Ethnic minorities have accepted designated positions that were in their best interests as a way to start and perpetuate their careers in intercollegiate athletics administrations, but a lot of ethnic minorities get pigeonholed in the so-called designated positions, which do not allow minorities to use those positions as stepping-stones.

The 2009-10 NCAA Race and Gender Demographic Member Institutions' Personnel Report collected statistical demographic data relative to the NCAA's membership administrative staff composition. The report identified the ethnicity and gender of athletic administrators from all three divisions (i.e., Division I, II, III). The data from the report were divided into three categories. The categories were athletics administrators, head coaches and assistant coaches. All three groups were organized by overall figures, percentages and then a divisional breakdown. Data from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were excluded. The report indicated that in 2009-10, the percentage of racial and ethnic minority administrators was 15.3 percent, an increase from 10.8 percent in the base year. The overall number of racial and ethnic minority administrators has increased from 1,530 in 1995-96 to 5,474 in 2009-10. Within the position of Director of Athletics the number of racial and ethnic minorities has increased from 82 to 125 whereas the increase went from 60 to 251 for Associate Directors of Athletics and went from 87 to 272 for Assistant Directors of Athletics.

Shoji's (2004) study's purpose was to determine patterns in the career paths of the ethnic minority administrators who held a senior-level athletic administrators position at the NCAA Division I level. His study excluded Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)

senior-level athletic administrators. The senior-level administrators were individuals who held the title of Director of Athletics, Associate Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director, and Senior Woman Administrator. The study had two research questions. The first question focused upon how the participants reached their current position within athletic administration, while the second one identified the minority senior-level administrators from NCAA Division I member institutions. The participants completed surveys. A couple of significant findings were discovered. One finding was that African-Americans are often funneled into positions such as compliance and academics. The other findings concluded that these positions are dead-ended and do not usually favor upward mobility. Another finding was that there seemed to be a glass ceiling effect in place that prevents minorities from being promoted beyond the Assistant and Associate Athletic Director levels.

He recommended that further research examine the barriers to entry into athletic administration faced by ethnic minority administrators by having the participants express what they think the barriers are and what how to avoid the barriers.

Spennard's (2011) study examined the career paths of current Division I athletic directors. He used an electronic questionnaire that was sent to 327 NCAA Division I Athletic Directors. Ninety-nine participants completed a closed and open ended questionnaire. One of the study's objectives was to examine the career paths of current Division I athletic directors. The research examined the barriers to females and minority coaches to provide a potential framework which leads to the lack of gender and minority representation among Division I athletic directors. This study indicated a direct parallel were determined and previous theories such as Kanter's theory of homosocial reproduction (1977) and the ensuing byproduct of the 'old boys network' were found in his study.

Institutional racism within mainstream higher education institutions limits career advancement opportunities for black male administrators. Lewis indicated that the impact of institutional racism was evidenced in the following areas:

1. Not being able to participate in search and screening committees;
2. Lack of trust and not accepting of ideas from ethnic minorities;
3. Lack of budget control;
4. Information not being shared in a timely fashion; and
5. Alienation through non-involvement (2007).

There are a number of barriers that have been identified as impediments for ethnic minority males. Negative stereotypes regarding ethnic minority males are the most widely accepted explanations for their limited advancement in leadership roles (Brooks and Althous, 2007). According to Lombardo (1978) there are two different stereotypes regarding African-American males, they are the “brute” and “Sambo” stereotypes. These labels were made by white society to protect their superior position in society and to disparage African-American males in order to maintain them in non-consequential positions. Brute has been identified as an African-American male that is overreactive, primitive, violent, temperamental, uncontrollable, and sexually powerful. Sambo is identified as benign, childish, fun-loving, good-humored, immature, inferior, exuberant, lazy, comical, impulsive, uninhibited, and lovable (Lombardo, 1978).

The belief that intellectualism does not exist among African Americans has kept management positions in Division I college sports mostly white (Coakley, 1994, Leonard & Smith, 1997).

Mentoring

Mentoring is a very important factor in career advancement. Traditionally, mentoring has been described as the activities conducted by a person (the mentor) for another person (the mentee) in order to help that other person do a job more effectively and/or progress in his or her career. Researchers have identified mentoring as developmental assistance that is provided by a more senior individual within a protégé's organization—that is, a single dyadic relationship (Higgins et al., 2001). Kram (1985) indicates that mentoring and peer relationships provide both a range of career-enhancing and psychosocial functions. According to Higgins et al. (2001), mentoring behaviors, such as sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, and protection, are more directly related to enhancement of the task-related aspects of work that facilitate objective career success. Previous research relative to mentoring practices determined that objective career outcomes, compensation and number of career promotions were higher among those who are mentored than those who are not mentored. Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, and Lima (2004) indicated that mentored individuals were more satisfied with their careers, more likely to believe that they would advance in their careers, and more likely to be committed to their careers than non-mentored counterparts. In addition, mentored individuals were more satisfied with their jobs than non-mentored individuals.

As it relates to mentoring minorities vs. non-minorities, the approach is different. Thomas (2001) found that minorities took a different advancement path than non-minorities. Non-minorities usually took a fast track. His research concluded that minorities who advanced further all shared one characteristic, a strong network of mentors and corporate sponsors who nurtured their professional development. He also stated that cross-race mentoring and cross-gender relationships were hard to establish, develop and mature, but the mentoring of ethnic minorities must be across racial divides.

Associating with an individual with influence and authority within the system has proven to be beneficial. Mentor relationships provide an excellent learning experience as well as helping an individual achieve his/her goals, and having a mentor can be of value for career progress. Lewis (2007) found in his study that networking played a critical role for African-American male administrators in the way problems and successes were shared to utilize as positive tools for career advancement in higher education institutions. Networking has empowered African-American male administrators who share some of the same knowledge to produce an alternative view of the status quo.

Thomas' (2001) conducted a three year in-depth research case study on the career progression of 20 ethnic minorities employed at three major corporations located in the United States. These companies were multi-billion dollar organizations that had a history of commitment to diversity. In addition to studying 20 ethnic minorities, he conducted in-depth case study research on 13 white executives, as well as 21 nonexecutives in order to have a comparison. He claimed that corporate American has failed to diversify executive teams and has not been able to help talented ethnic minorities break through the glass ceiling.

His research findings concluded that there are distinct career trajectory advancement patterns for white and minority executive professionals. The identified white executive professionals tend to enter a fast track early in their careers. However, high potential ethnic minorities advance in a much slower rate once they reach middle management positions. He stated that ethnic minorities have a tendency to plateau in middle management.

Ethnic minorities who advance the furthest shared one common characteristic. The characteristic they shared was having a strong network of mentors and corporate sponsors who nurture their professional development. He identified three career progression stages. In Stage One, ethnic minorities gained very important fundamentals toward advancement. Stage One was

where an individual would obtain confidence, competence, and credibility. In his study, these are known as the three Cs. Stage Two is where the individual continues to develop the three Cs while increasing their managerial skills and judgment. While in Stage Two, each minority executive had at least one influential executive to serve as a mentor and had other influential executives as sponsors. Stage Three required the ethnic minorities to move from middle management to executive level, which requires broader based experiences. Stage Three requires individuals to think and act more strategically and politically and develop at least two more relationships with others, both white and other ethnic minorities of the same race as the minority executive. Having a diversified network is important to career advancement.

Thomas also stated that mentors of ethnic minorities (i.e., cross race) must understand the challenges race can have on their protégés' career development and advancement. Some of the challenges are negative stereotypes, identification and role modeling, skepticism about intimacy, public scrutiny, and peer resentment.

Mentoring can be highly effective for ethnic minority males. However, mentors of ethnic minorities must understand how minorities advance their careers. Thomas (2001) recommended that a mentor of professional ethnic minorities must become aware of the challenges race can present to his/her protégé's career development and advancement. Also, white executives progressed more rapidly by entering a fast track early in their careers. Scales (2010) indicated that black female participants in her study believed that they needed to work harder and out-perform their counterparts as a way of acquiring senior-level positions. In addition, her participants argued a limited number of African-American women senior-level leaders were in a position to serve as mentors to aspiring African-American women (Scales, 2010).

Tabron's (2004) study found that networking and professional contacts enhanced the professional development for African-American coaches and administrators. Thomas (2001) and

Brooks and Althous (2007) concluded that a career-upward trajectory was more achievable when network resources and mentors were available, and it was necessary for African-American administrators to have a least one mentor and network resources to gain an upward career trajectory.

Institutional Racism

The whites' fear of African Americans invading the white status quo, and attitudes about African-American competence, are barriers for African Americans to have success in sport administration (Sailes, 1998). Coakley (1994) stated that certain management or leadership positions within a corporate or institutional structure have historically not been available to African Americans. The stereotypical profile for an executive level position with an organization is perceived to possess intellectualism and mental control, and African Americans have not been perceived to satisfy the stereotypical profile for an executive level or head coaching position (Brooks & Althouse, 2007). Ethnic minority males who aspire to become athletic directors in athletic departments in predominantly white institutions have to navigate barriers and overcome them. Whites are reluctant to hire African Americans into leadership management positions in major college sports because they do not have confidence in the intellectual and managerial capabilities of African Americans; these are myths for African Americans who suffer from scientifically unacceptable assumptions that are not validated by research (Brooks & Althous, 2007).

The Psychological Theory (Sailes, 1998) suggested that African Americans are incapable of fulfilling leadership positions such as quarterback, pitcher or point guard; the theory claims that African-Americans do poorly under pressure and are not good thinkers. The absence of minorities in leadership and teaching roles reflects in part the institutional racism that is endemic in Western societies, such as the United States (Coakley, 2001).

Tabron (2004) investigated perceived institutional and social factors that were barriers for NCAA Division I African-American male coaches. His study identified certain patterns that were employment barriers for African-American male coaches and senior (e.g., assistant, associate) athletic directors. In Tabron's study, athletic administrators agreed that there was a lack of black administrators and limited employment opportunities for African Americans. At the same time, the administrators who participated in the study believed that equal opportunity was available regardless of color. There are, however, major barriers for ethnic minorities to conquer prior to joining the club of athletic directors. This type of ideology is known as hegemony. Hegemony is a social theory in which the condition of certain social groups within a society have authority, through imposition, manipulation, and consent over other groups (Morton, 2007). Minorities also must receive the necessary support and opportunities for career-enhancing leadership and development from internal and external sponsors and their current place of employment.

Lewis (2007) examined institutional racism to gain a better understanding of how it impacted career advancement. His qualitative research participants were five African American male administrators from different mainstream institutions of higher education. Each of the participants had earned masters' degrees. Data were collected via the participants participating in interview and the researcher taking field notes. According to Lewis, the individuals who participated in his study identified three barriers (i.e., limited opportunities, institutional racism, and invisibility) that prohibit career advancement for black male administrators at higher education institutions.

Institutional racism refers to the organizational informal barriers that prevent minority groups from obtaining higher-level positions within the organization (Bielby, 1987; Jeanquart-Barone and Sekaran 1996). Jeanquart-Barone and Sekaran` developed a model to test the

precursors (i.e., supervisory support, procedural justice, indoctrination) of institutional racism in their study. They stated that when an organization that has talented and capable minorities, the minorities may depart the organization when they see no opportunity to advance. Lewis (2007) determined that institutional racism is very evident in institutions of higher education, because they deny ethnic minorities the chance to participate in university search and screening committees, they withhold important information, are not open to ideas received from minorities, and exhibit a lack of trust.

In conclusion, it is essential to address the issues of oppression like institutional racism that affect individuals and institutions of higher education, and institutional racism needs to be eradicated and the disparities need to be reduced. The lack of diversity in senior leadership positions within the NCAA membership has been addressed by the NCAA National Office, but the NCAA's membership still struggles with the inequities of system policies, hiring practices, and procedures. Problems of disparity of representation in organizations hurt ethnic minority groups. University systemic problems are deeply rooted and are hard to change.

Glass Ceiling Effect

The invisible barrier to career trajectory is known as the glass ceiling. The glass ceiling effect is comprised of organizational, attitudinal, and social barriers that effectively keep women and minorities from advancing up the career ladder (Morrison, White, Velsor & The Center for Creative Leadership, 1987). Ethnic minorities may never receive job assignments with higher duties than what they were given at the beginning of their employment. In Thomas' (2001) study on the career progression of ethnic minorities in United States corporations, it was noted that most companies retaining talented high-potential professionals of color found a plateau in middle-management positions. Jones (1986) reported the more visible the job assignment, the fewer the opportunities for African Americans. One of the reasons for this occurrence is due to

low expectations by supervisors (Brooks & Althouse, 2007). Cose (1993) conducted a survey on African American corporate professionals and identified ten major employment barriers. They were the following:

1. Inability to fit in;
2. Lack of Respect;
3. Low Expectations;
4. Shattered hopes;
5. Pigeonholing;
6. Good old boy network;
7. The glass ceiling effect;
8. Prejudice;
9. Experience; and
10. Alumni hopes.

In 1991, the Civil Rights Act of 1991 created the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission.

The Commission's directive was the following:

1. Examine the preparedness of women and minorities to advance to management and decision-making positions in business;
2. Examine the opportunities for women and minorities to advance to management and decision-making positions in business;
3. Conduct basic research into the practices, policies, and manner in which management and decision-making positions in business are filled;
4. Conduct comparative research of business and industries in which women and minorities are promoted to management and decision-making positions, and business and industries in which women and minorities are not promoted to management and

decision-making positions;

5. Compile a synthesis of available research on programs and practices that have successfully led to the advancement of women and minorities to management and decision-making positions in business, including training programs, rotational assignments, developmental programs, reward programs, employee benefit structures and family leave policies; and
6. Examine any other issues and information relating to the advancement of women and minorities to management and decision-making positions in business.

The Commission's (1995) study findings concluded that there was a glass ceiling that prevented the advancement of women and minorities from the top levels of management, and the study identified three levels of barriers. They are the following:

1. Societal barriers, which may be outside the direct control of business;
2. Internal structural barriers within the direct control of business (e.g., hiring practices, corporate environments, lack of mentoring and professional development, exposure); and
3. Governmental barriers.

According to Thomas (2001) there are three stages for ethnic minorities to take in order to break through the glass ceiling. The stages are the following:

- Stage 1: Gain three "C's," which are confidence, competence and credibility.
- Stage 2: Increase functional knowledge to deepen and broaden a foundation of the three "C's" while developing working relationships with key people in other functional areas.
- Stage 3: Individuals need to think and act more strategically and politically, and continue

to develop a diverse network of highly placed mentors and sponsors who are from difference ethnic groups (white and black).

Career Advancement of Athletic Directors

Previous research conducted on athletic director career paths identified certain common characteristics, which yielded baseline information. However, limited research has been conducted to examine the career patterns of ethnic minority males who are athletic directors at the Football Bowl Subdivision level. Quarterman (1992) conducted a study on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) athletic directors and found that most of those HBCU athletic directors came through the ranks of college student-athletes/professor/coach either at the high school or college level prior to becoming athletic director. In other non-HBCU institutions, such as NCAA Division IA institutions, individuals were either assistant or associate athletic directors prior to becoming athletic directors. For the academic criteria, Quarterman's findings concluded from the participants in his study that few athletic directors had degrees in sport administration.

Fitzgerald, Sagaria, and Nelson (1994) conducted a study of career trajectory patterns of NCAA Division I, II, and III athletic directors. He indicated that previous literature was used to understand the career paths of athletic directors used Spilerman's (1977) "career trajectory" model from occupational sociology. This model held the view that a career line or pattern was associated with labor market patterns or job sequences to the athletic director position.

Fitzgerald's study utilized the five steps normative career pattern used from other research. Five steps of the normative career pattern are the following: college student-athlete, high school coach, college coach (assistant or head), assistant or associate athletic directors, and college athletic director. Fitzgerald's findings, using the model, indicated that the most common experience was being a collegiate athlete and earning a varsity letter. Altogether, 94% of his

participants had experienced career patterns that followed the linear time sequence of the positions advanced in the normative career pattern. Fitzgerald et al.'s findings showed 96% of his participants had a bachelor's degree, and the most common major was physical education for all three NCAA divisions.

Sweany (1996) conducted a study to compare factors affecting the career paths of NCAA Division I, II, III and NAIA athletic directors. Her findings included that earning a bachelor's degree was important in both genders' responses. Physical education undergraduate and graduate degrees were the majority of the majors earned by both genders, and her participants who became athletic directors participated in college varsity sports. Also, they had prior experience working for college athletic administrations. Earning a doctoral degree seemed to be more important to female participants than to male participants (Sweany, 1996).

Grappendorf (2004) stated that the female athletic directors had college coaches help them move into college administration, they participated in college varsity sports, and possessed advanced degrees. A normative career pattern of taking the five steps towards the athletic director position did not exist, according to Fitzgerald et al. (1994). An individual did not need to be a high school coach to become an athletic director.

Whisenant, Pedersen & Obenour (2002) research's findings were important because they identified specific responsibilities that enhanced an individual's chances to become an athletic director. One of those responsibilities was that of managing a revenue sport such as football and basketball while being an assistant or associate athletic director. Grappendorf (2004) indicated that exposure to fundraising, development, contractual issues, and budgeting were important responsibilities to have prior to becoming an athletic director.

Shoji (2004) could not determine an exact career path for ethnic minorities for athletic directors. His findings identified that most of the directors in his study earned an undergraduate

degree in business and participated in college varsity sports. However, earning a master's degree in sport administration/management was the most common master's degree earned. His study indicated that coaching was a promising road into athletic administration for minorities. Also, ethnic minority administrators participated in college varsity sports. Higher education institutions utilized the concept of "interest convergence" in order to advance a disenfranchised group when it is in the best interest to do so (Lewis 2007). (Bell, 1980) indicated that the term "interest convergence" comes into play when the interest of blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interest of whites, and only true equality will come for blacks when whites surrender racism-granted privileges.

Factors That Affect Career Mobility for Women and Ethnic Minority Males

Empirical research studies have identified factors that affect career mobility for women and ethnic minorities. In a 2007-08 NCAA study relative to female gender discrimination, some of the women who participated in this study identified dissatisfaction with the equality of sexes within intercollegiate officiating, opportunity for career advancement, equality of race/ethnicity within intercollegiate officiating, and salary (NCAA, 2010). Also, the study stated that female administrators were qualified but did not apply for intercollegiate athletics administrator positions due to the identified barriers mentioned above. Grappendorf's (2004) findings indicated that there were stereotypes that suggested women could not lead in a male-dominated environment. He also found that the issue of homogenous reproduction still existed in hiring practices, which is to say organizations tended to find attractive those candidates who resembled present members in style, assumptions, values and beliefs, which kept females from advancing (Whisenant et al., 2002). In order to advance to a senior leadership position such as an athletic director, women need to be exposed to fundraising, development, contractual issues, and budgeting. Another key factor for female administrators is the persistence to work up through

the ranks and get involved in networking prior to becoming an athletic director (Grappendorf, 2004).

Benton (1999) conducted a study on black female athletic administrators, and indicated that employment discrimination patterns were still present in our society. Benton also said that racism, such as the "good old boy network," is still practiced. Grappendorf (2004) also indicated the presence of "good old boy" networks within the structure of intercollegiate athletics.

Lewis (2007) conducted a study to add to the literature relative to the barriers African American males face as they advance their careers at mainstream higher education institutions. He also identified tools to help African American males overcome career advancement barriers. Lewis stated that ethnic minority males in higher education accept designated positions such as director of minority and/or multicultural affairs, or equal employment opportunity officer, in order to start their careers. These positions, however, do not lead to career advancement. He also indicated that African American male administrators are relegated into designated positions in which responsibilities are ill defined and lack authority to make hard decisions. Such positions have no control over budget or resources, which make it difficult for individuals in these positions to effectively and efficiently maintain their programs and services within higher education institutions.

Shoji (2004) indicated that the glass ceiling effect is still in effect, and it prevents a large number of minority assistant and associate athletic directors from being promoted to a higher level. African Americans are pushed into compliance and academic positions where there is no upward mobility.

Suggs (2005) indicated in his study that women and ethnic minorities get on the correct career path to become an athletic director because they accept peripheral jobs that do not prepare them for leadership positions. His study indicated that positions such as marketing, fundraising,

and business affairs which teach glad-handling, money-raising, and negotiation, and administrative skills are required to become an athletic director in today's society.

Not having mentors and a lack of networking (Shohi 2004; Grappendorf, 2004; Benton, 1999) were common factors that prevented females and ethnic minorities from career advancement into the athletic director position. Thomas (2001) indicated that mentors must be willing to give protégés the benefit of the doubt. Sometimes negative stereotypes (subtle racism) must be removed if a mentor of a different race is involved in a cross-race mentoring relationship. According to Thomas, if a potential mentor has negative stereotypes about a possible mentee based upon race, he or she might withhold that support until the minority prospective protégé has proven himself by having a sustained record of solid performance prior to investing in him. In this case, subtle racism may be the rationale why some of minorities are not fast-tracked, and whites are.

Lewis (2007) indicated that institutional racism, such as the acceptance of ideas or trust by the dominant culture, is an obstacle that prevents career advancement for black males in higher education positions. The factors in his study were the following:

1. Not getting the necessary, shared information released by members of the dominant culture;
2. Lack of shared information from the executive level; and
3. The Alienation through Non-Involvement to help with the decision making process within mainstream institutions of higher education.

According to Houzer (1974), the lack of networking opportunities, mentors, and roles models are barriers to the advancement of African-American women in professional occupations in sport.

Summary

In conclusion, the ideology of hegemony and its unconscious practices is a perceived barrier for ethnic minority males and women. As the NCAA and other diversity agencies and programs try to change a rooted culture on higher education institutions, hegemony must be addressed in the discussion as a topic of concern. Future generations of leaders can help make the change by educating organizations about the harm of hegemony practices. Our society is still struggling with the inequities of hegemonic systems. The theoretical concepts of Leader Member Exchange Theory and The Critical Race Theory have been discussed to help identify the career-advancing factors and the barriers that prevent advancement. Also, the effects of mentoring were investigated. The literature shows there are barriers to ethnic minorities and women that keep them from advancing to the athletic director position. However, there are limited studies that have been done to identify what common factors helped ethnic minority males to become athletic directors, as well as limited studies that determined the barriers that may prevent them from advancement.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study was designed to understand the factors influencing the career trajectories of ethnic minority male athletic directors in NCAA Division I FBS institutions and to discover how those factors provide a road map for future ethnic minority male administrators. The Leader Member Exchange and Critical Race theories were used as theoretical lenses to explain how and why ethnic minority male athletic directors advance professionally in a white-dominated profession within higher education institutions. The number of ethnic minority males who are athletic directors in university athletic departments is not reflective of the institutions' enrollment patterns. In today's diversified society there is a need for more ethnic minority males in administrative leadership positions. This study provided information about ethnic minority males who select careers in intercollegiate athletics administration, and about the factors and barriers they might face when trying to ascend to the position of athletic director. The findings of this study are expected to provide information to assist NCAA institutions and higher education administrators in understanding the phenomenon of this elite group of ethnic minority males as they journey to the athletic director position.

In this chapter, the methods and methodology guiding this study are described. The chapter includes a discussion of the study as it relates to:

1. Research design;
2. Research method;
3. Methods (including participation selection process, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures);
4. The role of the phenomenological researcher;

5. A pilot study;
6. Reliability and validity; and
7. Ethical issues.

Research Design

This researcher used a qualitative research design to determine the factors that impact career trajectories for ethnic minority male athletic directors. Qualitative studies develop from three kinds of data collections:

1. In-depth, open-ended interviews;
2. Direct observations; and
3. Written documents (Patton, 2002).

Qualitative research demands that the researcher immerse himself in the research, offering both greater opportunity to observe the same subjects repeatedly over a period of time and greater “flexibility to discern and explore the influence of newly emerging factors caused by individual and environmental changes” (Conger, 1998, p. 110).

The phenomenology method was utilized by conducting interviews. Interviews yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. The phenomenology approach is derived from the disciplinary roots of philosophy and phenomenology’s central question and analysis; it tries to determine the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experiences of this phenomenon for this person or group of people (Patton, 2002). Phenomenology asks for the very nature of a phenomenon, for that which makes some “thing” what it is—and without which it could not be what it is (Van Manen, 1990, p. 10).

This study sought to understand those factors influencing the career trajectories of ethnic minority male intercollegiate athletic directors in NCAA Division I FBS affiliated institutions, and to discover how those factors may function as a career path road map for future ethnic minority male administrators. In order to accomplish this, the study examined the experiences of ethnic minority male athletic directors, drawing insight and direction from the events influencing and hindering their ascent to leadership in intercollegiate athletics.

Research Method

Phenomenological Research

The goal of the current qualitative, phenomenological study was to explore lived experiences of 15 ethnic minority male athletic directors who have been hired at NCAA Division I FBS member institutions. Patton (2002) defined phenomenology as “the meaning, structure and essence of the lived experiences of a phenomenon for a person or group of people (p. 104) Phenomenology is defined by Van Manen (1990) as the very nature of a phenomenon, for that which makes a some “thing” what it is and without which it could not be what it is.”(p. 10)

The Role of the Phenomenological Researcher

Cresswell (2007) defines qualitative research as beginning with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. In a qualitative study the researcher’s role must use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. Therefore, when problems or issues need to be addressed, qualitative research is the appropriate research method to employ. Conducting qualitative research provides a complex detailed understanding of the issue. The qualitative research method provides a communication tool that empowers individuals to share their stories,

hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study.

A phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon versus a narrative study, which reports the life of a single individual (Creswell, 2007). Phenomenological research tries to describe rather than explain and does not start with a hypothesis or preconception. The basic purpose of phenomenology research is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (van Manen, 1990, p. 177). The researcher must identify a phenomenon (e.g., an “object” of human experience) (p.163). This human experience may be a phenomenon (e.g., being left out) (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher collects the data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals (Creswell, 2007). This description consists of “what” they experienced and “how” they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994).

In this study the researcher has disclosed all biases regarding the topic under study. The researcher has a vested interest in the results of this study because of a desire to become an athletic director at the NCAA Division I FBS level. A researcher with a desire to study the success of ethnic minority males in the athletic director position, and having a personal and natural interaction with the participants, should enhance the research relationship between the researcher and the participants. With life story analysis it is important that the researcher, as a listener, be aware of and recognize the difference between the story that is being told and the story the researcher wants to hear (Gready, 2008). The researcher requested the participants to respond openly and honestly to the questions being asked by the researcher. The data and the responses from the questionnaires were analyzed by using Moustakas' (1994) approach.

Participant Selection

This study was concerned with identifying the factors that impacted career trajectories for ethnic minority males to an athletic director position. The accessible population consisted of athletic directors employed at NCAA Division I FBS institutions who were employed during the 2008-11 academic years. Each ethnic minority male held the title of athletic director (or an incarnation thereof) for the 2008-11 academic school years. Patton (2002) stated, "There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources." (p. 244).

The research participants were selected by using a sample technique (Creswell, 2007). Between five and 25 individuals, who all have experienced the phenomenon of becoming an athletic director, were selected to participate in the study. Therefore, the sample pool that consisted of 10 ethnic minority male athletic directors was purposely selected from the population of NCAA member institutions from the Division I FBS listed from the National Association of Collegiate Director of Athletics' 2008-11 roster of ethnic minority athletic directors' list. The research participants were available and willing to participate in the qualitative research study. Patton (2002) stated that quality inquiry is rife with ambiguities; therefore, purposeful strategies, instead of methodological rules, and a small sample size provide a more open range of experiences to seeking depth.

Pilot Study

After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval and prior to starting data collection via interviews, a pilot study was conducted. A convenience sample of participants who were currently ethnic minority male athletic directors at the Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) was interviewed. The pilot study provided an opportunity to determine the

viability of the interview questions and survey to help enhance clarity in the understanding of the meaning of the questions (Taylor, 2004). The pilot study tested the data collection process.

The pilot-study interviews lasted an average of 90 minutes. The recorded interviews were listened to, so as to determine the questions and the order of questions, to ensure the researcher was able to gather the relevant information for the research. The participants provided feedback on the questions so the questions could be reworded, clarified, or combined with other questions (Taylor 2004). The interview questions were modified to increase the quality of the data in the official study.

The pilot study process helped to ensure the questions and surveys would be able to ascertain that the appropriate types of data would ultimately be collected. The data collection instruments were administered to the pilot study group in the same manner as they were administered to the official research study participants. The results from the pilot study were not used in the actual study, but they helped to improve the process in the official research.

Procedures

In the data collection process, an important step toward collection data for the qualitative researcher is to find participants to study, and to gain access to and establish rapport with participants so they will provide good data (Creswell 2007). To gather such data, one must undertake in-depth interviews with people who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest; that is they have “lived experiences” as opposed to secondhand experience. According to Creswell (2009), “The actual methods of data collection, traditionally based on open-ended observations, interviews and documents, now include a vast array of materials, such as sounds, emails, scrapbooks, and other emerging forms” (p. 181). Patton (1990) asserts that a qualitative research design has to be open and flexible to allow exploration of data.

This researcher sent recruitment letters to the potential research participants and then

followed up with telephone calls to confirm participation. Interview times were arranged for those who accepted the invitation to participate. This researcher included, in the recruitment letter, all of the federally required Institutional Review Board (IRB) information for human subjects. Additionally, participants were asked for their consent to be audio taped and transcribed from the interviews.

The primary source of data collection was face-to-face. Face-to-face interviews have a distinct advantage of enabling the researcher to establish rapport with participants and therefore gain their cooperation. They yield the highest response rates in survey research and allow the researcher to clarify ambiguous answers and when appropriate, seek follow-up information (Creswell, 2007). In this regard, in-depth interviews were conducted with purposefully selected ethnic minority male athletic directors. In addition to the interviews, the researcher's observations of the participants and note taking served as an additional means of data collection for this study. All interviews were audio taped and field notes were recorded. After each interview, the audiotapes were reviewed and transcribed verbatim. All transcripts were reviewed for accuracy. During the interview, this researcher restated or summarized information and then questioned the participants to determine accuracy and authenticity as well as using follow-up email and correspondence to clarify any missing information (Colaizzi, 1978; Johnson, 1999).

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized the Creswell (2007) simplified modified version of Stevick-Colaizzi Keen's method to analyze the data. The following steps were taken:

1. First describe personal experiences with the phenomenon under study;
2. Develop a list of significant statements;
3. Take the significant statements and then group them into larger units of information called "meaning units" or themes;

4. Write a description of what the participants in the study experienced with the phenomenon;
5. Write a description of “how” the experienced happened; and
6. Write a composite description of the phenomenon incorporating both the textural and structural descriptions.

To ensure internal validity, triangulation was employed. Triangulations involved corroborating evidence emerging from different sources to help the researcher better understand a theme or perspective (Creswell, 2007). In this study, data were collected through multiple sources including interviews, follow-up e-mails, observations, field notes and member-checking.

Data Interpretation

The data were interpreted through an analysis of the “field text” and data collected from the life story interview, which were reorganized into a conceptual framework, or “restorying” (Creswell, 2007). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), restorying moves simultaneously in four directions: inward (inside, self), outward (toward community), backward (in time), and forward (in-time). To obtain a pattern of recognition, Patton (2002) recommends content analysis. Content analysis sometimes refers to searching text (e.g., interview transcripts) for recurring words or themes. Content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meaning (Patton, 2002).

Reliability/Validity

The credibility of qualitative research depends on three elements. Patton (2002) describes the three distinctly related elements as the following:

1. Rigorous methods for doing fieldwork that yield high-quality data that are systematically analyzed with attention to issues of credibility;

2. The credibility of the researcher, which is dependent on training, experience, track record, status, and presentation of self; and
3. A philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry, that is a fundamental appreciation of naturalistic inquiry, qualitative methods, inductive analysis, purposeful sampling, and holistic thinking.

To help strengthen quantitative research, methodological mixes such as the triangulation method were employed in this research. Triangulation uses several kinds of methods or data. There are four types of triangulation (Creswell, 2007): Data triangulation, the use of a variety of data sources in a study; investigator triangulation, or the use of several different researchers or evaluators; theory triangulation, or the use multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data; and methodological triangulation, or the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or program.

Denzin (1978) states that the logic of triangulation is based upon the premise that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival factors. Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observation must be employed. This is termed triangulation. A final methodological rule of the principle is that multiple methods should be used in every investigation. According to Patten (2002), studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method (e.g., loaded interview questions, biases or untrue responses) than studies that uses multiple methods in which different types of data provide cross data validity checks.

Instrumentation

The researcher conducted in-person and phone interviews to collect data from the participants. The interview time frame was 60 to 90 minutes. In addition to the interviews, the researcher had each participant complete a Professional Biographical Informational

questionnaire which contained 18 questions. The Professional Biographical Informational Questionnaire can be found in *Appendix E*. The Interview Protocol can be found in *Appendix F*.

Ethical Issues

This researcher obtained permission to interview human subjects from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Delaware State University. Subjects involved in the study were informed of specific guidelines regarding "Informed Human Subjects" and were required to sign acknowledgement of IRB consent statements prior to participation in this research study. The researcher did not identify respondents in the research study publically. The researcher made this clear to the respondents prior to their participation in the research. Respondents' names were not identified at any time. Research data containing participants' names were kept secured in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's residence. Only the researcher had access to the locked file cabinet with the research records. All research records will be shredded by the researcher upon successful completion of the doctoral program.

Summary

This chapter defined the research design methods and methodology followed in the study. The study was conducted using a qualitative inquiry. This study was conducted using a phenomenological research design. The purpose of the study was to examine the factors that influence ethnic minority male career trajectory towards the athletic director position, to identify factors that are potential obstacles in obtaining the athletic director position, and to identify factors that are career enhancing in the progression towards the athletic director position. The researcher identified 15 ethnic minority male athletic directors to be invited to participate in the study using purposive sampling. The participants met the following criteria: (1) the participant needed to be an ethnic minority male, (2) the participant must have been an athletic director at a NCAA Divisions I Football Bowl Subdivision, (3) the participant was available and willing to

participate in the study. The data from the responses and discussions were reported in Chapter IV on the lived experiences of the ethnic minority male athletic directors in their career trajectory. This study was held to the strictest ethical guidelines of Delaware State University's IRB. The next chapter addresses the researcher's conclusions as they relate to a summary of the findings, interpretation of analysis, implications for theory and practice, recommendations for future research and recommendations for action.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The major purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influenced ten ethnic minority males who sought and obtained careers in intercollegiate athletics at the administrative level of athletic director at an NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) member institution. The potential and/or perceived barriers and potential obstacles they faced in obtaining the position were identified. Also, this study identified career-enhancing tactics that were employed to increase the likelihood of being selected to be the athletic director position. This chapter provides the reader with the study's results including the data collection methodology and protocol used and the analysis of the collected data. Each participant's interview was guided by the following central research questions:

Central Research Questions

1. To what extent are there common factors among the career paths of current ethnic minority male athletic directors within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?
2. Why is there a limited number of ethnic minority males that have ascended to the level of athletic director within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?

Pilot Study

After obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and prior to starting data collection via interviews, a pilot-study was conducted. A convenience sample of men who were currently ethnic minority athletic directors at the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) level served as the participants. The pilot study provided an opportunity to determine the viability of the interview questions and survey to help enhance clarity in the

understanding of the meaning of the questions (Taylor, 2004). The pilot study also tested the data collection process.

The pilot-study interviews lasted an average of 90 minutes. The recorded interviews were listened to in order to determine the questions and order of questions to ensure they were able to elicit the relevant information for the research. The participants provided feedback on the questions so the questions could be reworded, clarified, or combined with other questions. The interview questions were modified to increase the quality of the data in the official study.

The pilot study process helped to ensure the questions and survey were able to ascertain that appropriate types of data were collected. The data collection instruments were administered to the pilot study group in the same manner as they were administered to the official research study participants. The results from the pilot study were not used in the actual study, but they helped to improve the process in the official research.

Participant Demographics

A total of 15 ethnic minority male directors of athletics were invited to participate in this research study. A total of seven ethnic minority male directors of athletics participated in face-to-face interviews for this research study. A total of three ethnic minority male directors of athletics participated in phone interviews. The other five participants were unable to be scheduled within the research data collection time frame. All participants signed the Informed Consent Form in person at the face-to-face interviews. All participants who participated in a phone interview were e-mailed their Informed Consent Forms prior to the scheduled interview time. The Informed Consent Forms were signed by each participant, scanned and returned to the researcher electronically prior to the scheduled interview time.

The ethnic minority males who participated in this research study held the rank of athletic director at a NCAA Division I FBS member institution. All of the participants interviewed were

ethnic minorities. *Table 1* displays the demographic information collected on the study participants who actually participated in the interview process. Pseudonyms were used in order to maintain the anonymity of the individuals and their respective institutions.

Table 1 contains participant demographical data related to age, education, and tenure in their current position. The age of participants varied from 42 years to 66 years with a mean age of 54 years old. Regarding their educational background, all ten or 100% reported to have attained a bachelor’s degree. Three or 30% have attained a master’s degree. Four or 40% have obtained a doctorate degree.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Age	Education	Tenure in Current Position
Participant 1	56	Bachelor’s	2 years
Participant 2	60	Bachelor’s	11 years
Participant 3	66	Doctorate	7 years
Participant 4	43	Master’s	7 years
Participant 5	42	Doctorate	6 years
Participant 6	42	Master’s	6 years
Participant 7	64	Doctorate	12 years
Participant 8	57	Master’s	8 years
Participant 9	50	Doctorate	7 years
Participant 10	56	Bachelor’s	7 years

The total number of years as athletic director ranged from seven to 27 years, with the mean number of years holding that position being 11. The age when participants first became an

athletic director ranged from as young as 34 to as old as 56. The mean age at which the participants first became an athletic director was 41.

Table 2 shows the total number of years the participants held the position of athletic director as well as the age at which they first became an athletic director and the athletic participation level (i.e., I, II, III) at which they played intercollegiate sports as student athletes. All participants (100%) played intercollegiate sports and were student-athletes.

Table 2: Additional Participants Demographics

Pseudonym	Total Yrs as AD	Age in 1st AD Position	Athletic Division as a Student Athlete
Participant 1	7 years	49	Division II
Participant 2	11 years	50	Division I
Participant 3	24 years	30	Division III
Participant 4	7 years	37	Division I
Participant 5	6 years	36	Division I
Participant 6	7 years	34	Division I
Participant 7	8 years	56	Division II
Participant 8	8 years	44	Division I
Participant 9	7 years	43	Division I
Participant 10	27 years	29	Division I

While the number of years that participants held the title of athletic director ranged from seven to 27 years, the mean number of years participants spent holding the title of athletic director averaged 11 years. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that participants applied for the athletic director position up to 11 times before being hired at that level with the mean number of times participants applied before being hired being four. Two participants indicated that they

did not have to apply for the position but were either appointed or moved into the position due to their university’s restructuring.

Table 3 lists the types of professional development programs participants were involved with on their career path towards becoming an athletic director.

Table 3: Types of Professional Development Programs Utilized by Participants

Professional Development Program	Number	Percent
NCAA/NACDA Program	4	40
D I-A Leadership Institute	6	60
NCAA Committee Membership	6	60
Had a Informal Mentor in the Profession	8	80
Reported some type of Mentor	2	20

Prior to serving as athletic director, four out of the 10, or 40%, of participants indicated that they had participated in an NCAA and/or NACDA professional development program. Six out of the 10 participants, or 60%, indicated that they did participate in other professional development programs such as the Division 1A Leadership Institute and the Sport Management Institute. More than half of the participants, 60%, served on an NCAA committee prior to serving as athletic director. Eight out of the ten, or 80% of participants, reported having mentors from the profession of athletic administration prior to being appointed as athletic director. Two participants did not recall having a mentor in the field of athletics but were mentored by other individuals. Therefore, 100% of the participants acknowledged having a mentor in their lives, whether it is a coach, another athletic director, athletic administrator, or faculty member while attending college, or another successful adult.

Table 4 lists job titles participants held prior to becoming an athletic director for the first time. Six out of ten, or 60%, held the job title of assistant athletic director during their rise to the athletic director position. Seven out of the ten, or 70%, held the title of associate athletic director in their ascension to the athletic director chair. Five out of ten, or 50%, held the title of senior associate athletic director at some point in time as they ascended to the athletic director position. Two, or 20%, were graduate assistants at some point during their career path prior to becoming an athletic director. Only one out of the ten reported holding the title of deputy athletic director prior to becoming an athletic director.

Table 4: Jobs Held on the Career Path Towards Becoming an Athletic Director

Position Title	Number of Respondents Who held that Position	Percent
Intern	0	0
Graduate Assistant	2	20
Assistant AD *	6	60
Associate AD *	7	70
Senior Associate*	5	50
Deputy	1	10
Athletic Directors (Non-FBS)	0	0
NCAA Staff	0	0
Other (Faculty, Intramural Director)	1	10
*Areas of Focus in these positions: Academics, Administration, Compliance, Development, Medical, Events and Facilities, Marketing, Medical, Sports Administration, Strength		

Data Analysis

In Chapter III, the data analysis process began with the researcher assessing and evaluating all the collected data. The researcher identified themes from the respondents'

statements, which reflected their beliefs, perceptions, knowledge, and experiences. The researcher utilized the Creswell (2007) simplified modified version of Stevick-Colaizzi Keen's method to analyze the data. The following steps were employed:

1. Described personal experiences with the phenomenon under study;
2. Developed a list of significant statements;
3. Identified significant statements and then grouped them into larger units of information called "meaning units" or themes;
4. Wrote a description of what the participants in the study experienced with the phenomenon;
5. Wrote a description of how the experienced happened; and
6. Wrote a composite description of the phenomenon incorporating both the textural and structural descriptions.

In this study, data were collected through multiple sources including interviews, follow-up e-mails, comparing field notes and member checking by sending participants copies of their transcripts and asking for feedback as to the accuracy of the transcription and clarification of any inaccurate statements. All respondents indicated the transcripts of their interviews were accurate.

The researcher listened to all the participant audio recordings of the semi-structured interviews, read all the verbatim interview transcriptions and read the responses to the questionnaire. This method allowed for the extraction of significant statements or phrases from the interview process that are relevant to the phenomenon. As several significant statements emerged the researcher read carefully to pull out statements focused on the phenomenon being studied. To ensure internal validity triangulation was employed which involved corroborating evidence emerging from different sources to assist the researcher to better understand a theme or

perspective (Creswell, 2007).

Coding and Themes

The process of re-reading the transcripts helped to draw the researcher into the text and discover the nuances of the study subjects' pauses, phrasing, and unique expressions (Klenke, 2008, p. 348). The coding process began with the highlighting of the significant statements with multiple colors. Meanings were created from the significant statements then an exhaustive description of the phenomenon was produced by the integration of the results of the analysis (Creswell, 2005). The three major themes found in the research data follow:

1. Key Factors to Career Advancement;
2. Racial Stereotyping; and
3. Denied Access to Career Enhancing Positions.

Findings

Three distinct themes emerged as a result of the responses to the two central research questions asked during the semi-structured interview and their responses to the questionnaire:

- (1) To what extent are there common factors among the career paths of current ethnic minority male Athletic directors within the Division I FBS Level?
- (2) Why are there a limited number of ethnic minority males that have ascended to the level of Athletic Director within the Division I FBS Level?

The researcher asserts that from these documented perspectives and responses the reader will gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of these ethnic minority males in the position of athletic director in three thematic areas: (1) key career advancement factors; (2) racial stereotyping; and (3) denied access to enhancing positions. These three themes reveal the beliefs, perceptions and experiences of Ethnic Minority males in their progression to the position of athletic director at the Division I FBS level.

Following is a discussion of each of these themes and actual statements made by the interviewees to illustrate each theme.

Research Question #1.

To what extent are there common factors among the career paths of current ethnic minority male athletic directors within the Division I FBS Level?

Theme No. 1: Key Career Advancement Factors

Analyzing the data, indications are that having a college degree, being a student athlete at a Division I school, and serving as an assistant or associate athletic director were common experiences among the participants. No two participants obtained the position of athletic director through an identical series of events, experiences or predictable path. What surfaced from their responses to this research question were descriptions of experiences and perceptions from participants which detailed common strategies, tactics and methods that these ethnic minority males employed to reach the level of athletic director, and achieve their career goals through overcoming barriers and identifying and utilizing resources in their environment. Career enhancing factors mentioned by a number of the participants included having a mentor, networking, engaging in diverse professional development and gaining varied work experiences prior to being hired in the athletic director position. Also mentioned were advanced formal education, gaining visibility and exposure with search firms and those in the position to hire, and working harder, being better than everyone else. Additionally, integrity and character were factors often mentioned. The following responses are representative of what many participants disclosed.

One participant said:

I think you have to fill the pipeline and what we are trying to do, even through the NCAA, is build a network and we call it basically building the pipeline behind us. We

bring in the minority athletic directors on this level so it's about mentoring. It's about someone who has ascended to the top position or myself coming up and pulling people up and also being able to represent them to search firms and having them to get to know them and these types of things.

Another participant stated:

I believe what keeps us out is that they need a champion. They need somebody that can carry the flag and give them exposure and have them be in settings where people can see them actually participate and be part of the discussion or part of the work. It's about exposure. It's about getting people to know who you are.

Forging substantive relationships with people that support participants' goals and are willing to stand up to speak on their behalf was stated by 80% of participants. This goes beyond connecting with people in a networking or mentoring fashion. Participants discussed in forming relationships included getting to know people on an intimate level, anticipating their needs, encouraging and supporting them, speaking well of them, interacting with their friends, families and coworkers in a positive fashion, and interacting with them outside of the arena of athletics. Several participants stressed the importance of knowing how to establish and develop strong, positive relationships with people, on and off campus, including stakeholders, constituents and community leaders.

One participant listed a number of things:

Take advantage of professional development opportunities available through the NCAA.

Ask an established African-American AD to be a mentor. Take advantage of opportunities to visit campuses and spend time with people and professional pipelines for those opportunities. Go to visit the search firms. Go visit and introduce yourself to these people (search firms). Be aggressive in marketing and promoting themselves.

Another participant said, “Get that next set of skills to enable them to further expand on the work that they do, the knowledge base, etc.”

Along those lines another participant said:

Do some other things – sports administration, coach management, being involved in the hiring process and the termination of coaches and staff . . . always trying to find a way to get some of the type of fundraising experience, whether it’s being on the committee helping to raise money . . . because you have to start showing a track record for fundraising. You have to network off campus and be involved in national organizations. You have to get to know people who run search firms in this business and they have to be comfortable with you as a potential candidate.

In order to maintain his desired career trajectory this participant stated:

I have intentionally dressed the “right way.” I have intentionally taken etiquette and paid attention to things with etiquette. I intentionally got a doctorate. I intentionally went to a specific university. I intentionally graduated in four years from the school because I never wanted to be labeled with some negative stereotypes that are attached with us (African-Americans).

Finally one participant advised: “Every job you have do it well, number one! Coming up through the system you have to be better than everyone else around you. It’s just the way it is.”

Research Question # 2.

Why is there a limited number of ethnic minority males that have ascended to the level of athletic director within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?

Theme No 2: Racial Stereotyping

Several interviewees (80%) identified racial stereotyping as a barrier towards the career progression of Ethnic Minority males to the position of athletic director. Stereotypes lead to

questioning the competence of African-American males applying for the position of athletic director or other senior level administrative positions in athletics. Participants discussed strategies they employ to overcome preconceptions about their capabilities.

A common theme among participants regarding a stereotype is reflected in the comment of one participant below: “Yes, all the time, people tell me how articulate I am and with my counterparts, I’ve never heard anybody go up to John, James, Susie, Laura and say, “Oh, you’re so articulate”.”

One participant stated the following regarding stereotyping:

I think overcoming the stereotype that donors and business people and stakeholders would not respond to African-American leadership was something that had to be overcome.

Another participant stated:

I think there is prejudice towards believing that a minority can do all the things that are in the minds of the person hiring. I still think there is prejudice out there as to whether minorities and women can do what it takes to be successful at their institutions.

A participant disclosed the following:

I think it has to do with the concept or belief, for whatever reason, that football is king and football is the revenue maker. And for that reason we (blacks) are not capable of managing that endeavor or not capable of being revenue efficient. We don’t have the ability to go out and fundraise, hobnob with the sort of people that you have to raise money. I think it’s that coupled with the fact that there is a mindset of hiring with it what you know and so who you know and what you know.

Theme No 3: Denied Access to Career Enhancing Positions

Cunningham & Sagas (2005) define access discrimination as limits that are not related to

the actual or potential performance that minority group members encounter. "This discrimination occurs at the time the job is filled (e. g., rejection of applications, limited advertising of positions) and prevents members of a particular group from entering a job, organization or profession" (Cunningham & Sagas, p 149). This theme included statements from participants about being pigeonholed in lower level designated positions such as compliance or academics which carry a limited scope of duties and thus impacting visibility and exposure as well as limiting the opportunity to acquire a broad range of experiences within critical areas of athletic management and administration necessary for the advancement into the position of athletic director. The "old boy network" of white male dominated environments was a factor common to the environment of all the participants in this study. Several participants made comment to being in a predominantly white-male environments and having to make these decision-makers comfortable enough to overcome their concerns about what "face" represented their institutions to external constituents.

One participant reported:

I think, secondly, we don't have the opportunities to be in the position to do things that presidents, search committees are looking for as it relates to key elements which are raising money and marketing, corporate sponsorship that show you have a direct responsibility to being responsible for bringing money and an understanding of how to do it. We don't always get those opportunities. We are more likely to be in academics, compliance, maybe facilities, and not marketing, development, fundraising, or corporate sponsorship.

Another common experience disclosed by participants was encountering the old boy network—white male dominated environments in which hiring and promoting practices often resulting in hiring or promoting of individuals that fit their mold.

One participant said, "I think a barrier is that good old boy network or not being viewed as an honorary member of the system."

Another participant shared the following:

People hire people they are familiar and comfortable with. People recommended to them by people they have a professional relationship with or friendship. People exposed to them in a variety of situations and networking.

A participant said distinctly:

I just think the biggest thing is that people will not hire them (African-American males). They just won't hire them. It's almost, like, you going to have to prove yourself. So even with proving oneself, it is just not something they are going to do.

Along the same lines another participant stated:

So it's not a matter of not being qualified. It's not a matter that they're just not there. It's just a matter of you (institutions) having to make a commitment to hire them (African-American males).

A common theme by many of the interviewees was the concept of working harder and being better than everyone else in order to be considered for a position.

In the world of intercollegiate athletics at the Division I FBS level, there are a small number of opportunities to become an athletic director. With only 121 colleges or universities at that level, nationwide there are only 121 positions to be filled and an unknown number of potential candidates vying for those positions at any given point in time. At present, only nine African-American males hold those positions. Many of these candidates have been re-cycled by search firms, meaning that these proven candidates are often put forth when a new position at this level becomes available, limiting the opportunity for other candidates to even be considered.

One participant said:

I know a number of people who worked very, very, hard and diligently tried to get that spot, and it never happened. Just as I said, it's just a matter of them (search firms and institutional committees) not giving them the opportunity. They (African-American candidates) just can't really articulate when asked the question about fund raising. And that's one where you really enhance yourself by basically being able to point to times when you came up with ideas and you sat down with big donors and you could say, "I was the one that got that \$5 million."

Additional or Unexpected Themes

Each participant described his experience in a career trajectory that led him to the position of athletic director with stories and powerful words from which were extracted significant statements, interpreted meaning, and general themes. As a result of the 10 interviews, and the responses to the questionnaire, additional unexpected and/or or additional themes emerged from the participants responses. These themes include the following: having a unique pedigree, certain personality traits, and forming relationships.

In response to research question number two and discussing stereotyping and the effect on career progression to the level of athletic director within the Division I FBS, one participant stated not experiencing any overt stereotyping because his background opened doors. As stated by one participant, "I have a unique pedigree." Another participant stated something very similar. As a former professional athlete, with a doctorate he did not perceive that pedigree lending to very many stereotypes. This participant approached things by wanting to do better and never giving people an excuse to say no.

When the discussion of glass ceiling issues arose as a possible barrier to career progression, another participant believed that his pedigree (e.g., where he went to school, what his degrees are) in fact made glass ceiling issues null and void. A statement by one of the

participants revealed an understanding that the pedigree was an advantage in that it puts you within arm's reach of the people in power and actual decision-making levels, like university presidents who hire the athletic director for their institution. Having a unique pedigree led many of the participants to be in the company of legends in the area of athletic administration or interacting with big-money donors or befriending individuals with high levels of recognition, prestigious and influence, high level government officials, who with one phone call could open a door that had previously been shut to ethnic minority males.

Personality was another unanticipated theme. Five out of ten, or 50%, of the participants, identified this theme. Although not identified as often as the major themes, personality played a part in dealing with barriers such as stereotyping and persevering. As disclosed during the interviews, participants on average had to apply at least four times before obtaining the position of athletic director with some applying as many as 11 times before achieving that goal. The essence of what participants stated regarding personality is that in the face of discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice, and opposition, those with certain traits were able to overcome those perceived barriers.

Among the traits identified by respondents were patience, perseverance, persistence, and flexibility. Ethnic minority males were cautioned to be patient when they saw white colleagues with similar experiences have opportunities to advance their careers, while they, themselves, were passed over. Instead of brooding about a perceived slight, they should seek external exposure by seeking opportunities to serve on institutional and NCAA committees, volunteer to assist with development and fundraising events. Along with cultivating these traits, respondents talked about the importance of attending relevant professional development programs and completing advanced degrees as ways to enhance marketability.

Flexibility was highlighted when discussing the concept of moving out of one's comfort

zone. People generally feel more comfortable around others like them. Ethnic minority males are encouraged, however, to move out of their comfort zone, especially when attending career-enhancing seminars or conferences and reach out to majority stakeholders within the sports industry. Ethnic minority males must be flexible enough to put themselves out in the majority community to help reduce the negative connotations, perceptions, and stereotypes held by that community. The importance of building relationships, whether through a formal or informal mentoring relationship, or by reaching out to meet new people who potentially may be of assistance in career advancement, cannot be overstated.

Political awareness is another important trait for ethnic minority males. Advancing in any career field is often fraught with political considerations. Navigating an upward trajectory in higher education, and athletic administration in higher education in particular, requires an astute and politically aware candidate. Having the ability to strategically demonstrate leadership capabilities on campus and within the community is very important. Ethnic minority males need to understand the dynamics of politics. They need to be aware of the political implications and ramifications of actions they take and that others take on their behalf.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative, phenomenological study was to investigate and describe the factors and barriers relative to career trajectory for ethnic minority males based on the experiences and beliefs of ethnic minority male athletic directors. The target of the study was to identify emergent themes relating to factors and barriers of the phenomenon and to investigate the reasons for the underrepresentation of ethnic minority males in the athletic director position as the NCAA Division I FBS Level. Central themes that emerged were grouped by the central research questions.

A sample size of 10 participants provided data on career trajectory in the NCAA and

perspectives on the barrier that prohibit progression to the athletic director position at the FBS level. The data ascertained from this study may assist ethnic minority males who aspire to become athletic directors to know what it takes to become an athletic director, and may help the NCAA and leaders of higher education to develop strategies to encourage and to increase diversity in leadership positions within the NCAA.

Chapter IV presented and analyzed the research data and was organized by demographics, patterns identified in responses to the research questions, and core themes. The participants in the study represented a special group of ethnic minority males, and the study is among one a few studies that have exposed a phenomenon using a contextual construct of race. To the researcher's knowledge, no study has been conducted on the perspective of ethnic minority males who are athletic directors at the NCAA Division I FBS level existed prior to the current research study. Chapter V provided the findings and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Summary of Results

The purpose of this study was to gain an academic understanding of why there are so few ethnic minority males holding the position of athletic director in the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS). The researcher's rationale for conducting this research was due to the researcher's career aspirations of becoming an athletic director at the FBS level. The researcher was particularly interested in learning about the career ascension of ethnic minority male athletic directors. The purpose of conducting this research was to add to the body of research knowledge for other ethnic minority males who have a similar desire to become an athletic director, especially at the FBS level. The findings presented in the previous Chapter IV reveal the lived professional experiences and revealed three overarching themes which emerged from the research: key factors to career advancement, racial stereotyping, and denied access to career enhancing positions.

While conducting a review of literature, the researcher discovered an absence of research studies that have been conducted on ethnic minority males who hold or have held the position of athletic director, especially at the Division I FBS level. The findings of this study are beneficial as they describe the influences on the career development of ethnic minority males toward positions in senior-level athletics administration. The literature review provided the necessary theoretical framework which guided the study and assisted in determining that a qualitative phenomenological methodology would be most appropriate for the researcher's study.

As revealed by the literature review, qualitative methods appeared the most appropriate methodology for this type of research project because of its ability to provide complex textual description of how people experience a given research issues. Therefore, a phenomenology was

the appropriate method to study the nature of this phenomenon for this particular group of males.

The participant selection for this research study was 15 ethnic minority males who have held the title of the athletic director at the NCAA Division I FBS level. Data were collected from December 2011 to March 2012.

Ten ethnic minority males who held the position of athletic director at Division I FBS member institution comprised the participant pool for this phenomenological study. Data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews and, if that was not possible, through phone interviews. Additionally participants completed a questionnaire for the purposes of gathering demographic information, as a supplement to the face-to-face interviews. Also, participants submitted their resumés. Each interview was audio taped and lasted for approximately 90 minutes. Participants were invited to engage in dialogue with the researcher. Because the interviews were semi-structured, the researcher used an interview guide as a tool to aid him in asking questions that engaged the participants and solicited responses that addressed the two central research questions. When the researcher deemed it necessary to bring clarity to respondents' answers to the interview questions, the researcher used such prompts as "can you expand on that idea, or "can you give an example?" Interviews were transcribed verbatim. As a result of the interviews, three themes emerged from the data.

The research questions that guided this research were:

1. To what extent are there common factors among the career paths of current ethnic minority male athletic directors within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?
2. Why is there a limited number of ethnic minority males that have ascended to the level of athletic director within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?

The findings in this study provide information on the development of ethnic minority

male athletic directors' careers in intercollegiate athletics, and what factors and barriers impacted their progression to the athletic director position.

Discussion

The findings in this phenomenological research study reveal the factors and barriers that influence the career trajectory of ethnic minority male athletic directors at the Division I FBS level, and assist in gaining an understanding of how and why ethnic minority male athletic directors at FBS level advance professionally. To understand how and why there is a small number of ethnic minority male athletic directors ascended to their position at the Division I FBS level, two central research questions were developed to gain insight into ethnic minority male directors of athletics' personal experiences and their perceptions regarding the career trajectory of ethnic minority male athletic directors.

In regards to the theoretical framework of this study, the findings are consistent with the literature in a number of areas. Experiences and perceptions participants shared regarding the themes of racial stereotyping and denied access to career enhancing positions appear to go hand in hand. Where there is one, there is the other. As discussed in Chapter Two, the Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory reflects on in- group/out-group dynamics. The LMX theory by Graen (1976) is based upon a reciprocal relationship between leaders and subordinates. It is also an ongoing exchange that is established between the leader and the subordinate. The theory states a positive relationship often depends on similarities between the leader and the subordinate. The primary focus of the LMX theory emphasizes the dyadic relationship between leaders and individual subordinates. The theory creates an in- group and an out-group whereby not every follower is treated the same by the leader resulting in two groups of followers. Members of the in-group receive more information, influence, confidence and concern from their leaders than do out-group members (Dansereau et al., 1975).

The findings of this study are consistent with the notion of in group/out group dynamics set forth in the LMX theory. The study participants indicated that there were perceived barriers to

achieving the athletic director's position due to their lack of being part of the in-group. Their sense of being shuttled into dead-end jobs such as academic advisors or compliance officers is consistent with being in the out-group. The participants of this study were aware of the need to become part of the in-group and that they made conscious efforts to become part of the in group.

Regarding the findings of this study all participants were able to develop relationships with leaders that put them within the in-group. Participants had an understanding that people hire people with whom they are familiar and comfortable, and one of the strategies that this group of men often employed was finding a way to make people comfortable with them. One participant said, "We tend to, unless we're consciously breaking through, we tend to hire whom we are comfortable with", thus affecting access to positions such as the athletic director. Another participant observed, "You have to try to attach yourself to people who are willing to promote you from within and into other places." One participant clearly recognized the need for being connected with people who were willing to push him forward or to make a call, and to do those types of things to lay the groundwork necessary for ascending to the athletic director position.

Another participant stated, "So my career was really one of not even really looking to be an AD, but one where people saw something in me and decided to bring me on quickly, giving me responsibilities quickly, as opposed to having to grind my way up the ladder."

In-group members receive more intensive support and more sensitive supervisors according to Linden and Graen (1980, p. 452). In high LMX relationships, in-group members receive latitude in developing their roles and greater influence in decision-making, stronger support for their actions, and consideration then did out-group members (Graen & Cashman, 1975).

The participants' experiences of stereotyping often involved inaccurate, over generalized and erroneous perceptions perceived as barriers to be overcome in attaining that in-group status and its corresponding benefits. This theme addresses the idea of reliance on the characteristics of a group to predict their behavior (Brooks & Althouse, 2007, p 253). Stereotypes are often

resistant to change (Meyer, 1993). The African-American males who have ascended to the position of athletic director at Division I FBS schools have been able to deconstruct stereotypical images often associated with ethnic minority males and redefine themselves within a socially fixed image of those who lead their organizations, white males, while still retaining their personal identity as African-American males (Parker, 2005). One of the questions in the study asked participants to consider why some African-American males who have applied to the athletic director position were denied. One of the participants speculated, "It might be, they have stood for a core value issue with them that might not fit in with people's thoughts and values. People who stand for what they think is right might be contrary to the majority." That put them in the out-group.

The findings indicate the "old boys' network" was experienced by the participants as a barrier which further perpetuates the lack of minority representation in the athletic director position as determined based on the participants disclosures. From the perspective of the study's participants often institutions at the Division I level have historically been averse to putting African-Americans in the position where they would have to interact a great deal with external constituents feeling that they have to have somebody who looks like those constituents. Those constituents are not typically African-American. Thus African-Americans have been relegated to areas such as academic services, compliance, and life skills where they are primarily dealing with student athletes, the majority of whom may well be African American or other minorities.

Racial stereotyping emerged as a theme in this study as an experience shared by the participants in some shape or form. As an example related stereotyping one participant said:

And I think there are a lot of stereotypes about being a black man that still exist; that he's not approachable, he's defensive. And I think that as you prepare yourself you can't have a chip on your shoulder. You can't come across that you are bitter . . . That you can't be perceived as bitter and as angry, as in that the system played me and I'm tired of it. In any profession that's not the kind of stuff that people want. I do think that's an important thing to be aware

of is how people will perceive you.

Another participant stated, "There are not a lot of FBS AD jobs. There are only 120 jobs and there are certain institutions in certain parts of the country where we are not going to be hired for the obvious reasons which are biases of the institutions and where the schools are located."

Yet another participant commented, "Institutional racism is a series of policies and practices that permeates systems that create discriminatory behavior, either unintentional or intentional. Most cases I think it's unintentional but the policies themselves hinder opportunities for people."

It was also observed that, "It's a male dominated industry, but it's a white dominated industry."

Another participant commented:

And I ended up on almost every search committee of significance that the university was engaged. Then I was the token black. And it was kind of interesting because during that period I understood that I was the token but I also was smart enough to glean that there were real valuable experiences that I was acquiring from being involved in all those searches. I came to understand the role of the President, the role of the Provost, the role of the department, every professional position on campus. Through that process I learned firsthand the depth and breadth and scope of responsibilities which gave me an insight into how education works.

In addition a participant stated:

It is one of color. Look, it is a white male dominated society that still has bastions of racism, and by racism or prejudice and a prejudicial and a prejudicial thought process as to what minorities and women can successfully do. We cannot afford the fact that we're all a 50 years removed for the most part from the Civil Rights being granted. And 50 years removed means that many of the presidents and people on these boards who were in their 50s and 60s grew up with parents who were grappling with that

issue from a societal standpoint. Some who felt that certainly minorities deserve the same rights that we have and other who said they don't. So we are still as a society trying to evolve to a point where that is not important. But I don't think we will ever fully have a society that doesn't see race and doesn't see gender as a ghost to making decisions about who they hire and who they don't.

Another participant stated:

The area that I still think is missing is that we have to find a way to get college presidents who were clearly the decision-makers to be more engaged and to get to know up and coming folks either, for example, at some of the University professional association meetings, ACUL (Association of College University Land Grants), all these different conference president meetings or the various high level conferences where presidents are there. Until we can get some of these people in positions to present, to engage these presidents in conversation I think that the search people have become too powerful in my opinion.

Another encouraged African-American males interested in pursuing the position of AD to avoid leaving themselves open to many stereotypes. By not eliminating the common stereotypes associated with their race will place limits on the access and career progression to athletic director.

African-American experiences with negative stereotypic attitudes as youth prompt them to gravitate to places where they feel "safe" from further racial affronts. When feelings are routinely invalidated, a normal response is to disengage and to turn to someone who will understand and validate these feelings, to someone who has similar experiences. This, along with many other commonalities such as style of dress, vernacular, neighborhoods, and so on, leads to self-segregation (Brooks & Althouse, 2007, p. 253). This concept can be seen in the behavior of many African-American youth in sports settings. It can also be witnessed in the behavior of African-American males. One participant talked about not allowing "discrimination thoughts" to affect his perceptions

and responses to the circumstances and situations as he progressed towards the athletic director position. He talked about how “We blame others. We allow things and people to be obstacles.”

Another participant talked about encouraging African-American males with similar career aspirations to make an effort to socialize outside of the group of other African-American or ethnic minority males he typically saw them with at NCAA events or gatherings. When discussing what prevents ethnic minority males from reaching the athletic director position one participant stated, “They need to sometimes get out of their comfort level, and talk, and matriculate in areas in which they need to open the door.” He went on to say, “Here is where I think a lot of us go wrong. We go to convention...and everything else, we do not matriculate. We do not share and if there are other brothers there, that’s where we congregate and don’t get into the mainstream. We don’t sit down and talk.”

Another poignant comment made by this participant was, “Because I stereotyped and I had a perception that people look at me differently if I participated or matriculate in the other groups just to get a well rounded experience, I missed out...there was some ignorance there and I bought into the ignorance because I did not want to venture outside and have people think I wasn’t ‘down’ or that I was selling out.”

The researcher’s CRT theoretical lens led the researcher to study race, institutional racism, and the issues of diversity and inclusion in higher education. Participants’ responses mirrored the tenets of CRT and helped to confirm for the researcher that CRT is a viable theory that is as relevant today as it was when it was first posited over thirty years ago. Bell’s (1980) Interest Convergence theory indicates that the interests of Blacks in gaining racial equality have been accommodated only when they have converged with the interest of powerful Whites. His theory is rooted in the Marxist theory that the bourgeoisie will tolerate advances for the proletariat only if these advances benefit the bourgeoisies even more. The *Brown v Board of Education* case helped transform blacks from beggars pleading for decent treatment to citizens demanding equal treatment under the laws as their

constitutional right. It is believed that Blacks will only receive true equality will require the surrender of racism-granted privileges for Whites.

One of the CRT's basic tenets is that racism is ordinary, not aberrant, but the normal way society does business. The narratives shared by the participants often reflected racism experiences on an institutional level, in the business of intercollegiate athletics, frequently manifested in access discrimination to the athletic director's chair. Institutional racism refers to organizational and informal barriers that prevent minority groups from obtaining higher-level positions within the organization (Jeanquart-Barone et al., 1996), and is a by-product of racism. The Critical Race Theory (CRT) posited by Bell, Freeman and Delgado purports that racism still exists and provides a barrier to higher echelon jobs for minorities. The CRT studies find that job seeking minorities, who are much more apt than similarly qualified white males, tend to be rejected often for vague reasons (Delgado, 2001). White males hold most of the higher echelon jobs, such as athletic director or university president. An example of this can be found in the statements of one candidate who said, "There are just not a lot of FBS jobs. The reality is, there are only 120 FBS athletic director seats. And there are certain parts of the country, at certain institutions within that 120, where we are just not going to get hired for the obvious reasons and the biases that exist at those institutions or the geography that they are in. It's just not going to happen. So you cut that list down from 120 to some other number."

It was observed by one participant that:

I think secondly we don't always get the opportunities to be in the position to do the things that presidents, search committees are looking for as they relate to key elements which are raising money and marketing corporate sponsorship show that you have a direct responsibility to being responsible for bringing money and understanding how to do it. We don't always get those opportunities.

The literature review identified the glass ceiling effect and relationship to career progression, especially amongst women and minorities. During the interview process the participants shared their perception and experiences with glass ceiling issues as barriers in their career progression to the level of athletic director. In the 2002 NCAA Race and Demographics study of NCAA institutions athletic personnel, the percentage of black administrators has increased overall but the increases are not results of more blacks in decision-making positions such as athletic directors (Brooks & Althouse, 2007). The glass ceiling effect is composed of organizational, attitudinal and social barriers that effectively keep not only women but also minorities, from advancing up the career ladder. Although job descriptions may allow for other types of work, those affected by the glass ceiling phenomenon may not be given the chance to broaden their experience with hire level duties thus effectively keeping them relegated to lower level positions. This is an expression of access discrimination, an overarching theme identified in this study.

When asked to comment about glass ceiling issues several of the participants in this study reported very little experience with the glass ceiling effect. By virtue of them having achieved their goal of athletic director, the glass ceiling was not an insurmountable barrier for them. More than one participant made mention of having a "unique pedigree" which did not lend itself to the glass ceiling experience. A unique pedigree consisted of attending and graduating from prestigious universities, obtaining the highest level academic degree, playing collegiate and professional sports, and having influential mentors "grease the skids" to help them forward thus effectively knocking down the glass ceiling. One participant stated that he was aware that the glass ceiling existed and as he considered his next career opportunity his thoughts went to what institution would be willing to take a chance on him, quoting the words of one search firm representative, "young black guy."

One participant observed:

There are real world glass ceiling realities in corporate America. There were only three [black athletic directors] in 1991. To think that racism was not a factor in the slow

movement of hiring a black A.D., black football coaches, you'd have to have your head in the sand. Can you prove it? No, you can't prove it! You can prove it in certain parts of the country because they tell you. But that was before *Brown v the Board of Education*. That was "separate, but equal". But after that, the opportunities and actual hiring have still been extremely slow. The numbers speak for themselves.

Another participant noted that, "When I was at the University, I felt I was put in a box, and I knew as I learned about the business that I needed to be involved in other areas like sport supervision to advance my career."

Career advancement factors was the third overarching theme in this research study as well as a focus in the literature reviewed as part of this study. During the interview process the participants disclosed their perception as to what extent there is a relationship between mentoring and ascending to the athletic director position at the FBS level. Also the questionnaire that accompanied the face-to-face interviews asked participants to identify factors that they perceived that contributed to their career achievements. Without exception, the participants identified mentoring as a factor leading to career advancements toward the athletic director position during interviews. Additionally, mentoring was identified as the top factor that participants thought contributed to career progression to the athletic director position from the questionnaire. Kram (1985) indicated that mentoring and peer relationships provide both a range of career enhancing and psychosocial benefits. In regards to mentoring Thomas (2001) found that minorities take a different advancement path versus non-minorities, whereby non-minorities usually take a fast track. Thomas' research concluded that minorities who advance further all share a strong network a mentors and or corporate sponsors who nurture their professional development.

One participant commented, "I've had a lot of people who helped me and pulled me along and so it's a matter of I believe that this was a calling more than anything. I was called to do this and here's where I'm at today."

Another observed, "If you really believe I've done something than reach back and whatever I've done for you, do it for somebody else."

Yet another participant commented, "Having a boss to mentor me for two years was key. The mentor was very influential in catapulting me into this business. He helped me with the experiences that ultimately led me to become an AD."

Another participant stated, "We need to be more strategic in building a quality rolodex. We do not need 100 individuals. You need three ADs, three head football and basketball coaches, and a few presidents that can call on your behalf for the position you are seeking."

On the subject of mentoring, another participant commented, "Well, my mentor's network within the department at the university got me in. I did not have any trouble getting into a specific institution because my mentor set it up. All I know is I was accepted into a specific college. So I guess my primary mentor knocked down the glass ceiling to help me move forward. He greased the skids. I was in."

In this study a unique pedigree led to opportunities to develop a strong network of mentors and often that catapulted the African-American males in this study, particularly the youngest of this distinct group, onto a fast track. One participant went on further to explain that having a champion was a critical factor in his career trajectory to the athletic director position. In his experience, a "champion" was beyond the role of a mentor. A champion is less in the role of an advisor or someone who can share information about how to perform based on their experience in a similar or identical job, and more in the role of one who is influential enough to open doors often shut to African-American males, and one who is willing to risk his reputation in exchange for promoting a viable candidate for a position, in this case, in the role of athletics director at a Division I FBS member institution.

Several of the participants stated that they received employment opportunities in the position of athletic director in part because of networking connections formed with University presidents,

search firms, recommendations of sitting athletic directors and other highly influential people. Networking was seen as a critical career advancement factor.

Based on the findings of Spenard (2011) the NCAA Division I athletic directors who participated in his study spend a tremendous amount of time and attention, on a daily and weekly basis, on financial and budgetary oversight along with development and fundraising as well as policymaking for the athletic department. Campus relations, business management, human resources and employment closely followed these responsibilities in Spenard's study. Therefore career experience and growth in areas like finances and budgetary oversight, internal policymaking, development and fundraising, business management, sports operation, marketing, community relations is necessary within the athletic department to develop the knowledge and experience required for the position of athletic director. And thus, their years at the lower level positions, like job clustering, continue to hinder the opportunity to pursue senior-level management positions, which are typically needed prior to ascending to the athletic director position.

Analysis of the data collected from the open ended question at the end of the interview yielded 13 important strategies that ethnic minority males should consider implementing if they desire to ascend to the athletic director position at an NCAA Division I FBS level. The list below is not in chronically order of significance.

1. Identify a recognizable champion(s);
2. Have integrity and character;
3. Build academic credentials;
4. Obtain significant job responsibilities;
5. Obtain experience in development and budget management;
6. Become an expert in your profession;
7. Get exposure/become visible;
8. Build relationships with individuals who can guide, correct and affirm;

9. Get into the network of the decision makers;
10. Introduce yourself to search firms;
11. Work harder;
12. Attend professional conventions (NACDA, Sport Management Institute, Division I-A Leadership Institute; and
13. Self-promote.

The ethnic minority male athletic directors shared their perceptions as to why some ethnic minority males have not been able to become athletic directors at the FBS Level and perhaps not reach their full potential. They included comments regarding the lack of expectations of success; unfortunately, not being prepared; being too aggressive; lacking of a good mentor; making poor personal choices and having family obligations; lacking both patience and persistence; complacency; needing to improve interpersonal and oral communication skills; inability to build relationships; and the inability to recognize when it is time to change organizations.

Implications for Theory and Practice

Racial minorities are over-represented in academic life skills but underrepresented in other administrative staff and senior level positions (McDowell, 2009; Brown, 2010). African Americans are often funneled into positions such as compliance coordinators and academic advisors positions that can be dead-end and do not usually favor upward mobility (Shoji, 2004).

The NCAA's diversity programs and university sport management programs may use this research to inform sport management curriculum and help develop and prepare aspiring ethnic minority males who desire a career in intercollegiate athletes and want to become an athletic director.

Due to the lack of ethnic minority athletic directors, limited research has been conducted

on this population group. To determine if a pattern exists, it is necessary to investigate commonalties and career profiles to determine how these individuals became Athletic Directors. Additional methods for evaluating the barriers to obtaining senior-level positions and athletic administration are necessary due to the ongoing discrepancy in the representation of minorities, and of women.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research regarding the phenomenological experiences of ethnic minority male athletic directors may lead to a better understanding of the factors and barriers influencing the career trajectory of ethnic minority male athletic directors in NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision member institutions.

Further research examining the type of personality traits common amongst the participants who have reached the level of NCAA Division I FBS athletic director would be beneficial in examining what traits are most common and what traits may need to be developed amongst those who aspire to this level. Further research which deeply explores concept of having a champion in reaching career goals would be valuable to aspiring athletic directors. The data collected are essential for young professionals and current students who aspire to pursue a career with in collegiate athletics administration.

Methods for evaluating the barriers into the athletic administration career field are necessary due to the ongoing discrepancy in representation of ethnic minority males within collegiate athletics administration.

Replicating this study with specific focus on the results by division would further consolidate its results. Repeating this study by using ethnic minority males at the Football Championship Subdivision may produce similar results, which would strengthen and further validate the study's transferability (Creswell, 2007). Replicating this study at Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) would also be informative. Also, replicating the study using a combined sample

population of all ethnic minority male athletic directors at the Division I level (FBS, FCS, DI) would add to its reliability. Finally, it would add to the understanding of the phenomenon by investigating the hiring process of search firms on how they select their candidate pools and why there is a perception that they recycle its candidates.

This study enhances the research of African-American male athletic directors by investigating their life stories. Three themes emerged from the study, but additional research would offer further insight into the lives of ethnic minority athletic directors at NCAA affiliated institutions in the United States. Expanding the study's participants to include university stakeholders, such as college or university presidents, vice presidents, and board members, with authority in the hiring process of athletic directors would add another perspective into the hiring process for athletic directors. Expanding the study to examine the lack of female athletic directors at the FBS level would corroborate and strengthen the female athletic directors' perceptions regarding their leadership and provide a more complete understanding of the career trajectory of female athletic directors in NCAA affiliated institutions.

Implications of the Study to Leadership

Acquiring data from this elite group of ethnic minority males provides information to aspiring ethnic minority males on how to navigate their career paths to become an athletic director in an NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision level. As the number of ethnic minorities continues to grow within the NCAA membership, diversity is very crucial. Due to the current underrepresentation of ethnic minority males leading major athletic intercollegiate programs, it is imperative for more minorities to have the opportunity to ascend to the athletic director's chair. Upon reviewing the research literature known to the researcher, this study appears to be among the few research studies on the importance of ethnic minority male career advancement opportunities in the area of athletic intercollegiate administration. The participants' experiences and perceptions regarding specific factors and barriers provide needed

exposure on both the challenges they faced, as well as areas of opportunity available to NCAA's member institutions, to create a more diverse workforce with equal opportunity for minorities to advance to senior leadership levels. This study may help the NCAA and its member institutions to improve diversity and inclusion by provoking changes in the mindset of university leadership regarding the efficacy of minorities in senior leadership positions in athletics while providing strategies that assist in the development and implementation of programs and policies that facilitate access to professional development opportunities that prepare junior staff to assume senior leadership positions and support making executive educational decisions regarding such positions based on qualifications, experience, education, skills and competencies.

This study also has implications for leadership at all levels of higher education institutions. A number of studies have found that ethnic minority individuals are underrepresented in upper level leadership positions in higher education. The findings and recommendations of this study are applicable to ethnic minority candidates who aspire to leadership positions in higher education administration, up to and including the presidency of such institutions.

Reflection on the Study

This researcher is an ethnic minority male intercollegiate athletic administrator who is currently on a normative career pattern and aspires to become an athletic director at a Football Bowl Subdivision member institution. The researcher has had a diverse career path that involved gaining work experience at all levels of Division I (i.e., FBS, FCS, non-football Division I). Also, the researcher has experience working in the NCAA National Office and in professional sports. The researcher has participated in NCAA diversity programs that were designed to provide professional development and leadership training opportunities, and the researcher believes he is ready to go to the next level and become an athletic director.

However, he was informed that it is a very difficult climb for ethnic minority males desiring to ascend to the athletic director's chair due to obstacles purportedly experienced by other ethnic minority males. Thus, the motivation for the study was born. The researcher has witnessed a few of his peers with very similar backgrounds have the opportunity to become athletic directors and wondered how they got there. Also, prior to the researcher attempting to become an athletic director, he wanted to become educated on the perceived barriers and career tactics to help his career journey.

During the interviews, the researcher ascertained that he has experienced some of the career trajectory issues and barriers similar to those described by the participants as they were coming up through the ranks of athletic administration that relate to racial stereotyping and access discrimination. That discovery was a confirming experience for the researcher in that it normalized his lived experiences with ~~that~~ those of the participants regarding perceived barriers for ethnic minority males in athletic administration while providing the knowledge and direction to overcome barriers and achieve the goal of becoming an athletic director.

The researcher's biases were limited due to the candid conversations with the participants and having the interviews transcribed and reviewed by the participants for accuracy. The participants were very open with their responses and very helpful by providing substantive data during the interview discussions. The researcher has a philosophy that if he is not able to become an athletic director at a NCAA Division I FBS member institution that he wants to assist others to understand the process and the game they must play in order to be considered major contenders.

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APPENDIX A**Participation Recruitment Advertisement****ETHNIC MINORITY MALE CAREER TRAJECTORY TO THE NCAA DIVISION I
FOOTBALL BOWL SUBDIVISION DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS POSITION: A
PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

I am seeking 15 ethnic males who meet the criteria listed below to participate in this exciting study.

Criteria for participation:

- Current and Previous NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Intercollegiate Director of Athletics (AD), and
- Must have held the position of Director of Athletics position within the last five years
- Must be able to participate in one face-to-face interview and one follow-up telephone interview, and
- Must consent to reviewing their transcribed interview

If you are interested in participating please contact me at (303) 949-0802 or at Patrick.Hairston@gmail.com. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Prince Attah, at (302) 857-6718 or the Delaware State University Institutional Review Board, at 302-857-6810.

Note: The anticipated time for the entire process should not exceed two hours to complete the initial in-person interview, and one hour for possible follow-up questions and member checking - -- a total time commitment of no more than three hours. All information will be kept confidential.

APPENDIX B**Participant Request Solicitation Letter**

Dear Director of Athletics:

My name is Patrick O. Hairston, and I am a doctoral student in Educational Administration, Leadership and Supervision at Delaware State University. For my dissertation I am conducting a research project entitled *Ethnic Minority Male Career Trajectory to the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Director of Athletics Position: A Phenomenological Study*. Therefore, I am seeking your participation in the research.

The goal of this research is to ascertain an understanding the common characteristics that impacted the career trajectory for ethnic minority males who currently have the position of Director of Athletics at the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision. My research will be able to assist other ethnic minority males who desire to become Director of Athletics.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to complete an in-person interview (time and place to be determined) to describe your own experiences in reaching the position of Director of Athletics. The in-person interview should take approximately 60 to 90 minutes to complete. One hour is allotted for possible follow-up questions and member checking, for a total time commitment of two and one half hours. Within ten days of the initial interview you will be contacted via telephone for any possible follow-up questions. After the interviews have been transcribed you will be given an opportunity to review your interview transcript. You are free to answer/not answer any question and have no obligation to complete all questions once you begin.

Your participation in the survey is strictly voluntary and anonymous with full confidentiality guaranteed. Please note that that no institutional or personal identification information will be asked in this research. Participating in the study has no risks. The results of this research may be published, but your name will not be used.

The information you provide will be kept in confidence to the extent of the law. Any published results of the research will be referred to as the group, no names will be used in the study. The researcher will keep data. Research data containing participants' names will kept secured in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's residence. Only the researcher will have access to the locked file cabinet with the research records. Your signed consent form will be kept separate from the data. All data will be destroyed after the specific storing time has expired.

There is no personal financial benefit to be received by participating in this research. However, you are in an important position to make a major contribution to understand the career trajectory of ethnic minority male Director of Athletics and provide additional assessment tools in the career advancement of ethnic minority males.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the research or your participation in the research, please contact me, Patrick O. Hairston at 303-949-0802 or Dr. Prince Attoh, dissertation chair committee, at 302- 857-6718 or the Delaware State University Institutional

Review Board, at 302-857-6810.

If you are satisfied with the information provided and are willing to participate in the research, please indicate your voluntary consent by reading and signing the enclosed consent forms.

Sincerely,

Patrick O. Hairston
 Doctoral Student
 Delaware State University
 303-949-0802
 Patrick.Hairston@gmail.com

Enclosures

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent Form

Principal Investigator: Patrick O. Hairston

Title of Project: Ethnic Minority Male Career Trajectory to the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Director of Athletics Position: A Phenomenological Study

You are invited to participate in a research study of "An Investigation of Factors and Barriers that Impact Career Trajectory for Ethnic Minority Males To The Director of Athletics Position Within the NCAA: A Phenomenological Study." The desired learning outcome is to investigate and determine if there are common factors that have helped the career trajectory among ethnic minority males to ascend to the Director of Athletics position at the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision.

This study will be of benefit to others ethnic minority males who aspire to become Directors of Athletics at the Football Bowl Subdivision. Also, the study will help identify career enhancing tactics that may be used to increase the number of ethnic minority male talent pool and add to the empirical research relative to ethnic minority male career advancement.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been identified as an ethnic minority male Director of Athletics at the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision.

If you decide to participate, Patrick Hairston will contact you for an in-person interview. The interview will be scheduled in advance and is anticipated to take from 60 to 90 minutes. The location, date and time will be agreed upon time that fits your schedule. The following interview protocol will be followed:

Prior to the start of the interview, participants will be reminded of the following procedures:

1. The interview will be tape-recorded. The purpose of the audio taping is to help ensure accuracy of data collection, rather than a reliance on only written notes, which could be subject to errors. Transcripts will be analyzed to assist in identifying patterns, themes, and/or categories.
2. Interview participants will be assured of confidentiality throughout the research process.
3. Interviewees will be provided a transcript of the audio recorded interview to verify accuracy of data.
4. Only the researcher who conducts the interview will have access to the audiotapes. The tapes will be destroyed two years after the research project ends.
5. Tapes will be safeguarded and protected until destroyed. Tapes will be maintained by an identifier number, and no personal name or personal identifiable data in order to protect the identity and confidentiality of research participant.

6. Tapes will be secured in a locked cabinet at the home of the researcher. The researcher is the custodian of the key and the only person with access to the locked cabinet.
7. The only use of the tapes is to construct verbatim transcripts of the interviews.
8. Once the transcripts have been constructed, the tapes are no longer needed and will be erased after two years of completing the research.

Considering that this study is based on your personal experiences there are no invasive procedures or information requested, no discomforts or risks can be identified. This study has minimal risks attached to it relative to the participants. Therefore, issues such as medical care and compensation are not active concerns.

Ethnic Minority Male Director of Athletics participants are asked to read and sign a separate signature sheet to address informed consent. These documents will be kept in the investigator's home in a locked file until the data is analyzed and the dissertation is completed. In interviews recorded via tape recording will be deleted after two years from the completion of the research. The notes taken will be shredded after two years from the completion of the research. There is no identification included in the survey instrument. So there will be no way of identifying responses with the respondents.

If you give us your permission by signing this document, the investigator will disclose the results in his dissertation and any future presentation and publications. However, the participant's identity and confidentiality will be maintained.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with Delaware State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. Before you complete and sign the form, please ask questions on any aspect of the study that is at all unclear to you. If you have any additional questions later, please contact Patrick Hairston at (303) 949-0802 or Patrick.Hairston@gmail.com. If at any time you have questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office of Sponsored Programs at 302-857-6810.

**YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR
SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE,
HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE.**

I acknowledge that I have received a personal copy of this consent form. Copy Received: _____
(initial)

Date _____ Signature _____

Signature of Investigator _____

APPENDIX D

Audio/Tape Recording Informed Consent Form

Principal Investigator: Patrick O. Hairston

Title of Project: Ethnic Male Career Trajectory to the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Director of athletics Position: A Phenomenological Study

You are invited to participate in a research study of "Ethnic Minority Male Career Trajectory to the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Director of Athletics Position: A Phenomenological Study." The desired learning outcome is to investigate and determine if there are common factors that have helped the career trajectory among ethnic minority males to ascend to the Director of Athletics position at the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision.

This study will be of benefit to other ethnic minority males who aspire to become Directors of Athletics at the Football Bowl Subdivision. Also, the study will help identify career enhancing tactics that may be used to increase the number of ethnic minority male talent pool and add to the empirical research relative to ethnic minority male career advancement.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been identified as an ethnic minority male Director of Athletics at the NCAA Division I Football Bowl Subdivision.

If you decide to participate, Patrick Hairston will contact you for an in-person interview. The interview will be scheduled in advance and is anticipated to take from 60 to 90 minutes. The location, date and time will be agreed upon time that fits your schedule. The following interview protocol will be followed:

Prior to the start of the interview, participants will be reminded of the following procedures:

1. The interview will be tape-recorded. The purpose of the audio taping is to help ensure accuracy of data collection, rather than a reliance on only written notes, which could be subject to errors. Transcripts will be analyzed to assist in identifying patterns, themes, and/or categories.
2. Interview participants will be assured of confidentiality throughout the research process.
3. Interviewees will be provided a transcript of the audio recorded interview to verify accuracy of data.
4. Only the researcher who conducts the interview will have access to the audiotapes. The tapes will be destroyed two years after the research project ends.
5. Tapes will be safeguarded and protected until destroyed. Tapes will be maintained by an identifier number, and no personal name or personal identifiable data in order to protect the identity and confidentiality of research participant.
6. Tapes will be secured in a locked cabinet at the home of the researcher. The

researcher is the custodian of the key and the only person with access to the locked cabinet.

- 7. The only use of the tapes is to construct verbatim transcripts of the interviews.
- 8. Once the transcripts have been constructed, the tapes are no longer needed and will be erased after two years of completing the research.

Considering that this study is based on your personal experiences there are no invasive procedures or information requested, no discomforts or risks can be identified. This study has minimal risks attached to it relative to the participants. Therefore, issues such as medical care and compensation are not active concerns.

Ethnic Minority Male Director of Athletics participants are asked to read and sign a separate signature sheet to address informed consent. These documents will be kept in the investigator's home in a locked file until the data is analyzed and the dissertation is completed. In interviews recorded via tape recording will be deleted after two years from the completion of the research. The notes taken will be shredded after two years from the completion of the research. There is no identification included in the survey instrument. So there will be no way of identifying responses with the respondents.

If you give us your permission by signing this document, the investigator will disclose the results in his dissertation and any future presentation and publications. However, the participant's identity and confidentiality will be maintained.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with Delaware State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. Before you complete and sign the form, please ask questions on any aspect of the study that is at all unclear to you. If you have any additional questions later, please contact Patrick Hairston at (303) 949-0802 or Patrick.Hairston@gmail.com If at any time you have questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office of Sponsored Programs at 302-857-6810.

YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE, HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE.

I acknowledge that I have received a personal copy of this consent form. Copy Received: _____
(initial)

Date _____ Signature _____

Signature of Investigator _____

APPENDIX E

Professional Biographical Information

Please complete the following confidential demographic data:

Name (Print): _____

Title: _____

Address (Work): _____

Phone#: _____

(home)

(work/cell)

1. Conference affiliation of your current institution: _____

2. Years in current position: _____

3. Total number of years as a Director of Athletics: _____

4. Age: _____

5. Age when you became Director of Athletics for the first time: _____

6. Minority Ethnicity Categories: (Circle One).

1. American Indian or Alaska Native.

2. Asian.

3. Black or African American.

4. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

5. Hispanic or Latino.

6. Not Hispanic or Latino.

7. Other. Specify _____

8. Prefer not to specify.

Please complete the following confidential career progression data:

7. Prior to serving as Director of Athletics, did you participate in any NCAA and/or NACDA professional development programs? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, please list the programs:

8. Did you participate in other professional development programs (e.g., Division IA Leadership Institute) not identified in Question #7 above? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, please list the programs:

9. Did you serve on any NCAA committee(s) prior to serving as Director of Athletics?

Yes ____ No ____
If yes, please list the committees:

10. Did you serve on any conference committees (e.g., Championships, TV, Finance, Compliance, Student-Athlete Well-Being) prior to serving as Director of Athletics.
Yes ____ No ____
If yes, please list the committees:

11. Prior to being appointed Director of Athletics, did you have a mentor(s)?
Yes ____ No ____

12. Was the primary mentor male or female?
a. Was the primary mentor the same ethnicity? Yes ____ No ____
b. Did the primary and other mentor(s) help you become a Director of Athletics?
Yes ____ No ____

13. Was the primary mentor(s) a **SITTING** or **FORMER** Director of Athletics? (Please circle).

14. Your 1st AD job, did you have any affiliation with the University (e.g., Alumni, Board of Governors, Visiting Committee Member) prior to being hired? Yes ____ No ____

15. How many times have you previously applied for Director of Athletics positions prior to being hired? _____

16. Educational Background:
Degrees (Circle all degrees that apply) Major (list) Institution (list)
Associate's _____
Bachelor's _____
Master's _____
Doctoral _____
Professional (e.g., JD) _____

17. Athletic Background:
Sport Played? (List)
Level(s) Pro DI-FBS DI-FCS DI DII DIII Other
Sport Coached GA Assistant Associate Head
Level(s) Pro DI-FBS DI-FCS DI DII DIII Other

18. Administration Career Progression Background: (Please list all jobs prior to becoming a Director of Athletics).
Job Categories: Compliance, Academics, Student-Athlete Well-Being, Marketing, Development, Business/Finance, Administration, Facility, Tickets, Event Management, Sport Administration, Sport Information and Other.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Job</u>	<u># of Years at the Job</u>	<u>Institution</u>
Intern			
Graduate Assistant			
Assistant AD			

Associate AD

Senior Associate

Deputy

Director of Athletics (non-FBS)

NCAA Staff

Other

Willing to participate: Yes No

Signature

Date

APPENDIX F

Interview Protocol

The interview will be scheduled in advance and is anticipated to take from 60 to 90 minutes.

Prior to the start of the interview, participants will be reminded of the following procedures:

1. The interview will be tape-recorded. The purpose of the audio taping is to help ensure accuracy of data collection, rather than a reliance on only written notes, which could be subject to errors. Transcripts will be analyzed to assist in identifying patterns, themes, and/or categories.
2. Interview participants will be assured of confidentiality throughout the research process.
3. Interviewees will be provided a transcript of the audio recorded interview to verify accuracy of data.
4. Only the researcher who conducts the interview will have access to the audiotapes. The tapes will be destroyed after the research project ends.
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6. Tapes will be secured in a locked cabinet at the home of the researcher. The researcher is the custodian of the key and the only person with access to the locked cabinet.
7. The only use of the tapes is to construct verbatim transcripts of the interviews.
8. Once the transcripts have been constructed, the tapes are no longer needed and will be erased.

APPENDIX G

Interview Questions Guide

Phenomenological Prompt/Initial Question:

1. When you think back on your journey to becoming the Director of Athletics as an ethnic minority male, what stands out for you?

Central Research Questions

Research Question #1. To what extent are there common factors among the career paths of current ethnic minority male director of athletics within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?

Interview questions:

1. Can you elaborate on why you choose to become a Director of Athletics? Was this a deliberate career choice?
2. Who was your role model?
3. Describe for me when did this journey begin. What factors if any stood out for you?
4. Could you describe the most significant career experiences you believed led to your appointment to the Director of Athletics position?
5. Can you describe landmark event(s) that led to you becoming a Director of Athletics?
6. Can you describe the types of mentoring (formal or informal) and/or coaching you have had that supported you prior to becoming a Director of Athletics?
7. Can you elaborate on the characteristics of the mentor relationship? How did they help you to become a Director of Athletics?

Research Question #2. Why are there a small number of ethnic minority males that have ascended to level of Directors of Athletics within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?

Interview questions:

1. Can you elaborate on why you think there are so few ethnic minority males at the level of Director of Athletics, especially at the Division I FBS Level?
2. What do you believe prevents ethnic minority males from reaching the Director of Athletics position?
3. Could you describe for me any barriers or obstacles you faced in your advancement to the position of Director of Athletics.

4. How did you overcome these barriers to advance to the Director of Athletics position?
5. What can be done to increase the number of ethnic minority males into the Director of Athletics position at the Division I FBS Level?
6. How do ethnic minority males ascend to the level of Directors of Athletics within the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision Level?
7. Do you know other ethnic minority males who have worked just as hard as you who have not made it to the Director of Athletic position at the FBS level? If so, could you explain why?
8. Have you had situations in your career path that you believe would have prevented you from becoming a Director of Athletics?
9. Describe your process of how you became a Director of Athletics at the Football Bowl Subdivision Level?
10. How should minority candidates align themselves with search firms?

[Note: The following question will be asked to elicit information for prospective or future ethnic minority males who are pursuing director of athletics position at the football bowl subdivision and progression opportunities.

1. Do you have any advice or wisdom for the younger generation of ethnic minority male who want to become a DI FBS Director of Athletics?

Patrick O. Hairston
270 Belfry Drive
Felton, DE 19943
(302) 284-4611

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Over 14 years of sport administrative experience with progressively greater levels of responsibility and leadership with NCAA Division I Athletic programs. Qualifications include:

- Proven track record for assisting universities in maintaining institutional control and integrity with university and NCAA policies and regulations.
- Proven track record in supporting student-athletes academic success in the classroom while assisting coaches and student-athletes in conference winning championships.
- Able to secure private funds in support of athletics.
- Sound fiscal management of athletic department resources.
- Innovative leadership in connecting and enhancing communication with campus departments, academic and local communities for the athletic department.
- Possess a diverse sport administration work experiences in the areas of sport supervision, strategic planning, facility and event management, human resources, development and sport marketing.

EDUCATION

Delaware State University Doctorate: Educational Leadership	December 2012
West Virginia University Masters of Science: Sport Management	December 1996
University of North Carolina at Charlotte Bachelor of Arts: Major - Human Services & Minor - Communications	May 1994

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFILE

University at Albany - Albany, New York: (Total Enrollment 17,615, U.S. News & World Report National Rank #138, 19 Varsity Sponsored Sports)
Associate Athletic Director/Compliance *November 2011 to Present*

- Senior Executive Leadership Team Member
- Manage the daily operations of the Athletics Compliance Office & Office Personnel
- Sport Supervision (i.e., Women's Golf)
- Manage Women's Golf Budget
- Assist with Athletic Facility Planning and Development
- Assisted with Sport Teams and Department Fund Raising Efforts (e.g., Annual Golf Tournament)
- Participate in Searches for Head & Assistant Coaches and Athletic Staff Positions
- Review Coaches Contracts
- Manage Department Human Resources Projects
- Provide written and verbal interpretations of NCAA and conference rules and legislation

- Conduct and coordinate rules education seminars for coaches, athletics department staff members and University constituents
- Compliance Staff Liaison to the President's Office
- Performed other administrative duties assigned by the Director of Athletics

West Virginia University - Morgantown, West Virginia: (Total Enrollment 29,300, U.S. News & World Report University National Rank #164, 16 Varsity Sponsored Sports)

Adjunct Assistant Professor-College of Physical Activity & Sport Management August 2011 to December 2011

- Taught undergraduate classes (i.e., Technology in Sport and Introduction to Internships) in the College of Physical Activity and Sport Management
- Primary Manager and Coordinator for the College's Undergraduate Sport Management Internship Program
- Primary Relationship Developer for potential businesses and organizations intern host
- Advise students on internship positions
- Perform other administrative duties assigned by the Department Dean and/or Chair

Assistant Athletic Director August 2010 to August 2011

Managed the preparation process relative to the institutional response to the

- NCAA Notice of Allegations for possible rules violations
- Managed the process for updating policies and procedures for the Athletic Department
- Performed other duties assigned by the Athletic Director and/or the Deputy Director of Athletics

Assistant Athletic Director/Compliance August 2009 to August 2010

- Managed the daily operations of the Athletics Compliance Office & Office Personnel
- Provided written and verbal interpretations of NCAA and Big East Conference rules and legislation
- Conducted and coordinate rules education seminars for coaches, athletics department staff members and University constituents
- Compliance Staff Liaison to the University Board of Governors, President's Office, and the Athletics Director
- Conducted Searches for Compliance and Media Relations Positions
- Member of the University Athletic Director Search Committee
- Performed other administrative duties assigned by the President's Office and/or the Athletic Director

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) - Indianapolis, Indiana

Assistant Director of Championships April 2008 to July 2009

- Served as the Primary Championship Manager for DIII Baseball, Men's Ice Hockey, Men's Soccer, Men's Tennis and National Collegiate Men's and Women's Rifle
- Primary Manager of Championship Budgets ranging from \$160,000 to \$1.6 million dollars
- Worked with NCAA's TV partners
- Worked with NCAA's Brand Strategies/Events, Business Strategies/ Communications Departments
- Served a primary manager for selected governing sports committees and managed their respective championship activities
- Served as the Association's liaison with selected coaches associations
- Served as the Association's liaison with selected national governing bodies
- Corresponded with administrators, coaches, student-athletes, parents and the general public regarding various topics related to the NCAA championships
- Coordinated departmental projects and tasks as assigned by the director of championships
- Coordinator for the YES Clinics at the 2009 Final Four

Delaware State University - Dover, Delaware: (Total Enrollment 3,757, U.S. News & World Report Regional University (North) National Rank #136, 17 Varsity Sponsored Sports)

Associate Athletics Director/Internal Operations September 2005 to April 2008

- Sport Supervision (i.e., Men's Basketball, Baseball, Wrestling, Men's and Women's Tennis, Men's and Women's Track and Field, Equestrian, Bowling).
- Managed Teams Budgets
- Athletic Facility Planning and Development
- Assisted with Team and University Fund Raising Efforts (e.g., Annual Golf Tournament, Banquets, Auctions)

- Assisted with Game Day Operations
- Managed the Daily Compliance Office Operation & Personnel
- Managed the CHAMPS/Life Skills Program
- Managed the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee
- Primary liaison to the University Athletics Advisory Board
- Delaware State University Steering Committee for Institutional Assessment Member
- Delaware State University Strategic Planning Committee - Department of Athletics Representative
- Managed Searches for Head & Assistant Coaches and Athletic Staff Positions
- Manage University Human Resource Projects

Western Athletic Conference (WAC) - Denver, Colorado

October 1999 to August 2005

Assistant Commissioner/Compliance and Governance

- Provided written and verbal interpretations of NCAA and conference legislation
- Conducted conference-administered compliance reviews/audits for member institutions
- Developed and wrote legislation to amend or change NCAA or conference legislation
- Assisted member institutions with secondary and major NCAA rules violations
- Conducted and coordinate conference rules education seminars
- Conducted teleconference calls with the membership's groups and outside constituents
- Managed the National Letter of Intent Program and the Coaches Certification Test Program
- Managed the conference's Student-Athlete Special Assistance & the Opportunity Fund
- Staff Liaison to the FARs, Compliance Coordinators and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee
- Assisted member institutions with NCAA Athletics Certification
- Managed the conference's CHAMPS/Life Skills Program
- Former Collegiate Commissioners Association Compliance Administrators Member
- Performed other duties assigned by the Commissioner

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi - Corpus Christi, Texas

January 1998 to October 1999

Compliance Coordinator/Athletic Academic Advisor

- One of the founder athletic administrators to help implement a Division I athletic program from scratch after a twenty-five year absence from the University.

ATHLETICS FACILITY MANAGEMENT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Carolina Panthers - National Football League (NFL) - Marketing Intern to Stadium Operations Assistant (July 1996 to January 1997) Game Day Operations Responsibilities (e.g., help supervise event staff)
- Charlotte Coliseum Authority - Event Management Intern (September 1994 to August 1995) Game Day Operations for NBA basketball, minor league hockey, arena football, family shows, concerts, trade shows, 1996 Women's NCAA Final Four

NCAA COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

- NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet
- NCAA Division I Regulatory Culture Working Group
- NCAA Olympic Sports Liaison Committee
- NCAA Division I Amateurism Fact-Finding Committee
- NCAA Athletics Certification Peer Reviewer
- NCAA Amateurism Certification Clearinghouse Advisory Group Member

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

- West Virginia University School of Physical Education Visiting Committee Member (5-year term)
- West Virginia University National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) Active Board Member
- Guest Lecturer for College of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences Undergraduate and Graduate Students at West Virginia University
- Guest Lecturer for Sport Sciences Department Undergraduate Students at Delaware State University
- Guest Lecturer for the College of Education Graduate Students at the University at Albany

PERSONAL HONORS & AWARDS

- Williamson High School Athletic Hall of Fame Inductee - Class of 2004
- NCAA Leadership Institute for Ethnic Minority Males, Graduating Class of 2003
- National Academic Advising Association 2007 Academic Reform Institute Participant
- Postgraduate NCAA Intern - Class of 1996
- Graduate Assistant - West Virginia University/Department of Athletics Compliance Office - Class of 1995
- Baseball Student-Athlete - University of North Carolina at Charlotte (1990-92) two-year letter winner

VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY/COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT

- Albany Branch Capital District YMCA Branch Board of Advisors Member
- 2011-2013 Stowe Family Reunion President (Over 250 family participants)
- Youth Baseball Coach
- Boy Scouts of America, Felton DE - Pack 79
- Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

COMPUTER SKILLS

- Microsoft Office Software
- Legislative Services Database (LSDBi)
- NCAA Eligibility Center Database
- ACS Athletics Compliance Software

2687-7